



The VHPA AVIATOR

The Newsletter of The Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association



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Focus, A Reminder, And An Apology

Our now-longstanding fraternity sustains itself by remaining focused on the mission. The honorable mission of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilot Association is clearly defined within the Articles of Incorporation. Among the most important are: "...To enhance and accredit the cohesiveness, esprit de corps, and traditions of valor of rotary wing crewmembers... to promote and perpetuate the bonds of brotherhood... to provide social and recreational activities for members...conducting programs for charitable, literary and education purposes..."

By being the focal point for helicopter pilots who bravely served in Southeast Asia, we have gone beyond enjoyable reunions and social events to establishing important scholarship programs and historical legacies that recognize and remember our shared combat service. We benefit from the purity of this honorable association, and should be proud of the sustained participation we enjoy.

It is important to also remind ourselves the VHPA is a legal entity, as well. The VHPA is non-business and non-political, deriving valuable tax-saving benefits as a non-profit corporation (under Kansas statutes) and as an organization of war veterans complying with the tight rules of IRS Code 501(c)(19).

Sometimes oversights occur that merit an apology. The May/June 2012 Aviator Magazine highlighted the successful career and political aspirations of a VHPA member. Although recognizing the individual's outstanding career was appropriate, the Editor and reviewing Executive Council (EC) leadership included details that some members viewed as an inappropriate political endorsement. Upon further review, the Editor and EC came to the same conclusion. We express our apologies and promise greater editorial vigilance in future publications.

Bob Hesselbein, VHPA Executive Council Member at Large

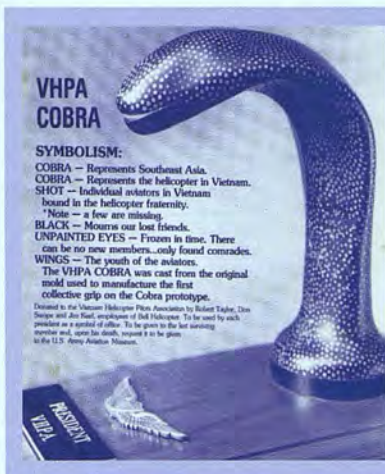
CELEBRATING THE OPENING OF THE NEW VHPA OFFICE

in Grand Prairie, Texas
15 May 2012



Front Row (right to left)
Carrie Cheshier (employee),
Sherry Rodgers (employee - office manager),
Dena Didas (contractor - bookkeeper),
Greg Pattillo (contractor - information technology)

Back Row (right to left)
John Sorensen (vice president),
Tom Payne (past president and secretary/treasurer),
Mike Sheuerman (past president and volunteer coordinator),
Steve Fimian (contractor - CPA), Mike Law (president)



The Association continues to seek the return...

The Association continues to seek the return of two important symbols: the VHPA Cobra plaque and VHPA ceremonial flag. Routinely transported to reunions in the VHPA Northern California Chapter Mobile Officers Club (MOC), our symbols were last displayed and seen at the 2009 Annual Reunion held in Philadelphia.

We ask you to assist in the recovery of the artifacts. Established as traditional symbols in the early years of your association, they represent the shared honor of our common service, a salute to individual and shared courage, and a fraternal symbol of remembrance of those who did not survive the fire of combat.

Recovery is the important thing. Whether the missing items were accidentally misplaced or intentionally "borrowed" is less important than the restoration of the symbols to their rightful place—the custody of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilot Association.

Our symbols of fraternity and honor can be replaced, but restoring the original Cobra plaque and VHPA ceremonial flag will hold far greater honor. Please join the search and help restore our heritage symbols for display at the future reunions. It is the right thing to do.

Respectfully,
Bob Hesselbein, Member-at-Large
VHPA Executive Council

AVIATOR PRIVACY STATEMENT

The VHPA Aviator contains member privacy information the VHPA considers proprietary and confidential. This information, including but not limited to the VHPA Chapter list, shall not be used for commercial solicitation purposes or for any correspondence related thereto without prior written authorization from the VHPA president. Correspondence relating to commercial purposes or solicitations shall only be sent to the VHPA Officers, Committee Chairmen and/or Staff listed in this publication.

E-mail items to The Aviator at: Aviator@vhpa.org

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Vice President	John Sorensen
Past President	Woody McFarlin
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Midterm Member	Bob Hesselbein
Junior Member	Clyde Romero
Secretary/Treasurer	Tom Payne
Founder	Larry Clark

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Historical	Mike Sloniker
Investment	Bob Smith
Membership	Mike Sheuerman
National Reunion Chair	Gary Roush
Public Relations/Publications	Bob Hesselbein
Records/Database	Gary Roush
Reunion Vendor Coordinator	Woody McFarlin
VHPA Calendar Project	Mike Law, Editor
VHPA Membership Directory	Gary Roush, Editor
VHPA Memory Map Project	Ron Bower
VHPA Scholarship Program	Tom Payne
VHPA Aviator Newsletter	David Adams, Editor

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Investment Advisor	Bob Potvin

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VHPA Secretary/Treasurer	
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VHPA Scholarships Program	
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www.VHPA.org

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FROM MIKE LAW, PRESIDENT OF THE VHPA

I'm writing this in early June. The activities associated with establishing and equipping the new VHPA office still dominate my calendar but will soon give way to the final reunion related tasks. It is safe to say that the VHPA leadership learned much from the five primary HQ contractors we've had over our 30-year history. Each contractor brought positives and negatives to the association's SOPs, business practices and traditions. Along the way we've been able to leverage the forward march of technology while staying true to the core values (camaraderie, recording and preserving our history, annual reunion and membership directory, bi-monthly magazine) established by our founders. We must be doing something right because over 15,500 have seen fit to join the VHPA! We pay our bills with complete transparency and have money in the bank. Even though the Aviator's Taps section continues to grow with each issue we are poised to have our best attended reunion in years this August in New Orleans. I'm excited about the VHPA's future! The Executive Council will share more details during and after the Annual Business Meeting in New Orleans about this exciting future.

I could go on and on about the "goodness" of the association having its own office. Perhaps Tom Payne summed it up best in our 15 May "full staff" meeting in Grand Prairie, TX: "I and many other old-time VHPA'ers have looked forward to the day we can again have our own office. I'm glad that each of you is here because you want to be here to make the VHPA better." There were five volunteers in the meeting (plus one more covering the phones) with three special purpose contractors and two employees.

In closing I want everyone who reads this article to know that the Executive Council is well aware that the VHPA's customer service especially in the area of answering the 800# calls with trained and knowledgeable individuals has been substandard of late. I beg anyone who has been "done wrong" to please call me at [REDACTED] or email me at [REDACTED]. If I am part of the problem in your mind, then please call John Sorensen at [REDACTED] or any member of the Executive Council. You have our pledge that the ship is now righted and heading in the correct direction.

*Come talk to me or any member
of the Executive Council in New Orleans!*

Mike Law

NEW ORLEANS IS BACK FROM KATRINA

The 29th Annual VHPA Reunion
New Orleans, LA 31 July – 5 August 2012
Hilton New Orleans Riverside
It's New Orleans - you're different here!

better than ever!

Important Last Minute Notes for this year's Reunion at the Hilton New Orleans Riverside Hotel.

Location: Hilton New Orleans Riverside,
Two Poydras Street, New Orleans, LA 70130
Phone Number: 1-800-445-8667

The Hotel lobby and registration desk are on the second floor and the VHPA registration area is on the first (street) level.

Driving Directions - From the West, Follow Interstate-10 to Downtown/East/Slidell, exiting at Poydras St. The off-ramp becomes Poydras St., following Poydras south to its end at the hotel's front circle drive entrance. From the East, Follow Interstate-10 Downtown/West, exiting at Canal St./Superdome. Follow signage to Superdome/Poydras St., turning left onto Poydras St. follow Poydras St. south to its end at the hotel's front circle drive entrance.

Airport Transportation - A taxi will cost about \$35 each way. The VHPA has a special rate with Airport Shuttle. Book airport transportation online with Airport Shuttle for a round trip discount. The link is on the VHPA reunion web site. Changes can be made by phone on 866-596-2699 after the initial reservation is made online more than 24 hours in advance. The discount is not available by calling first. The special rates with Airport Shuttle are \$38 per person round trip and \$20 per person one way.

Early Departure Fee - If you check out of the hotel prior to your reserved check out date, the Hotel will add an early checkout fee to your bill. To avoid this early checkout fee, please advise the Hotel before or at the time of check in that your departure date has changed.

Special Room Discount Rate Reservation end date - Our ability to reserve rooms at the special VHPA rate (\$119.00 per/night) ends on 11 July, 2012, twenty days before the Reunion starts. This means that the hotel will not honor our special \$119 per night room rate for reservations made after 11 July 2012. Be sure and make your reservations early.

Hotel special self parking rate - Only \$15.00 per day and this rate is available both to people staying at the hotel, and to those visiting the hotel. If you're staying at Reunion Hotel, ask the desk clerk that checks you in to give you a card to use to exit and enter the garage. If you are just visiting, you will need a daily special ticket to use when exiting parking. This ticket is only available at the first-floor VHPA registration desk.

Hotel Health Club - All VHPA Attendees will receive a discounted rate of \$5.00 per day to access the Health & Fitness Center. This is less than half of the normal rate.

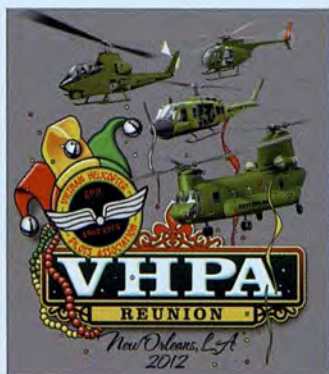
Hotel Internet Access - All VHPA rooms will receive a discounted guest room Internet rate of \$9.00 per day which is a discount over the normal rate.

Hotel Check In Time is 3:00 p.m. **Check out time** is 12:00 noon.

Hotel Room Cancellations - Reserved rooms are guaranteed by your personal credit card which provides the hotel with one night's room fee plus tax. This is required to hold the room. This deposit will be refunded if the reservation is canceled at least three (3) working days prior to arrival. To avoid this cancellation penalty, please be sure to take into account that weekends are NOT working days so this means that you may have to cancel at least five (5) days in advance to avoid a penalty. Also be sure to get a cancellation number.

Need a wheelchair? Please see <http://www.mrwheelchair.com/> or contact them by phone at 800-548-9672. Mr. Wheelchair has an agreement with the Hilton.

Any questions or problems, please let the VHPA or the MRP Staff know.



The 29th Annual
VHPA REUNION
New Orleans, LA
31 July – 5 August 2012
Hilton New Orleans Riverside

*It's New Orleans -
you're different here!*

New Orleans Reunion – “New Orleans Area” Tour Offerings

Dates and departure times vary – see the in-hotel Tour Desk for full details and availability

NEW ORLEANS CITY & FRENCH QUARTER TOUR

Board your luxury coach and travel through three centuries of history as you tour some of New Orleans' top attractions. Absorb the sights & sounds of the world famous French Quarter and historic Jackson Square, home of the Cabildo and Presbytere Museums. Visit one of the historic cemeteries referred to as “Cities of the Dead,” and learn about this unique above ground burial system. Marvel at stories of voodoo and piracy on Bayou St. John, the waterway used by Jean Lafitte and his band of pirates, as you make your way to the shores of Lake Pontchartrain, where you will see the longest bridge over water in the world, the Lake Pontchartrain Causeway. Follow the path of the St. Charles Avenue streetcar, the oldest continuously operating passenger railway system in the world, past the homes of former Kings & Queens of Mardi Gras, stately mansions and the world-famous, exclusive Garden District. Tour includes a drive through the Lower 9th Ward and the Lakeview area, two of the areas most affected by Hurricane Katrina. The tour will end near your hotel, in the French Quarter.

Following the guided city tour you may take the bus back to the hotel or spend some time on your own in the French Quarter. If you stay in the Quarter, the bus will pick you at 1:45pm to return to the hotel or you may return on your own later.

WWII MUSEUM TOUR

Dedicated in 2000 as The National D-Day Museum and now designated by Congress as the country's official World War II Museum. This remarkable attraction illuminates the American experience during the WWII era with moving personal stories, historic artifacts and powerful interactive displays. From the Normandy Invasion to the sands of Pacific Islands and the “home front”, the museum brings to life the teamwork, optimism, courage and sacrifice of the men and women who won the war and changed the world. You will have the morning to visit the Museum at your own pace. Your tour includes the film “Beyond All Boundaries”, narrated by Tom Hanks, a unique and powerful film about the Greatest Generations journey.

3 CHARMERS OF NEW ORLEANS COMEDY SHOW

The 3 Charmers are amazingly funny comedians that bring the unique taste of New Orleans with its relentless spirit to the stage. Tonight's show features characters with personalities that are unforgettable because they are true New Orleanians and express that with their New Orleans accents on stage in a funny way. New Orleans has had its fair share of obstacles in recent years, from Hurricane Katrina to the BP Oil Spill. Yet, here is a culture that refuses to go away, and holds on tight to preserve its place as one of the most unique cities in the world. This production stages stand-up comedy along with skits that will take you through the trials that New Orleans is having to overcome, and mixes it with the joy of being able to still call their city home. The heart-warming skits feature Ms. Inez Lappicola (played by Becky Allen) who says how she lost everything in the wake of Katrina and her dearest friend Ms. Loyce Cangelosi (Amanda Hebert) who stands by her friends trials through it all. Then the stand-up comedy of Jodi Borrello will share the meaning of the family unit in New Orleans with the type of humor like no other. By the end of the show you will come to love these ladies! Don't miss this evening of laughter presented by 3 women who are proud to share with you why they are never going to leave their hometown.

Golf Outing

The Annual VHPA Golf Outing will take place at the Lakewood Golf Club. A recent multi-million dollar renovation makes Lakewood Golf Club one of the most exciting courses to play with challenging fairways, tees and greens. Nes-

tled among beautiful Louisiana cypress and oaks, Lakewood Golf Club is one of the South's premier golf destinations. The day will begin with a continental breakfast at the club followed by a shotgun start at 8:00am, and end with lunch at the Club House. The fee includes use of practice facility, greens fees, cart, lunch, roundtrip transportation, all taxes, and gratuities. Golf clubs are available for rent for a fee of \$55. Those who sign up to play will be contacted by the golf coordinator, Vic Lent with additional information.

PADDLEWHEEL LUNCH CRUISE

Board your authentic steamboat and take a step back in time, when cotton was king and life was as slow as the current on the Mississippi River. As you cruise on New Orleans' only authentic steamboat, you will be amazed by the sights of one of the world's most active ports and the beautiful view of New Orleans from the comfort of your steamboat. Your narrated 2 hour lunch cruise includes an all-you-can-eat buffet which includes 3 entrees, several side dishes, salads, and an extensive dessert display. After lunch, enjoy the view as you relax to the sounds of the “Dukes of Dixieland” jazz band. Don't miss this wonderful day out on the river, and the chance to spend time with your friends and family.

COMBO TOUR: NEW ORLEANS CITY TOUR & PADDLEWHEEL LUNCH CRUISE

(only offered on Thursday, August 2. 09:30AM – 2:00PM)

Enjoy the city tour as described earlier, following the city tour you will be taken directly to the paddlewheel lunch cruise. You will not return to the hotel between the 2 events and will not have time on your own in the French Quarter.

NEW ORLEANS: MARDI GRAS & MAYHEM TOUR

New Orleans is renowned for Mardi Gras Celebration, in recent years the city has also become known for the disaster of Hurricane Katrina. Today you will learn about both. Since 1699, when Pierre Le Moyne, Sieur d'Iberville celebrated his arrival at the mouth of the Mississippi on Shrove Tuesday, Mardi Gras has been integrally linked to Louisiana's cultural heritage. Your tour begins at Blain Kern's Mardi Gras World which is literally the place where Mardi Gras magic is made. Step inside the giant warehouse filled with the famous Mardi Gras floats and props. Walk among the towering figures of fantasy, and watch the artists of Blaine Kern Studios, the world-renowned masters of Carnival sculpture and float building, at work in their shops. Mardi Gras World is a world of wonders, and the most unique expression of the spirit and culture of this annual Carnival. Then take the short ride to the Presbytere located in Jackson Square. You will see two fascinating exhibits: the Mardi Gras Exhibit and the Katrina Exhibit. Based on original research, the Mardi Gras exhibit traces the emergence of New Orleans' parades and balls to the present-day statewide extravaganza that attracts millions. The vast scope of the Museum's collection appears in three focus galleries complete with favors, souvenirs, invitations, which are displayed in huge cases and “open storage” cabinets. The most dazzling focus gallery - the Crown Jewels Vault - houses an astonishing array of tiaras, scepters, necklaces and other baubles worn by generations of royalty. Katrina & Beyond is a must-see exhibit on the history and science of this awesome storm. Eyewitness accounts, state-of-the-art multimedia displays and iconic objects collected in the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005, provide an unforgettable experience of loss and devastation. This exhibit will inspire you; it is ultimately a celebration of the spirit of service and resilience in the face of catastrophe & Mayhem. Please note: A small portion of this tour is not air conditioned; you will be required to walk 4 blocks from the bus to one of the Museums.

MARDI GRAS WORLD DINNER

Step off the coach, and walk through the stunning Mardi Gras floats and props stored at Blain Kerns Mardi Gras world, you will be awed at the creations which bring Mardi Gras to life. Then step into the Grand Oaks Mansion, New Orleans' only indoor antebellum mansion replica. Enjoy a cocktail among the brick walkways, moss-draped oaks, starry night sky and winding waterway. Make your way up the mansion's grand staircase to the River City Ballroom for dinner. As you sit among some of the floats and props, enjoy a delicious all-you-can-eat buffet and beautiful view of the Mississippi River. After dinner, dance to the sounds of the band, or just relax and enjoy the music. Don't miss this dinner which will be as spectacular as Mardi Gras itself. This will be an unforgettable evening, don't miss it. For those interested in attending the "Dust Off" Movie at the hotel, early bus departures will be available.



FRENCH QUARTER ON YOUR OWN

We will provide round trip transportation from the hotel to the French Quarter. You will have the afternoon



to explore the French Quarter on your own. Try a hurricane, enjoy some Cajun food, shop in one of the voodoo shops, take a walking tour or just walk down Bourbon Street and take in the sites. The bus will depart from the designated location at 5:00pm to return to the hotel. If you wish to stay longer you will be on your own for Transportation back to the hotel.

Inside the hotel events:



8:00 a.m. – 5 p.m. Daily

Mini-reunions and unit TOCs (Tactical Operation Centers) We have set aside a group of business rooms that will be dedicated to specific groups for as little time as one hour all the way to the full length of the reunion. We encourage groups (units, flight classes, etc.) to co-locate their reunions with the VHPA to avoid the time and expense to put on their own reunions. These groups can participate fully in all of the VHPA events while maintaining autonomy. Please check our web site at

<http://www.vhpa.org> for details or to reserve space for your mini-reunion. This is a great way to reconnect with your past.

11:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m. Daily

New this year is the "O Club". This replaces the honor keg room and provides a meeting place to relax and enjoy the company of your old and new friends while partaking in an adult beverage or two from a dedicated bar with reduced prices specifically for the VHPA. This will be in a private area near the center of all activity conveniently co-located with the mini-reunion rooms.

Historical Presentations Forums (HPF) - Jim Fulbrook and Al Roettger have put together an interesting group of historical presentations this year. *See the schedule for specific times and dates:*

HPF#1 - History of the Americal Division - Les Hines will explain how he collects historical information on the Americal Division and makes it available through CDs, DVDs and paper copies. While the Americal Division is an interesting subject on its own, the main value of his presentation is to learn how he has put together the information. Les has the ability to reprint unit albums and has about 60 1:50,000 maps with LZs marked on them that he got from pilots. Using S2 and S3 reports from the National Archives, he has marked battles as well as LZs on these maps. He has acquired an amazing amount of information and provides the perfect model for how to do this type of historical research. The key is to make it available to others and he can teach you how to do that.

HPF#2 - Combat Search and Rescue in Vietnam. Tom Phillips, a career Navy helicopter pilot and Vietnam combat veteran - a Seawolf of HA(L)-3 - will speak, supported by slides, on US combat rescue operations mostly over North Vietnam and Laos. He is coauthor of "Leave No Man Behind: The

Saga of Combat Search and Rescue" which recounts the history of combat SAR from World War I through OEF in 2003. The presentation will deal largely with USAF and USN squadrons assigned the dedicated mission of combat rescue of downed allied aircrew. While the name Jolly Green Giant is relatively well known today, the names Big Mother, Sandy, Pedro, and Clementine and others are less well known but equally deserving of recognition. The full story of Vietnam CSAR has never before been collected and presented and the presentation will deliver material and history not seen in books, film, or even the History Channel.

HPF#3 - The Vietnam Center and Archives - representatives from Texas Tech University will update us on the Vietnam Archives and explain how to preserve your personal Vietnam War experience. The Vietnam Center and Archive collects and preserves the documentary record of the Vietnam War, and supports and encourages research and education regarding all aspects of the American Vietnam Experience. This is the official archives of the VHPA. **HPF#4** - "The Battle of Kontum, 1972 Easter Offensive" - Lt. Col. John G. "Jack" Heslin (U.S. Army, retired), the author, will speak about this battle 40 years after the event. On March 30, 1972, the Army of North Vietnam (NVA) invaded South Vietnam. The battle that had been in the making for years had finally begun. The enemy opened three major fronts. The first was in I Corps where he sent 30,000 troops streaming across the DMZ. The second was in III Corps where the enemy attacked out of his Cambodian sanctuaries and tried to capture the city of An Loc. The third was in II Corps where two NVA divisions tried to capture the provincial capital of Kontum. This book is a collection of personal reflections by friends, family and survivors of the Battle of Kontum as told to Jack Heslin.

HPF#5 - Fallen: But Not Forgotten - Mike Sprayberry (CMOH) will show a documentary about his quest to locate six MIAs. In October 1969, then-Lieutenant Mike Sprayberry received the nation's highest military award, the Congressional Medal of Honor, for his heroic efforts during a harrowing nighttime rescue in the A Shau Valley. But over the four subsequent decades, Sprayberry has remained determined to find the six lost men from this mission and bring them home, returning twice to Vietnam in search of evidence to initiate a formal recovery effort by the U.S. Army. This documentary profiles Sprayberry's most recent trip to Vietnam. Family members of the six men killed in action and their comrades together share the loss and immense frustration but also the undying hope that one day these fallen soldiers may finally come home. This documentary is produced by award-winning CBS News cameraman Norman Lloyd and his foundation, the Commitment and Sacrifice Foundation (www.candsfoundation.org).

2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Wednesday, 1 August 2012

2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Friday, 3 August 2012

Poker Tournament I & II – This is an opportunity to exercise your skill at the table while spending time with your old and new friends in a friendly game of poker. Proceeds benefit our scholarship fund.

8:30 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. Wednesday, 1 August

3 Charmers of New Orleans Comedy Show - The 3 Charmers are amazingly funny comedians that bring the unique taste of New Orleans with its relentless spirit to the stage. The show features characters with personalities that are unforgettable because they are true New Orleanians and express that with their New Orleans accents on stage in a funny way. New Orleans has had its fair share of obstacles in recent years, from Hurricane Katrina to the BP Oil Spill. Yet, here is a culture that refuses to go away, and holds on tight to preserve its place as one of the most unique cities in the world. This production stages stand-up comedy along with skits that will take you through the trials that New Orleans is having to overcome, and mixes it with the joy of being able to still call their city home. The heart-warming skits feature Ms. Inez Lappicola (played by Becky Allen) who says how she lost everything in the wake of Katrina and her dearest friend Ms. Loyce Cangelosi (Amanda Hebert) who stands by her friends trials through it all. Then the stand-up comedy of Jodi Borrello will share the meaning of the family unit in New Orleans with the type of humor like no other. By the end of the show you will come to love these ladies! Don't miss this evening of laughter presented by 3 women who are proud to share and interact with you why they are never going to leave their hometown.

10:45 a.m. – Noon, Thursday, 2 August

Military Writers' Panel Discussion - organized by John Penny our book reviewer and David Adams our magazine editor. We're changing the format from last year's "talk" to pulling together a "panel discussion" of 4 to 5 successful VHPA authors who have just published their own new book. John Penny will lead the discussion concerning how these new authors broke into the writing business, how they found an agent to champion their work and how they selected a publisher to print their book. We'll try to cover all the good things, as well as many of the potential pratfalls these men have encountered in bringing their dreams to life. Thinking of writing a book? Want to share it with others? Want to make some money doing it? Then reserve your seat at this year's Military Writer's panel discussion.

8:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. Thursday, 2 August

Dustoff Legacy Documentary Premiere - by Arrowhead Films, producers of ITSOTB. This documentary will compare Dustoff operations in Afghanistan with Vietnam. Movie director Pat Fries traveled to Afghanistan to film today's version of Dustoff. The Unit he filmed was commanded by Major Patrick Zenk, whose father Bruce (now deceased) served in the original Vietnam War Dustoff unit and inspired his son to follow in his footsteps. It will touch your heart as you see today's helicopter flight crews save the lives of our young soldiers just as we did over 40 years ago. Dustoff dates back to the Korean War and was more fully developed during the Vietnam War, resulting in an unprecedented survival rate for combat injured troops. Today, an American marine or soldier wounded in action has a 95% chance of surviving, due in large part to the rapid response of highly trained helicopter medical evacuation crews.

7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. Friday, 3 August

Gold Star Family Breakfast - organized by Julie Kink. This is an opportunity to recognize our Gold Star families. All are welcome to attend. These families are extremely appreciative of the fact that their loved ones did not die alone and that we care about them and remember them like a brother.

9:00 a.m. – Noon Friday, 3 August

Annual Business Meeting (ABM) – This is when we conduct the official business of the association. On Friday morning you will hear committee chairman give reports on their activities over the past year and you will have the opportunity to vote on administrative issues and elect our next two Executive Council members. This is a good time to learn about the workings of the VHPA behind the scenes and to influence the future direction of our association.

8:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. Friday, 3 August

In the Shadow of the Blade (ITSOTB) 10th Anniversary Celebration of the filming of this award winning documentary. This documentary got its start at the VHPA 2000 reunion in Washington, DC. Many of the "stars" of the show and crew members will be in attendance along with a special "director's cut" of the film. In the Shadow of the Blade follows a combat UH-1 "Huey" helicopter across America to tell the stories of Vietnam veterans and their families. The Huey used in this documentary is now on display in the Smithsonian Museum of American History in Washington, DC. ITSOTB has become a powerful catalyst for emotional healing, reconciliation, and tribute as veterans share, reflect, and demonstrate to the world that one can "hate war, but love the American warrior."

8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. Saturday, 4 August

Memorial Service - organized by secretary/treasurer Tom Payne and VHPA member Gary Rossomme. It is the perfect setting and opportunity to reflect and remember our fallen.

5:45 p.m. – 10:30 p.m. Saturday, 4 August

Closing Banquet - The highlight for most reunion attendees is our closing banquet on Saturday night. This is the only "dress up" occasion of the reunion. It is a celebration of our time together opening with a tribute to our missing men and closing with the change of command from our current president, Mike Law to the new one, John Sorensen after the meal. Entertainment will be a brass dance band playing tunes from our youth. For those who just want to visit, there will be a comfortable place just outside the banquet hall were it will be less noisy during the dance.

*Everyone is welcome to attend any or all of these events.
Also the HPF presenters will have their books, CDs and DVDs
for sale in the vendor room throughout the reunion.*

Check our web site at <http://www.vhpa.org> for the latest and greatest reunion information. Please sign up now so you do not miss out on those events that are capacity restricted.

Gary Roush
webmaster@vhpa.org
National Reunion Committee Chairman

By New Orleans VHPA Chapter President Vic Lent

THE BIG EASY INSIDER

Are you reading this on your way to New Orleans? Maybe you are already back home. Either way, we locals sure hope that while in New Orleans you "Pass a good time". Don't read too much into those words, they just mean you had a good time while you were here.

There are many such phrases you may have heard and didn't quite understand so perhaps I owe you an explanation. Remember the 1956 Rock and Roll song by Shirley and Lee, "Let the Good Times Roll". We say that in Cajun French as "Laisser le bon temps rouler". Or "Laissez les bons temps rouler" if you prefer. It basically means "Let's party!". And Cajun is not uneducated French. Remember, the Cajuns were the ones who had sense enough to leave France. And when pushed out of English speaking Canada, they had sense enough to come to the USA. I am now stepping down off of my soap box.

Were you taken back when a local greeted you with "Where yat"? I'll slow that down to "Where are you at?" (but never, ever, say it that slow). They weren't asking where were you standing, they were asking about your state of mind, much like "What's happening?" or "What's going on?". That's also why many locals proudly call themselves "Yats". And if you have a born and raised in the French Quarter accent like that of my Cajun Bride; that Brooklyn/Boston type accent is called, speaking "Yat". But don't call a Yat a Yat unless they do it first. It's kinda like a Cajun can call a Cajun a "Coonass", but you can't call them one unless they tell you they are one. Got it?

Speaking of accents, trust me, I have never talked to an NOPD Cop who sounded anything like Dennis Quaid in the 1987 film The Big Easy. Nor do they show up on a call eating Beignets. On trust, if you hear "I got to tell you the truth" or the abbreviated "I gots ta tell ya da trute", it doesn't mean all the other stuff the person told you was not the truth, it just means this piece of info is really, really, important. Back to that "Where ya at?"; a good response is "I'm OK, How's ya Mom n Em?". You already figured that one out, right? I got here in the mid 90's and I knew the first day I had chosen the right retirement location and job. A woman I had never seen before in my life who was behind the counter at a convenience store asked "What can I get for you Baby?". Baby, she called me baby! And don't believe that "Darling" or "Dawlin" you hear in the movies either. That is a serious term of affection. If you call someone close to you "Honey" back home, they are "Dawlin" in New Orleans. But even if they are "Hey dummy" back home, they are still "Baby" down here. The other thing that first day was that the boss only asked me one question all day. He said "Hey Vic, you coming by the house for a beer after work?" Between those experiences and meeting/marrying my Cajun Bride here, why would I ever want to leave? WARNING: You too may experience a growing desire to not return home. Or you may find yourself convinced that you have to make another trip to New Orleans to see a bunch of that stuff you missed this time. Is that the Real Estate section of the paper I see in your luggage? The Big Easy, proud to call it home.

And I'm so glad we could share it with you.
-Big Chief Vee

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OFFICIAL SCHEDULE OF EVENTS - THE 29TH ANNUAL REUNION OF THE VHPA

New Orleans, Louisiana, 31 July through 5 August, 2012

See our Website at: www.VHPA.org
for the latest details and to register for the Reunion

Tuesday – July 31st, 2012

11:00am-11:00pm	O Club Opens (Stays open, same hours, throughout Reunion)
8:00am- 10:00pm	Unit Mini-Reunions and Unit TOC's open. They remain open 8:00am – 10:00pm throughout Reunion, see separate schedule
1:00pm- 4:00pm	Reunion T-Shirt distribution open
1:00pm- 5:00pm	Vendor Room Opens
1:00pm- 6:00pm	Welcome & Registration Desk opens
1:00pm- 6:00pm	Tour Desk opens
6:00pm- 8:00pm	Group dinner at Mulate's Cajun Restaurant
7:00pm- 10:00pm	Early Bird Reception

Wednesday – August 1st, 2012

7:30am- 9:00am	Tour Desk open
9:00am- 1:00pm	WWII Museum (only) Tour #1
9:00am- 2:30pm	Combo WWII Museum Tour, Lunch & Victory Belles Show
9:00am- 2:30pm	Combo New Orleans City Tour, Lunch & Victory Belles Show
9:00am- 5:00pm	Vendor Room open
10:00am-5:00pm	Welcome & Registration Desk open
11:30am-2:30pm	Lunch & Victory Belles Show (only)
1:00pm- 5:00pm	Banquet seating desk opens
2:00pm- 5:00pm	Poker Tournament #1
3:00pm- 5:00pm	Tour Desk open
7:00pm- 8:00pm	1st Time Attendee Reception
7:30pm- 10:00pm	Welcome Reception
8:30pm- 10:00pm	3 Charmers of New Orleans Comedy Show

Thursday – August 2nd, 2012

7:00am 2:00pm	Golf Tournament
7:30am 10:00am	Tour Desk open
8:00am 4:00pm	Welcome & Registration Desk open
8:30am 4:30pm	Plantations Tour and Lunch
9:00am 10:30am	HPF #1 - Les Hines, Collecting History
9:00am 11:00am (or 1:30pm)	New Orleans City & French Quarter Tour #2
9:00am 2:00pm	Combo New Orleans City Tour and Lunch Cruise
10:45am Noon	Military Writers' panel discussion
11:00am 2:00pm	Paddlewheel Steamship Lunch Cruise (only)
1:00pm 4:00pm	Banquet seating desk open
1:00pm 5:00pm	Tour Desk open
2:00pm 5:00pm	Mardi Gras & Mayhem Tour #1
2:30pm 4:00pm	HPF #2 - Tom Phillips, USN CSAR
6:00pm 10:00pm	Mardi Gras World Dinner at the Grand Oaks Mansion
8:00pm 10:00pm	Film Premiere – Dustoff Legacy Documentary

Friday – August 3rd, 2012

7:30am- 9:00am	KIA/MIA Gold Star Breakfast
7:30am- 9:30am	Tour Desk open
9:00am- 4:00pm	Welcome & Registration Desk open
9:00am- Noon	Business Meeting
9:30am- 1:00pm	Spouse/Guest Event – Cooking Demo & Lunch
10:30am-4:00pm	Banquet Seating desk open
1:30pm- 3:30pm (or 5:00pm)	New Orleans City & French Quarter Tour #3
1:30pm- 4:30pm	Quilt Outing
1:30pm- 5:00pm	WWII Museum Tour #2
1:30pm- 5:00pm	French Quarter On Your Own
2:00pm- 3:30pm	HPF #3 - The Vietnam Archive
2:00pm- 5:00pm	Poker Tournament #2
3:30pm- 5:00pm	HPF #4 - Mike Sprayberry, Search for MIA's
8:00pm- 10:00pm	In The Shadow Of The Blade movie 10th Anniversary Celebration

Saturday – August 4th, 2012

8:00am- 9:30am	Memorial Service
8:00am- 9:30am	Tour Desk open
9:30am- 1:30pm	Hands-on Cooking Class
9:30am- 1:30pm	WWII Museum Tour #3
10:00am-Noon	HPF #5 - Jack Heslin, Battle of Kontum
10:00am-3:00pm	Welcome & Registration Desk open
10:15am-1:15pm	Mardi Gras & Mayhem Tour #2
10:30am-12:30pm	Banquet Seating desk open
4:00pm- 6:00pm	Banquet Seating desk open
5:45pm- 10:30pm	Closing Banquet & Dance

Reunion Continuing Events:

Unit Mini-Reunions and Unit TOC's are scheduled daily from 8:00AM till 10:00 PM every day of the Reunion – see separate schedule for your individual unit's date, time and room assignment.

The Vendor Room – first opens on Tuesday July 31st at 1:00pm and remains open daily from 9:00am - 5:00pm through Saturday, August 4th

The O Club – first opens on Tuesday July 31st at 11:00am and remains open daily from 11:00am - 11:00pm through Saturday, August 4th

Visit
www.VHPA.org
for the latest
information on
Reunion 2012

VHPA 29th Annual Reunion • New Orleans, LA • July 31 – August 5, 2012

NATIONAL REUNION REGISTRATION FORM

Information and register online at www.vhpa.org or mail completed form to:
VHPA Headquarters, 2100 N. Highway 360, Suite 907, Grand Prairie, TX 75050

Toll Free (800) 505-VHPA (8472)
Email HQ@vhpa.org
Fax (954) 301-0742

Member name: _____ Member No.: _____ Wheelchair? ☐ Yes
Address: _____ Address change? ☐ Yes
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Email address: _____ Telephone: () _____
Wife/guest name: _____ Hometown: _____ 21 or older? ☐ Yes/Wheelchair? ☐ Yes
Guest name: _____ Hometown: _____ 21 or older? ☐ Yes/Wheelchair? ☐ Yes
Guest name: _____ Hometown: _____ 21 or older? ☐ Yes/Wheelchair? ☐ Yes
Guest name: _____ Hometown: _____ 21 or older? ☐ Yes/Wheelchair? ☐ Yes

EVENT	#Attending	Price	Total
Registration through 4/30/12*		@\$40	
Registration 5/1/12 and after*		@\$50	
Registration for under age 21		@\$15	
Group Dinner at Mulate's (July 31)	SOLD OUT	@\$45	SOLD OUT
Early Bird Reception (July 31)		No Charge	
New Orleans City & French Quarter #1 (Aug 1)		@\$45	
WWII Museum (only) Tour#1 (Aug 1)		@\$39	
WWII Museum, Victory Belles & Lunch (Aug 1)	SOLD OUT	@\$79	SOLD OUT
New Orleans, Victory Belles & Lunch (Aug 1)	SOLD OUT	@\$99	SOLD OUT
Victory Belles Show & Lunch (only) (Aug 1)	SOLD OUT	@\$65	SOLD OUT
Poker Tournament #1 (Aug 1)		@\$25	
1st Time Attendee Reception (Aug 1)		No Charge	
Welcome Reception (Aug 1)		No Charge	
3 Charmers Comedy Show (Aug 1)		@\$15	
Golf Tournament with Breakfast & Lunch (Aug 2)		@\$95	
Plantations Tour & Lunch (Aug 2)	SOLD OUT	@\$99	SOLD OUT
New Orleans City & French Quarter #2 (Aug 2)		@\$45	
New Orleans City & Lunch Cruise (Aug 2)	SOLD OUT	@\$75	SOLD OUT
Paddlewheel Lunch Cruise (only) (Aug 2)	SOLD OUT	@\$50	SOLD OUT
Military Writers' Panel Discussion (Aug 2)		No Charge	
Mardi Gras & Mayhem Tour #1 (Aug 2)		@\$55	
Mardi Gras World Dinner (Aug 2)		@\$90	
Dustoff Documentary Premiere (Aug 2)		@\$7	
KIAMI Gold Star Breakfast (Aug 3)		@\$26	
Gold Star Breakfast Sponsorship (Aug 3)		@\$26	
Annual Business Meeting (Aug 3)		No Charge	
Spouse/Guest Cooking Demo & Lunch (Aug 3)		@\$49	
New Orleans City & French Quarter #3 (Aug 3)		@\$45	
Quilters Outing (Aug 3)	SOLD OUT	No Charge	SOLD OUT
WWII Museum (only) Tour #2 (Aug 3)		@\$39	
French Quarter Transportation (only) (Aug 3)		@\$15	
Poker Tournament #2 (Aug 3)		@\$25	
In The Shadow of The Blade Screening (Aug 3)		@\$10	
Memorial Service (Aug 4)		No Charge	
Hands-on Cooking Class (Aug 4)	SOLD OUT	@\$165	SOLD OUT
WWII Museum Tour #3 (Aug 4)		@\$39	
Mardi Gras & Mayhem Tour #2 (Aug 4)		@\$55	
Closing Banquet (Aug 4)		@\$74	
Closing Banquet - Child (Aug 4)		@\$18	
Non-Registered Guest at Banquet (Aug 4)		@\$90	
Total From Sidebars	XXXXX	XXXXX	
VHPA Dues (if not dues current) 1 year		@\$36	
VHPA Dues (if not dues current) 3 years		@\$99	
Life membership (Call HQ for exact amount)			
2012 CD or Paper Directory Fee		@\$10	
Mult. Year CD or Paper Directory Fee (# of Years x \$10)			

GRAND TOTAL \$

HPF event fee \$25.00
One \$25.00 PER FAMILY fee buys access to every one of the five HPF events for 2012. It also buys a DVD of all of last year's sessions.
Total \$

T-Shirts **Total \$**
___S@\$18 ___M@\$18 ___L@\$18
___XL@\$18 ___XXL@\$19 ___XXXL@\$20

Banquet Meal
___Beef ___Fish ___Vegetable

Voluntary Contributions:
VHPA Membership Fund \$
VHPA Scholarship Fund \$
VHPA General Fund \$
Vietnam War Museum \$
VHPA Reunion Sponsorship \$

REFUND POLICY
IMPORTANT: Please review the details of the Refund Policy, including the limited opportunity to purchase a Refund Guaranty available only on a one-time basis at the time of registration, which is posted online at the official VHPA website: www.vhpa.org

Refund Guarantee Fee
(10% of Total Events) \$

OFFICIAL REGISTRATION CANCELLATION DATE IS NOON, CST, 11 JULY 2012.
IMPORTANT: Please review Reunion Refund & Cancellation Policy carefully

CREDIT CARD PAYMENT
MC/Visa #: _____
Exp. Date: _____
Signature: _____
CHECK OR MONEY ORDER PAYMENT
In lieu of a credit card, you can mail a check or money order payable to "VHPA" with form.

* Each person 21 and older must pay the full registration fee, except for banquet-only guests.

VIETNAM HELICOPTER PILOTS ASSOCIATION

2100 N. Highway 360, Suite 907, Grand Prairie, TX 75050

800) 505-VHPA (8472)(voice) • (817) 200-7309(fax) • HQ@vhpa.org (e-mail) • www.vhpa.org (website)

Membership application/change of address

☐ New application

☐ Address change

☐ Directory correction

NAME _____ DATE OF BIRTH: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

HOME PHONE: () _____ WORK PHONE: () _____

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Membership Dues: ☐ Annual \$36 ☐ Three year \$99 ☐ Lifetime (based on applicants' age*) Total: \$ _____

*age 59 and below (\$450), 60-64 (\$350), 65-69 (\$250), 70-74 (\$150), 75-79 (\$100) 80 and above (\$75)

☐ Add \$10 for printed Membership Directory ** ☐ Add \$10 for Membership Directory on CD **

☐ Add _____ for Membership Fund Contribution ☐ Add _____ for Scholarship Fund Contribution

Aviator Subscription only ☐ Annual \$36 ☐ Three Year ☐ Lifetime- see above membership rates*

☐ Charge my MasterCard/Visa C/Card ☐ Personal check/money order enclosed

Credit card No.: _____ Expiration date: _____

SIGNATURE: _____

FLIGHT SCHOOL CLASS: _____ SERVICE BRANCH: _____

COMBAT FLIGHT HOURS: _____ SOCIAL SECURITY NO.: _____

Information about each Vietnam unit:

Dates in units		Unit	Location	Call sign
From:	To:			
1st				
2nd				
3rd				
4th				

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

How did you learn about the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association? Referred by? Was membership a gift? From whom?

*NOTE: Lifetime Membership and/or Subscriber Dues are based on the applicants' age - please provide your date of birth.

** NOTE: Membership Directories are not available to only Aviator subscribers

VIETNAM WAR'S MISSING IN ACTION

Report of VHPA Member Ron Miller visit to JPAC Headquarters in Hawaii

The National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia was incorporated in the District of Columbia on May 28, 1970. Voting membership is comprised of the wives, children, parents, siblings and other close relatives of Americans who were or are listed as Prisoners Of War, Missing In Action, or Killed In Action (body not recovered and returned) during the Vietnam War.

The League originated on the west coast in the late 1960's. The wife of a ranking POW, believing that the U.S. Government's policies of keeping a low profile on the POW/MIA issue and encouraging the families to refrain from publicly discussing the problem were unjustified, initiated a loosely organized movement that evolved into the National League of POW/MIA Families. The League's POW/MIA flag is the only flag ever displayed in the U.S. Capitol Rotunda where it stands as a powerful symbol of our national commitment to the accounting issue. The flag also is flown in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, D.C. Mayor's office, Northern Mariana Islands, Guam and American Samoa.

There is no doubt that advocacy on this issue by the League and its supporters prompted the U.S. Government to form the

Defense Prisoner Of War/ Missing Personnel (PMO) within the Department of Defense (DOD) and also established JPAC, the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command, located in Honolulu, Hawaii. The DOD also established SOP's for all the services that requires them to use all available resources for as long as it takes to account for those who went missing on the battlefield.

I was recently invited to JPAC Headquarters in Hawaii where I received a full briefing on this incredible organization and the dedicated men and women who work there. My interest in the POW/MIA issue began in 1982 and was prompted by an operation in Vietnam in October 1966: I was stationed with the 116th ASHC at Phu Loi when I was given the mission to take 3 HUEY Gunships to Khe Sanh to support SOG operations -- almost all were in Laos and the DMZ. The SOG's A - Team was located in an underground bunker just south of the airstrip and, since this airstrip was unsecured, we had to fly back to Phu Bai each day to spend the night.

The teams were usually comprised of three Senior NCO's and eight Montagnards, the indigenous people who lived in that area. I spent three tours flying helicopters in Vietnam; these men were the bravest of the brave. On October 3, 1966, we inserted a team on a hilltop in Laos utilizing Navy CH-46's, with my three gunships and Air Force fighters capped in support. Standard Operating Procedures required us to move away from the landing site, go into orbit and be ready in case the team was attacked. Within minutes a large force of NVA launched an attack. The Navy Choppers and Air Force fighters received heavy damage while trying to make the extraction. My SOP for the three gun-



Wall Art inside the Command Briefing Room in JPAC Headquarters. It's easy to see what these guys are thinking about as they go on with their work.



Our author and VHPA Member Ron Miller poses in front of the headquarters for the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command, Pacific (JPAC) in Hawaii.

ships was, when in contact, use all available firepower during gun runs and thankfully we were not hit. At some point it became obvious that we could not pick up the team and SOG called off the mission. These courageous fighters are still Missing in Action (MIA).

JPAC team members have been to the site a few times and, as of this date, no remains have been found. They will continue the search until the mission is successful.

JPAC is made up of well over 400 handpicked Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Department of the Navy civilians and contractors. JPAC's Central Identification Laboratory (CIL) is one of the largest and most scientifically diverse forensic laboratories in the world, and is the only accredited skeletal identification laboratory in the United States. Three permanent overseas detachments assist with command and control and in-country support during investigation and recovery operations: Det. One located in Bangkok, Thailand,

Det. Two in Hanoi, Vietnam, Det. three in Vientiane, Laos and a fourth Det. in Hawaii that deploys worldwide as needed.

The core of JPAC's day-to-day operations involves investigating leads that result in accountability and identification of Americans who were killed in action but never brought home. They also place priority on investigating and accounting for those last known alive in captivity or in immediate proximity to capture by hostile forces. I had the honor of being briefed by the Det. in Hanoi in 1993 and was taken to a recovery site in the Hanoi area. I cannot overstate how meticulous and persistent our JPAC teams are in searching for the remains of our comrades. I cannot begin to tell readers how difficult it is to reach some of these sites or how dangerous it can be. Seven team members, including two LTC's, one Maj. and four Senior NCO's from the Army, Air Force and Navy lost their lives in a helicopter crash while searching for missing comrades. And this kind of sacrifice goes back a long ways: an Army Captain on a mission to account for missing servicemen near Saigon was the first to die, as a result of enemy action on 15 Dec. 1973.

As of this date, the dedicated personnel of JPAC and its predecessor organizations have found, excavated, identified and returned 969 of our comrades from the battlefields of SE Asia, though 63 were recovered by U.S. personnel in South Vietnam before the end of the war. There are still 1,674 Americans listed by the Defense POW/Missing Personnel office (DPMO) as missing and unaccounted for from the Vietnam War. On average JPAC's CIL identifies remains of one previously missing American every four days -- so we will reach the 1000 mark in the not too distant future. They are also finding and identifying the remains of many more Americans from other earlier wars, one recently from WWI in France and 17 U.S. Marines from WWII, found on an island in the Pacific.



Local bar in Honolulu, a favorite gathering spot for the members of the JPAC Recovery Teams. The surfboard was used in that famous scene of the movie Apocalypse Now.

As I was leaving JPAC Headquarters, I was shown this quotation, which was etched in glass above one of the laboratories that contained the remains of some of our missing comrades:

**"WE WRITE NO LAST CHAPTERS,
WE CLOSE NO BOOKS, WE PUT AWAY NO FINAL MEM-
ORIES. AN END TO AMERICA'S INVOLVEMENT IN
VIETNAM CANNOT COME BEFORE WE'VE ACHIEVED
THE FULLEST POSSIBLE ACCOUNTING OF THOSE
MISSING IN ACTION".**

~ Ronald Reagan, at the Tomb of the Unknowns, 1984

The citizens and, especially the military of the countries where the U.S. is looking for our missing comrades are astounded that we would still be

Congress has designated September 21st as National POW/MIA Recognition Day, events are scheduled across the Country that need your support.

DEDICATION - SACRIFICE

LTC RENNIE M. CORY, JR, USA
LTC GEORGE D. MARTIN, USA
MAJ CHARLES E. LEWIS, USAF
MSGT STEVEN L. MOSER, USAF
HMC PEDRO J. GONZALES, USN
SFC TOMMY J. MURPHY, USA
TSgt ROBERT M. FLYNN, USAF

Lost in a MI 17 crash on April 7, 2001
in Quang Binh Province,
Socialist Republic of Vietnam

"YOU ARE NOT FORGOTTEN"

Plaque inside JPAC HQ dedicated to their seven members lost in the crash of a Russian Helicopter while on a recovery mission.

expending our resources, time and lives in this on-going search. It is certainly my wish, as well as the never-ending hope of the POW/MIA families that the U.S Government will persevere until the fullest possible accounting is achieved. I agree and think we will never stop looking, because "missing" does not mean "disappeared." It does not mean "lost." The missing are not forgotten "ghosts" on some distant battlefield. They are real American soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines and pilots who are still there, waiting.... waiting to come home to the Country they served.

Ron Miller

Vietnam Veteran, 1966-68-73

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

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Paul E. Bartlett

Vietnam Veteran Helicopter Pilot

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Looking for Military Memorabilia from the Vietnam War



I am seeking Military Memorabilia that pertains to Helicopter Operations in Southeast Asia.

Items of interest include - pocket patches, calling cards, scarves, headgear, personalized helmets & gear, propaganda, flight gear, pins, wings, plaques, paper items, souvenirs, unofficial/novelty items, flags, artwork and even uniforms and "Drinking Suits" of the era!

This includes Aviation, Transportation or Air rescue units.
Army ~ Air Force ~ Navy ~ Marine Corps

I'm very actively pursuing material from Cavalry units - a unit specific Stetson hat, Patches & embroidered scarves, calling cards, a saber carried in country, guidons, plaques and various other unit related material and souvenirs pertaining to flying Cav units.

These items will be used in exhibits throughout the country and as source material for an upcoming book. I will also place photos and descriptions of anything contributed by a VHPA member on the VHPA's on-line museum: website (www.vhpmuseum.org).

Please note that anything contributed will not be re-sold but will remain in this collection for all to enjoy!

I'm happy to purchase your items at a very fair price if they help me complete or expand portions of the collection. You don't have to donate to participate! Many thanks to everyone for your on-going support in this effort!

For full details contact John Conway at.....

Evenings

Toll Free Worldwide (888) 870-5408

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

Vietnam Veteran Huey Helps Transport a Fallen Afghanistan Trooper

On Wednesday May 2, 2012, a Huey with 1970 combat hours in Vietnam helped transport a modern-day, fallen Afghanistan Trooper toward his final resting place.

PFC Michael Metcalf, from Boynton Beach, FL, after being in-country for only three weeks, was killed April 22nd by an IED while rushing to the aid of victims of another IED which had exploded moments before the one that killed him. His body was flown to Dover AFB, Delaware and then on to West Palm Beach, Florida for family services prior to his final burial at Arlington National Cemetery.

The Huey is an "H" model #68-16425, which flew with "B" Company of the 123rd Avn. Bn. (Warlords) while stationed in Chu Lai, Vietnam. 425 has been restored to display condition, placed on a custom trailer, and is used in parades, Veteran events, and is often brought to schools for student education about the conflict in Southeast Asia.

Project 425, as we call our privately funded restoration and display effort, is named for the last three digits of the aircraft's tail number, was used to transport PFC Metcalf's flag draped coffin from the jet which came from Dover to the



funeral home in Boca Raton, Florida 15 miles to the south. MG Wayne P. Jackson, USA (ret) and VHPA member CW2 Bill Jeczalik, both from our restoration "crew" volunteered as pallbearers. Ceremonies at the airport included water canon salute by airport firefighters, Palm Beach County Honor Guard with their bagpipes and drums, the Patriot Guard motorcyclist, and a host of family and friends. The dignified event was covered by local TV news and the Palm Beach Post newspaper.

Mike Carroll, a former Chinook Crewchief with the 147th ASHC "Hillclimbers" and spearhead of

the project said, "Using our Huey as part of a "last ride home" has been in our thoughts since its restoration began six years ago and we are honored to have been a part of this ceremony." Welcome home, brother. Rest in peace.

Bill Jeczalik

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

www.Project425.org



Vietnam Reflection - Through Their Eyes *the hot new site on Facebook!*

To the Membership of the VHPA

As many are aware, I have been working with various members of your organization helping them digitize their Vietnam era slides and photographs. While doing so I almost always find some photos that really needed to be shared with everyone; not only those men's families, but also with the members of the VHPA and also the general public.

But how do we do that without jeopardizing the copyright of these men's slides? This time we found a way that would protect the copyright of the slides, and still be able to share these slides with everyone. We have set up a page on Facebook groups called:

Vietnam Reflections - Through Their Eyes

(<http://www.facebook.com/groups/309674519112045/>)

We have make this an open site, non-organizational, for all services, all ranks, all duties, all units, dependents, children, grandchildren, students, teachers, historians, anyone that is interested in the Real Vietnam, not only Through Their Eyes, but now, also through Their Own Words found on their posts. No Politics, no disrespect allowed, and no Graphic photos or postings. This is a site for Reflection and Reconnection's. We have many members from all services and now we are even getting soldiers from Iraq and Afghanistan visiting us. In just the first six weeks, we now have over 600 members.

Each slide on the new site is credited to the name of the pilot photographer. We also list the dates the man was in-country, when the slide was taken, the unit the pilots was flying with at the time and if available, a short description of action shown in the photo. We close each session with a reminder that all images are copyright protected. I try and load as many as five pictures on this site every day, but we have also new photos posted to the site daily from our viewers. If you are interested in seeing what is up so far, go to Facebook and search for the group. If you want to be notified when new photos and posts are put up, simply "friend" us and you will be the first to know.

*Thank You for Your Time,
Ned Crimmin*

E-Mail: [REDACTED]



The Reunion

.....by Richard Dipboye

I first met Greg and Dave at Ft. Wolters in the U.S. Army flight school in October 1969. I had decided it was time to quit school and join the Army. I had already had a tour in Vietnam in the Marines, but was tired of school and needed to do something different. I had always wanted to fly and finally had the time and money to get my Private Airplane license. Joining the Army to go to flight school seemed like the thing to do if I wanted to keep on flying. I was still in the Marine reserves, but knew I would never be able to fly for them without a college degree.

All through flight school, Ft. Wolters and Ft. Rucker, Greg, Dave, and myself spent most of our off time together. We had a couple of weeks off after Ft. Wolters, so we all met at my house in California where we could drive to Ft. Rucker together. It was a good experience for all, as none of us was very familiar with the south. Greg was from Washington, and Dave was from Utah, and I was a California native. After our training finished in August of 1970, as new Army Aviators and Warrant Officers, we were ready for Vietnam. Dave and I went on to Ft. Sam Houston for Medevac training, and Greg went directly to Vietnam. We all finally met up again once we got in country. I went to the Air Ambulance Platoon, 326th Medical Battalion, 101st Airborne at Camp Eagle. Dave went to Phu Bai Dustoff, and Greg went 8th R-R Co. We were all in the Hue-Phu Bai area together.

Dave and I had our share of hair-raising moments, but Greg, well, he had a pretty sedentary job. He wanted more so he volunteered for a transfer to the 2/17th Cavalry of the 101st, to fly the OH 6, the "Loach". It was definitely a job for one who wanted to see a lot of action. He got his wish when we all got involved in an operation called, "Operation Lam Son 719", an across the border mission in support of the Vietnamese Army (ARVN) in Laos.

Then I got a shock. We all read the "Stars and Stripes", the official military newspaper, and looked forward to reading about the news from the states and from in country. One day in March 1971, there was a feature story, "Diary of a Chopper Pilot". It was written by a helicopter pilot from 2/17 Cav. And about half way through the story he described how, "Crandall plows his loach into the side of a hill in Laos". I was in total shock, I prayed this couldn't be Greg, but it was. He was listed as a MIA at first, then as a KIA, but his remains were not recovered until sometime in the 80's by the U.S. recovery team. As soon as we got together Dave and I had a few beers in Greg's honor and reminisced about all the good times we had.

Over the years I lost track of Dave, we parted ways at Ft. Lewis. I stayed in the

Army and made a career of it. Dave got out and did some traveling...he visited me once in Germany in 1972 or 1973 but I never saw him again.

I have visited the Vietnam Memorial, the "Wall", several times in the last few years and always pause to reflect on my fallen comrades. I have friends on the Wall from both the Marines, and Eagle Dustoff. It is always a very solemn occasion and I am never able to leave there without wiping a few tears from my eyes. But, I am ashamed to say, I had never looked for Greg's name, I guess I had forgotten him.

Then came the 2000 VHPA reunion inn D.C. I will never forget this

reunion for two reasons. One is the fact that the 4th in D.C. is always a great place to be with probably one of the greatest fireworks displays in the country. The second is that they also have one the greatest parades in the country. We were invited to march in the parade down Constitution Ave., they even waived the entry size rules as we were easily over 1500 strong when you added in our wives, children and even towed helicopters leading and trailing. People were coming out onto the street shaking our hands, others were saluting from the curbs. I will never forget the

Vietnamese running out into the street to thank us. And the Marine General I saluted with a, "Semper Parati!" and the return salute with a strong, "Semper Parati!". We finally got our welcome home parade!

That night at the banquet we had a quiet ceremony to remember our fallen comrades, to reflect and to offer a silent prayer to our lost friends. This year was a little different because at each place setting around the table, slips of paper were laid with the name of a pilot who had been killed in action in Vietnam. When the MC asked everyone to pick up their piece of paper and read the name, all I could think of, was, "Oh, My God!" I was almost crying with tears running down my cheeks. I was speechless...I could barely whisper his name. My slip of paper said, "Gregory Stephen Crandall". The next morning I made another trip to the Wall, I had to pay my last respects to Greg along with a prayer to God asking him to never let me forget Greg again.

Richard Dipboye

Air Amb Plt, 326th Med. Bn. 101st Abn.

Dustoff 91 - 1970-71

E-Mail: [REDACTED]



INTERESTED IN ADVERTISING IN THE VHPA AVIATOR?

The Official Newsletter of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association

Prices range from \$135.00 for a 1/4 Page to \$475.00 for a full-page, Black/White ad; Color Ad rates are slightly higher. New ad set-ups are free & other price discounts are available. Full Details available at: Aviator@VHPA.org or HPilot1963@aol.com

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the Editor of the VHPA Aviator

Concerning Page 30 in the last issue of The Aviator, Boland for Congress

Come on EC, wake up! The VHPA is what it is today because the News Letter Policy has ALWAYS been "No Politics, in any way, shape, or form"! The article appearing in the May/June 2012 Issue of the "Aviator" regarding a member's running for Congress DOES NOT adhere to that policy! VHPA Member Boland's run for Congress, while admirable, is not information that should appear in the "Aviator"! It has nothing to do with the charter of this fine organization and I find the "offer to donate to his campaign" especially offensive!

The leadership of the VHPA has faced this issue before and has always staunchly supported the Membership edict to keep all aspects of the VHPA free of politics. I hope the appearance of this article is not an indication of the EC's desire to change an excellent membership mandate that has meant so much to the well being and continue growth of the VHPA.

Greg Ross

Past President, Founder of the VHPA

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

Editor's Note: Greg's E-mail was just the first of the several complaints we received about that "VHPAers in the news" article that ran in this last issue. The EC has responded on page 2 of this issue for all the Members to read, and I'll abide by it.

To the Editor of the VHPA Aviator,

I read each newsletter as it comes in. About two months ago, I noticed an ad by Ned Crimmin to scan and digitize Vietnam slides, and if necessary, to restore/enhance the slides. I looked at my slides, most of which I hadn't seen in over 40 years, and started sorting them for mailing to Ned. Wow! What an experience - it took me back to that period of time, and I had slides of most of the guys I flew with. There were slides of fire-bases, combat assaults, and choppers, choppers and more choppers!

Anyway, the reason I wrote is to give the highest recommendation on the work that Ned Crimmin produces. I got mine back this week and the results are amazing. Ned tells me that he has worked on close to 10 of us vets so far, and each seems to have some beautifully unique slides. Ned wants to collect the best of the best and share/donate them to VHPA. I'm willing to share mine and I hope you'll make the same decision when you send him yours.

Peter Rzeminski

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

Editor's note: See full details of Ned's new website on page 15 of this issue

To the Members of the VHPA

I thought I would take some of your time to address a problem I'm seeing more and more of. As you guys start to retire, move on and/or worse yet pass on I want to talk to you about what is happening to all of your "stuff" that you might have kept from Vietnam.

As a known buyer of Vietnam Memorabilia, I maintain a lot of connections with people in the business and you won't believe all the calls I getting concerning your "stuff" that's now starting to show up in yard/garage sales, at thrift stores and even at full blown surplus stores and collectable dealers. What worries me is that once it has left its primary source (you), all the history of the piece disappears as someone usually separates the name from what's being disposed of. Clothing almost always has the name tags stripped off, which is not only physically destructive but it negates a lot of the historical value of the piece.

In other words, what once was the flight suit or the helmet bag that once belonged to a Vietnam pilot becomes just a thing to be bargained for once the owner's identity is lost. I know this is a silly thing for me, a grown man to worry about, but it's what I do!

John Conway

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

Editor's note: See John's paid ad on page 13 for details of his offer to buy your memorabilia.

An open letter to Howard Horton, author of last issue's story about his flight class's "Crittter"

I just read the story about your stay at Rucker in January '68 and the problems you had with your barracks "Crittter". And not to go one up on you but...

As the a member of the first of two flight classes to "enjoy" a winter at Fort Rucker (Class 54K), I can recall damn near freezing to death in those barracks where the wind blew through cracks in the walls that were large enough to stick your fist through. First they held us over at Gary Air Force base in San Marcos, Texas while

they were changing Camp Rucker to Fort Rucker and it was in the dead of winter before we were finally allowed to travel. It was so cold there that we'd assemble at the Officer's club in heavy Air Force WW II bomber fleece and drinking Hot Rums in gloved hands.

There were no enlisted to light or keep the barrack's coal furnaces going, we had to do it ourselves or freeze to death. I'll never forget the night that I stuck my head into my neighbor's (Major Waller, Signal Corps) room one evening to find him completely clothed in the old fleece bomber gear, with earmuffs and a scarf, under two more blankets, with his cot pulled over under the one 80 watt bulb hanging from the ceiling while he was trying to obtain what little warmth that it emitted! Good times!

Regards,

C. C. Goode

Col (Ret.), USAR, Viking 6

E-mail: [REDACTED]

To the Editor of the VHPA

The article by Dennis DeWine in the last issue about an IFR flight into Da Nang brought back some memories, not all of them pleasant. As Dennis notes, the Army had few pilots qualified to fly IMC and there was little priority given to training instrument pilots in those days. Also, our navigation systems were often primitive, both in the aircraft and on the ground.

In many instances we had to rely on Marine and Air Force controllers and we were not high on their priority list. During the first days of Tet 1968, I carried a shot-up UH-1 to Da Nang from Northern I Corps, arriving just at dusk. We immediately loaded up a _ ton truck and several troops for the return flight to Phu Bai. We made contact with Phu Bai radar and began the vectors for the approach into the Marine base. Then, they were contacted by Marine aircraft and we became the stepchild. After being vectored out over the South China Sea, we lost communications with the controllers.

We knew the ceiling was around 500 feet and visibility was about 1 mile and we were lost and low on fuel. The 1st Cav Base at Camp Evans had set up a GCA a couple of days before and we contacted them on FM. They were unable to locate us and told us to fly west while they continued searching. We finally picked up the NDB which had also been installed within the last few days and radar finally identified us. We made an ASR approach and when we broke out over the garbage dump, we turned on the landing and search lights to find our way to a parking spot. Finding a tent with some extra cots, we settled in for the night. A few hours later, the North Vietnamese treated us to a mortar attack.

The next morning, I managed to meet our brand new battalion commander. His greeting was not to congratulate us for being alive but to harangue me for turning on my landing light, saying I had caused the mortar attack. My response was to tell him that when I lost an aircraft it would be because of a mortar attack and not because I am too stupid to use a landing light to avoid crashing.

From that moment on, he and I were on good terms and I have good thoughts about him to this day. I have often thought about the "what ifs" of this mission. What if John Fox (a classmate from flight school) had not been my co-pilot? What if the beacon at Camp Evans had been inoperative? And, most of all, what if the Army radar controllers had not been the best in the world? If anyone would like to see what life was like for Chinook pilots during the period Feb-May 1968, "Google" U.S. Army Aviation Digest July 1969 and read the article "Chinooks IFR (Cav Style)".

Carl L. Hess

Flight Class 63-3WA, flew with B Co, 228th ASHB, 67-68 and 114th Avn. Co, 64-65.

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

To the Members of the VHPA,

I happened upon your web site by accident and I wanted to tell you my story. I was drafted into the Army and sent to Vietnam in 1970. I served with the 5th Division in Quang Tri and 101st Div. in Phu Bai. My MOS was 11C/11B, a simple infantryman, I ended up serving over 14 months in Vietnam.

I just wanted you all to know that If it weren't for you pilots, there is a good chance I wouldn't be here today. And while I was never wounded, I can say with certainty that there were times the sound of an incoming 'slick' was the sweetest sound I ever heard!

I always say THANKS when I meet you in person,
today I want to say Thanks to all that read this.

Norman L. Goodin

E-mail: [REDACTED]



"Looking For"

Looking For info on Arthur John (Jack) Ulm Jr.

My brother, Arthur John Ulm Jr. (Jack) retired as a CW4 around 1970 shortly after serving two tours in Vietnam as a helicopter pilot. I'm now looking for any army buddies of Jack that might be able to share some stories with Jack's son, Arthur John Ulm III and his family.

Although I am Jack's brother and we both serviced in the Army in Vietnam at about the same time (I served three plus tours from 3/64 thru 6/67), Jack was about 16 years older than I and I hardly knew him while I was growing up. Here's hoping that some of his Army buddies can provide the knowledge about Jack's Vietnam and Army career that I can't.

*Thanks for your time,
David Ulm*

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

Looking for men with knowledge of service dogs use in Vietnam

I have now retired as an international geologist, and live in Canada. Since I graduated from university in the mid-seventies, I have heard many stories of men and their dogs performing feats of bravery in Vietnam with their dogs being trained to identify "Trip Wire" on enemy trails in the jungle. I have also heard countless stories of how these dogs have saved the lives of many service men and I am now writing a book about the several unusual feats of bravery performed by these dogs.

The second reason I am writing is to search out any service men who might have already gathered this information regarding instructors or dog trainers in Vietnam and/or anyone who may be available for me to contact. My interest lies in dog training, primarily in "Search and Rescue" and "Man-trailing" with Bloodhounds. Special recognition will be given to those who contribute stories for this book.

Although I did not fly with any of you pilots in Viet Nam, a lot of my friends did. I personally have been on eight trips to Viet Nam with my company searching for precious metals, mostly gold, from 1985-2004. I currently along the East slopes of the Rocky Mountains, a few miles East of Jasper, CANADA and look forward to hearing from you.

Maurice Martin

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

Looking For information on Lester Haverfield

I hope that you can help me. I am looking for anyone that may have served with, or that remembers my father, Lester Haverfield. He served two tours in Vietnam as a Helicopter Pilot and has been gone for many years. But now I am working on a memory book for my two boys and would love to include some comments from anyone that may have known him.

*Thank you for your time,
Stacy Haverfield Amos*

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Looking For information about SP4 Robert Thomas Callan.

I am looking for any information on my cousin, SP4 Robert Thomas Callan. Robert died of wounds from hostile fire on 16 December 1970 while flying as a door gunner with the Black Widows, C Company, 101st Avn Bn, 101st Airborne Division. Robert's information can be found on Panel 06W Line 124 of the Vietnam Memorial Wall.

We, the family, would appreciate any information about Robert that anyone may provide.

VHPA Member Peter W Barber
Email: [REDACTED]

Looking For the pilot of a Huey that crashed during the battle for Hill 875 in November of 1967.

I was with the 1st of the 12th Inf. 4th ID, during the battle of hill 875 in November of 1967. I am now looking for the pilot of a Huey that went down, I believe the day before Thanksgiving.

He came into a one-chopper LZ too fast and clipped the tall trees and crashed. The gunners got out along with the co-pilot but the pilot was pinned

in the wreckage. Myself and another fellow soldier tore the door off the hinges and got him to safety before the aircraft burst into flames.

I have searched for this man before and really would like to settle this in my mind, I am not sure if he survived that crash or not. There were 2 crashes that day and this one was on the south side of the hill. Any help would be greatly appreciated.

*Thank you,
Norm Goodin*

E-mail is [REDACTED]

Looking for Richard L. Allaire and Johnny E. Hayes.

If you have contact information on either of these two men, please contact Gary Roush at: roush@vhpa.org

We have some information for them. Thanks.

Looking For Cpt. James Cooper Wright

Jim Wright served with the 62d Aviation Company in Phu Bai in 1968-69. He ETS'd from the Army in 1972 and was last known to be in San Antonio, TX area in 1977. The VHPA Directory show a most recent address in Albuquerque, NM, but Jim is not there.

Jim and I flew together often, when he was not immersed in his "RLO" duties as Unit Supply Officer. Have been searching for my old stick buddy, and tent mate for several years. Help!!!

*Thank You!!
Robert (Bob) Lyle
Coachman 1-9*

62d Aviation Company Jul68-Jul69

E-mail: [REDACTED]



The Cub Inn is a 5,000-square-foot log cabin that offers unique charm that blends our love of aviation with the great outdoors. Located in California's Sierra Nevada mountains just 25 miles from Yosemite National Park, our five guest rooms sleep either two or four people, and they all feature a private bath.

Our guests start each day with a hearty country breakfast and are also invited to join us in the living room each evening to enjoy a glass of wine and a light snack. The Cub Inn is the life-long dream of husband and wife team, Piper Cub owner and pilot Charleen Beam and VHPA Life Member Joe Riley.

Full details and booking information are available on our website:

TheCubInn.com

Or call us at: 209-962-0403
(land line) to book.



WELCOME TO THE VHPA!

Look the list over and if you recognize anyone, give them a call, drop them a line or send them an e-mail welcoming them into our Association. Full contact information is available either on-line in the Member Services section of our website, or through our staff at HQ by calling 1-800-505-VHPA.

Line 1, Last, first, MI and/or nickname of new member; double asterisks (**) ID new life members

Line 2, his current city and state, branch of service

Line 3 -5 , his (Flight) Class and Vietnam (VN) Unit(s) served with, if that info is available

We welcome 20 new Members to our Association in this issue. All have all joined the VHPA during the period from 06 April 2012 through 25 May 2012.

Anastasio, Michael A
Fairfax, Virginia, US Army
Flight Class (s): 69-30
Vietnam Unit(s) not provided

Besst, John V.
Lady Lake, Florida, US Army
Flight Class (s): 70-44
134 AHC in 71; 3 AVN 52 CAB in 72; 201 CAC in 72

Collins, Lacy H.
Newberry, South Carolina, US Army
Flight Class (s): 70-40 70-46
Vietnam Unit(s): 120 AHC in 71-72; 59 AVN in 72-73

Craddock, Ollie C 'Sunny'
Newton, Alabama, US Army
Flight Class (s): 64-3
Vietnam Unit(s): B/1 AVN 1 INF in 67-68; 62 CAC in 72-73

Esterak, David R. **
Boyce, Louisiana, US Army
Flight Class (s): 67-1 66-23
Vietnam Unit(s): A/227 AVN 1 CAV in 67-68; OH-58 NETT in 70-71

Foster, Michael W. 'CRAB'
Christiansted, Virgin Islands. US Army
Flight Class (s): 69-11
Vietnam Unit(s) not provided

Garrett, Howard L. **
Rowlett, Texas, US Army
Flight Class (s): 68-12 68-18
Vietnam Unit(s): D/3/5 CAV in 68-69; ACT/11 ACR in 71-72

Hamblett, Victor L.
Salem, Virginia, US Army
Flight Class (s): 67-15
Vietnam Unit(s): D/1/1 CAV in 67-69; 17 AHC

Hurley, John E.
Marshall, Texas, US Army
Flight Class (s): 71-30
Vietnam Unit(s) not provided

Malcom, Ben S **
Fayetteville, Georgia, US Army
Flight Class (s): 71-10
Vietnam Unit(s) not provided

Nestor, Mark L.
Gloucester, Massachusetts, US Army
Flight Class (s): 69-37
A/4 AVN 4 INF in 69-70

Pierce, James 'Jim' **
Dahlonega, Georgia, US Army
Flight Class (s): 128 AHC in 65-66
Vietnam Unit(s) not provided

Root, Stephen D. 'Steve'
McPherson, Kansas, US Army
Flight Class (s): 68-503 68-1
Vietnam Unit(s): 238 AWC in 69-70

Russ, Brian J. **
Sarasota, Florida, US Army
Flight Class (s): 69-43 69-39
Vietnam Unit(s): C/2/20 ARA 1 CAV in 70; A/2/20 ARA 1 CAV in 70-71; F/79 AFA 1 CAV in 71

Singleary, Frederick 'Fred S.'
Stafford, Virginia, US Army
Flight Class (s) not provided
Vietnam Unit(s): 1 AVN CO in 72; 59 CAC in 72-73

Stewart, Albert R.
Daleville, Alabama, US Army
Flight Class (s): 66-10 67-6
Vietnam Unit(s): 229 AHB 1 CAV in 71-72

Veal, Monte Ray
Mars Hill, North Carolina, US Army
Flight Class (s): 63-4
Vietnam Unit(s): 128 AHC in 69

Vickery, Donald "Don" "Vick"
Sautee Nacoochee, Georgia, US Army
Flight Class (s): 66-10 66-8
Vietnam Unit(s): A/227 AHB 1 CAV in 66-67; D/3/5 CAV 5 INF in 67; TM 4 DET 7 USAF ADV in 69-70

Vyterna, Charles M. 'Tuna'
Milan, New York, US Air Force
Flight Class (s): 71-24AF 71-22
Vietnam Unit(s): 20 SOS 14 ACW in 70; 40 ARRS in 72-75; 21 SOS 14 ACW in 75

Watson, Cyril J.
Chicago, Illinois, US Army
Flight Class (s): 68-14 68-22
Vietnam Unit(s): HHC 1 BDE 5 INF DIV in 68-69

UPCOMING REUNIONS

VETERANS OF AIR LOGISTICS

31 July - 4 August, VHPA reunion in New Orleans, LA
POC: Kenny Bunn: [REDACTED] or go to: VHPA.org

NATIONAL REUNION OF THE DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS SOCIETY

19-23 August, Seattle Marriott Airport Hotel, SeaTac, WA
POC: Reunion BRAT [REDACTED] or go to: www.dfcsociety.net

B TROOP 7/17TH CAV & ALL RUTHLESS RIDERS

3-7 September, San Antonio, TX
POC(s) - Buddy Harp: [REDACTED]
or [REDACTED]
Rich Hefferman: [REDACTED]
or [REDACTED]
Johnnie Griffiths: [REDACTED]
or [REDACTED]
www.b.717.homestead.com

VINH LONG OUTLAWS ASSOCIATION

62d Avn Co; Co A, 502d Avn Bn; 175 AHC
and all attached units.
September 6 -10, 2012, Savannah, GA.
POC: Bob Koonce, [REDACTED]
www.vinhlongoutlaws.com

FLORIDA CHAPTER OF THE VHPA

20th Annual Reunion - September 20-23, 2012
The Plantation Inn in Crystal River, Florida
Chapter members: Download Registration Form at www.vhpaf.org
Information: Contact Gary Harrell, [REDACTED]
(or) E-Mail: [REDACTED]

132ND "HERCULES" AND THE 178TH "BOXCARS"

26 - 30 September 2012, Williamsburg, Virginia
POC - John Engle: [REDACTED]

D TROOP, 1/1 CAVALRY

March 7 thru March 9, Orlando, Florida
POC - Keith Aakre, E-Mail: [REDACTED]

Want to see your Reunion publicized here?
Send details to: Aviator@VHPA.org

I'm a VHPA Kid!



Captain Jennifer Anderson takes command



(from l to r) Linda Fortenberry, daughter Amanda Mathews, Cpt. Jennifer Anderson, CW2 Ben Anderson, Dick Fortenberry



Dick Fortenberry poses with his daughter Jennifer after the Change of Command



Captain Jennifer Anderson receives the Company Guidon

Captain Jennifer Anderson takes command of Bravo Co., 4th Aviation Battalion, 3rd Infantry Division at Hunter AAF, Fort Stewart, Georgia. Jennifer's new callsign is Blackheart 6. Jennifer's twin sister, Amanda Mathews recently completed her 3rd Blackhawk combat deployment.

These photos are sent to us by Member Richard Fortenberry. Dick flew under the Cobra callsign with the gun platoon of the 114th Aviation Company out of Vinh Long, Vietnam. He later flew with the 82nd Airborne Division Aviation Battalion at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

Richard is quite an accomplished sport parachute enthusiast; he was one of the 19 original men who formed the Golden Knights back in 1960 and he went on to win the World Championship in sport parachuting in 1962 for which he was featured on the front of Sports Illustrated magazine. After leaving the service Dick spent 25 years as a corporate pilot retiring in 1998. He and his wife now live in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee. Besides being commission officers, Army Aviators and helicopter pilots, both of their daughters are also sky divers.

Editor's Note: I'll bet it has been a long time since anyone has seen an "I'm a VHPA Kid" button. I believe the one here was given to my kids when we all attended the Reunion in Santa Clara, California back in 1996. We had a lot of members bring their children to the Reunions back in those days, Linda and I did it so often that our kids made many friends they looked forward to seeing every year, sort of like their Dad's did. I'll never forget returning from an ABM one year and being met at the door by both of them asking "where are we going next year for vacation?", something back then that was only disclosed one year at a time, and only at the ABM. Now I see those same kids again joining their parents at a Reunion, but this time they bring along their own families so their kids can spend some time with their grandparents, and that's a great thing about the VHPA.

But kids grow up and move on, I seriously doubt that many of us any longer have children that qualify as "kids", in fact the "I'm a VHPA Kid

button" was probably a little obsolescent when it came out. But I love that button and keep it on my desk because it brings me back to some great family vacations.

And like many of you, I'm really proud of what my children have done on their own. I must receive 6-8 submissions a year asking that I run a story about a member's kid and what they have accomplished. And I am really torn on whether to print them in the Aviator or not, for after all, this newsletter is about us, the men who flew helicopters during the Vietnam War.

On the other hand I love the stories you send me concerning what your kids have accomplished on their own so I thought I would start this recurring page that highlights our "VHPA Kids". I'll keep it to a full page at the most so if you send me something, don't be disappointed if it doesn't immediately appear. Like a lot of the stories I have sent me, they often have to wait an issue or two before I can fit them into the magazine.

Spur 38 Is Back



Cobra 095 at a hover prior to a early test flight in the re-certification process. Serving front seat pilot duties that day was Rick Clemens, owner of the Cactus Air Force.



Cobra 095 finally arrives as part of The Cactus Air Force. Restoration would continue for another six years.



Cobra 095 as she appeared in 2010, slowly becoming to look like her old self.



Our author, Mike Billow in Vietnam with his fellow Silver Spurs. Taken in 1970 at Ouan Loi, Vietnam.
(L to R) Paul Bennett, Scouts; Mike Billow, Guns; Tommy White, Scouts and Dave Tela, Guns

Eat your hearts out all my fellow Spurs and indeed, all those other old Cobra pilots out there. I wanted to share this short story about being able to be on the ground floor of a 5-year restoration project of an AH-1G Cobra!

Rick Clemens, HMFIC of the "Cactus Airforce", in Carson City Nevada, who, besides being an avid aviation warbird collector and aviator, thankfully hasn't quit his day job as President of Specline Manufacturing (someone has to pay the bills, I damn sure can't!). Well somehow Rick found the time to scour the internet for another interesting aircraft projects and initially, like most fixed wing pilots, he started thinking about obtaining another "starch-wing" airplane. But unlike most military aircraft collectors, Rick was fascinated with the Vietnam Era efforts of Army Aviation and he really wanted to pick up a helicopter to add to his stable of amazing air machines. And, he finally decided to pick the right Vietnam Warbird, the AH-1 Cobra.

The best history of the aircraft (70-15945) that we can reconstruct so far is that she was initially stationed at Ft. Campbell in the 1980's and eventually was last made a part of the Cobra inventory for the Texas Army National Guard down in Austin. She was initially produced as a "G" model but was quickly moved through the "Q" and "S" conversion mod's and was finally ended up as an "F" model. Gary Roush, the King of all the data in the VHPA's database told us our Cobra was never assigned to a Vietnam unit and although that was disappointing, I took heart in knowing that we were one day getting her back in the air. After decommissioning, the Cobra ended up in Florida with an enthusiast who couldn't do much with her and he finally sold her to Rick.

I've known of Rick's passion for aircraft for some time and when he found out that I was in the area, he called to ask what I thought about joining their restoration project as their Pilot. Obviously I was ecstatic about the prospect and told him that I would immediately come down to his hangar in Carson City (CXP) and take a look. But when I first saw 70-15945, although I recognized the basic Cobra airframe, I honestly doubted she would ever fly again.

She was in really rough shape and was missing a lot of very essential things when I saw her that day - like an engine, the transmission and the main rotor blades plus about a million other parts and pieces. But Rick is a very tenacious guy and armed with a crew of aircraft mechanics under the direction of our FAA certified Aircraft Inspector, Tim Brune, they have sunk their hearts into this projects and have once again added to their terrific track record of turning one man's junk into an awesomely beautiful object of flying art! Rick, through his amazing and unwavering late-night internet capabilities, found major components and spare parts from all over the world. The transmission came from the Netherlands and a sundry of other locations, people and manufacturers supplied the rest of the missing components. Slowly the parts came together and after over five years of hard work, we were finally getting ready to fly. I initially thought that the color scheme that Rick picked was somewhat strange to my "OD" green background until I learned that it is historically accurate to the first "G" models delivered to an Alaskan Cobra unit and is almost never seen in today's remaining Cobra fleet.



Cobra 095 resplendent in the color scheme of the AH-1 Cobra, the "Arctic" Company, Ft. Richardson.

in the Saddle

by Mike Billow

I am very fortunate to have continued flying after Vietnam and my tour with A Troop, 3/17th Cav. I now have over 15,000 hours in military fixed-wing, military helicopter and civilian commercial aircraft. I ended up with 40 years of combined Active and National Guard service and I "retired" in 2009 as a CW5. The last time I flew a Cobra was in 2006 for the movies "Courage Under Fire" and Con-Air (my obligatory Andy Warhol's "15 minutes of fame"). But when I strapped into Rick's Cobra to run it up for its first instrument checks, I was transformed - my 60 year old body, with its 19 year old mind was right back in Quan Loi! It is truly an amazing feeling and experience.

The initial engine start was flawless, no leaks or seeps, the system checks were nominal and we quickly followed up with the initial hover and hover test flight. Working closely with the FAA FSDO in Reno we were granted certification as "Experimental/Exhibition" aircraft allowing us to start the required series of re-certification test flights. Once finished, we proudly took 459 to last year's Reno Air Races and displayed her in their extensive "Heritage Classic Warbirds" section where we had the pleasure of introducing her to the 250,000 spectators in attendance.

That was a day of another special significance because my front seat was occupied by my longtime, great friend and former Cobra classmate from Class 70-18, C Troop 3/17th Cav's "Charlie Horse 34" and fellow VHPA member Russ Whipple. Russ and I have flown commercially over the years, from mineral exploration to tuna boats but it was the first time together in a Cobra since we were stationed with A Troop 1/9th Cav at Ft. Hood in 1971. What a hoot for both of us!

Colors of the first Alaska unit to Knights" of the 120th Aviation chardson, Alaska

With Cactus Aviation, I am looking forward to having the Cobra in attendance at several air shows this summer and the aircraft will be featured in the #42 edition, May/June 2012 publication of Warbird Digest Magazine. A full story of the

restoration project and some really nice photography will be published so make sure you pick up a copy as soon as they are available.

My good buddy and VHPA member John Stoley looked back through his flight records and found that he had once flown 945 with the TXARNG; a small community in a small world! If any of you out there have ever encountered 70-15945 in your career and can us help "fill in the blanks", I would appreciate hearing from you. And finally, thanks for allowing me to share this great experience with you, my brothers in arms! I certainly owe all of you for being an essential part of my world and will be thinking about all of you, and all of my fellow Spurs while I'm out "yanking and banking" for all of us!

Best Regards,

Mike Billow
Spur 38, CW5, AV (Ret)

E-mail: [REDACTED]



Mike Billow, Spur 38, poses beside the cockpit of Cobra 095



Russ Whipple and fellow flight school classmate, Mike Billow



Tom Brune, Crew Chief for the Cactus Air Force head of 095's Certification Team shares a moment with Mike before a test flight.

**More information on
Rick's Warbird Collection
may be found at:**

www.cactusairforce.com

**Here's a link to the local
TV's Station's news story
about the project:**

<http://vimeo.com/35780619>

Credit for our Cover Photo of 70-15945 In Flight goes to Jim Raeder of Warbird Digest, ©reserved and permission granted to run in the Aviator. Jim also provided the great pictures of Mike standing beside the cockpit of 945 and the picture of the hover flight test by Mike and the aircraft's owner, Rick Clemens.

Credit for the "Charlie Horse 34 & Spur 38" photo along with the picture of Mike and the rebuild team leader Tom Brune goes to Gene Murrieta©, Reno NV.

The picture showing 945 flying over the riverbed is printed courtesy of Skip Robertson, photographer for "Vertical" magazine.

(Much to the Editor's consternation...)

The Question of whether Mother Goose was a B or a C model continues....

As a former member of the 191st Assault Helicopter Company who had the privilege of flying Bell Helicopter 66-15107 a UH-1C Model Huey Gunship named Mother Goose in combat...I was particularly interested in the article written by Bill Zierdt entitled "MOTHER GOOSE: A HIM OR A HER?" that was published in the May/June 2012 Issue of the VHPA AVIATOR.

It is my understanding that the position taken by Mr. Zierdt is essentially that because Mother Goose had a stabilizer bar, she could not have been a true C Model Huey Gunship, and therefore the Goose must have been, as Mr. Zierdt put it, "one of the anomalies politely referred to in the historical literature as a compound B/C model".

During my first tour in Vietnam, I was assigned to the 174th Assault Helicopter Company, which as I recall was equipped with "Bravo 540's" (i.e. B Model Huey Gunships that had the 540 rotor system). Now to tell you the truth....the time that I served in Vietnam was so long ago, that I was, and am, having a great deal of trouble trying to remember what the differences between the Bravo 540's and Charley Model Huey Gunships were...so to refresh my recollection about "stuff" like stabilizer bars....I initially looked at the attached pictures of Mother Goose and the other two 191st AHC C Model Huey Gunships that we know are currently on display right here in the good old USA....and I've got to tell you....to my untrained eyes, it sure looks like all three of the 191st AHC's surviving C Model Huey Gunships are packing stabilizer bars....but please take a look at the attached photos and judge for yourself.

At that point, I realized it was going to take someone with a whole heck of a lot better background in Maintenance than what I have, to figure out whether or not Mr. Zierdt's position was well taken....so I circulated Mr. Zierdt's article to more than 40 people who I am in contact with, who were either former members of the 191st AHC, or current members of the VFW Post in Little Rock where Mother Goose is now on display....and from the feedback I received from that group, it appears that the consensus is that Mr. Zierdt's position regarding the existence of a stabilizer bar on Mother Goose was not well founded. Specifically, what the members of that group told me was that the Bell AH-1G Cobra was the first, and perhaps the only, helicopter produced by Bell that saw service in Vietnam which did not have a stabilizer bar....and in support of their position on this subject, these gentlemen provided me with the attached pictures of a Bell OH-13 and a schematic drawing of the rotor system for a C or M Model Huey....which I've once again got to tell you....to my untrained eyes it sure looks like stabilizer bars are also present in those photos.... but once again please take a look at the attached photos and judge for yourself.

Finally, I was told that the reason I was having so much difficulty trying to remember what the differences were between the Bravo 540's and Charley Model Gunships was that after all of the changes were made to the UH-1B's, about the only sure fire way that you could tell them apart by just looking at them, was to see which side of the aircraft the "fuel filler" was on....i.e. if the fuel filler was on the right side, it's a Bravo 540, whereas if the fuel filler was on the left side, it's a Charley Model.

Assuming that the location of the fuel filler is in fact the acid test for distinguishing between Bravo 540's and Charley Model Huey Gunships....then Mother Goose was indeed a UH-1C Model Huey Gunship....and if you would like to see a picture of the Goose's left side that clearly shows the location of her fuel filler....just let me know, and I will be pleased to forward a copy of that picture to you.

In conclusion, let me take this opportunity to say that I am 100% on board with Mr. Zierdt's point that "the purpose here is not to start an argument, but to begin a discussion for my own as well as other's historical education"....as

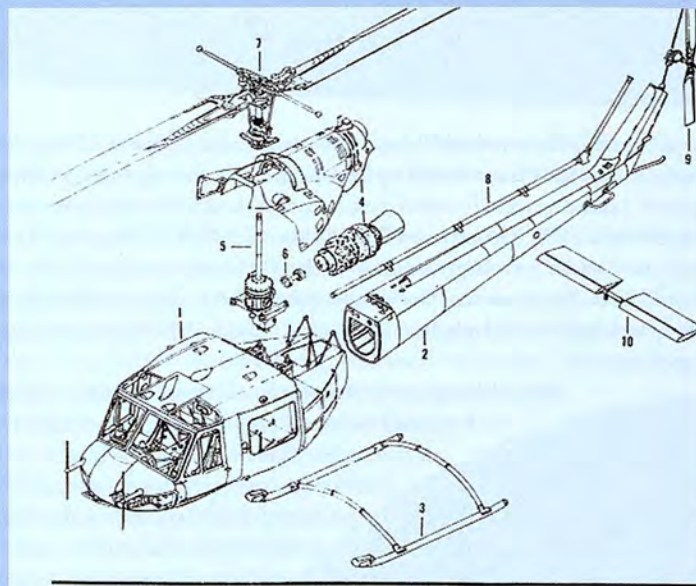


FIGURE 2. EXTERIOR VIEW OF UH-1C, UH-1M HELICOPTER

INDEX NUMBER	FIGURE TITLE	FIGURE NUMBER
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Picture Of A Bell OH-13

quite frankly at this stage in my life....I really don't care if Mother Goose was a Bravo 540, a Charley Model, "A Him or a Her", or some other kind of "anomaly"because for me it is enough to know that Mother Goose was a truly magnificent lady who served us well by carrying so many of us into combat, and returning us home safe and sound, despite all the trouble and battle damage that we caused her to suffer.

Thanks,
Ed McKee

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

Editor's Note: I knew before I ever printed Mr. Zierdt's article in this last issue that his story would lead to nothing but this, but I did it anyway as I like to hear from all of our Readers. But with these two additional takes on the Mother Goose story, as Forest Gump once said "That is all we are going to say about that!!" It won't happen again.

David Adams

To the Members of the VHPA - Bill Janes here, Webmaster for the 191st AHC

With respect to Mr. Zierdt's self proclaimed dilemma concerning the labeling of Mother Goose - I sent the following message to Bell Helicopter.

I am an Army Vietnam Helicopter pilot and during my first tour I flew UH-1D and UH-1C helicopters. Now, the official magazine of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association (VHPA) has published a story saying that the UH-1C did not have a stabilizer bar. The story reports as well that any UH-1B that was fitted with a 540 rotor with a stabilizer bar was some sort of hybrid invented at ARADMAC.

I don't think so. The UH-1C did originate from the UH-1B, but it got the 540 rotor system, and the cambered vertical fin, was Engineered at Bell as a weapons platform, and with a stabilizer bar. Please confirm.

Thanks,
Bill

And...The fine folks at Bell were kind enough to respond as follows:

Bill,

you are absolutely correct. All of the 540 equipped UH-1s (UH-1C, UH-1E, HH-1K, UH-1L, TH-1L, and UH-1M) had the stabilizer bar. I would suspect the writer was confusing the 540 rotor system used on the AH-1G. It had a SCAS system in place of the stabilizer bar.

For clarification. The UH-1B equipped with the 540 rotor was a Bell development, originally called the UH-1B (540) by the Army. Later the designation was changed to UH-1C possibly late 1966/early 1967 (based on available MWOs). I have not uncovered any Army documentation that points directly to the designation change but all of our engineering refers to them as UH-1Cs. I am not certain but I suspect that any ARADMAC effort was to bring the original UH-1B (540) aircraft up to the full production UH-1C configuration (66-491 and sub) as there were a number of mod's required. As best as I can tell, it looks like the first 248 UH-1Cs were actually UH-1B (540)'s.

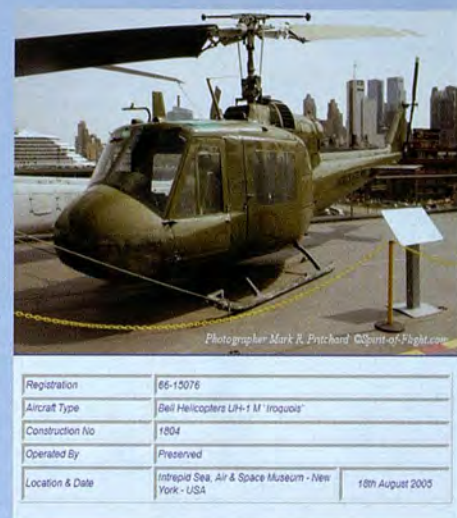
Jim Sprinkle
Product Support Engineer
Military Technical Support
Medium Legacy and Surplus Helicopters
Bell Helicopter TEXTRON



Ken Carlton With 191st Huey Gunship Now On Display At Fort Stewart



Mother Goose at the Pulaski Technical College



Last Known Assignment of Huey 66-15076

There are three types of Military Aviators in this country

....courtesy of VHPA Member Dale McKnight

Naval Aviators - On a carrier, the Naval Aviator looks over at the Catapult Officer ("Shooter") who gives the run up engines signal by rotating his finger above his head. The pilot pushes the throttle forward, verifies all flight controls are operational, checks all gauges, and gives the Cat officer a brisk salute, continuing the Navy/Marine tradition of asking permission to leave the ship.

The Cat officer drops to one knee while swooping his arm forward and pointing down deck, granting that permission. The pilot is immediately catapulted and becomes airborne.

Air Force Pilots - We've all seen Air Force pilots at an air force base look up just before taxiing for takeoff and the ground crew holds him until the pilot's thumb is sticking straight up. The crew chief then confirms that he sees the

thumb, salutes, and the Air Force pilot then takes off.

This time-tested tradition is the last link in the Air Force safety net, to confirm that the pilot does not have his thumb up his ass.

Army and Marine Corps Aviators - If you've ever seen an Army helicopter pilot preparing for takeoff, you will note that the pilot gives the ground guy a thumb's up before he is given hover and takeoff signals. There are two theories about the origin of this gesture. One is that it is to show that the pilot has identified which of his fingers is the thumb so that he will be able to properly operate his controls.

But the most compelling theory says that this is to show the ground crewman that the pilot does indeed know which direction is up.

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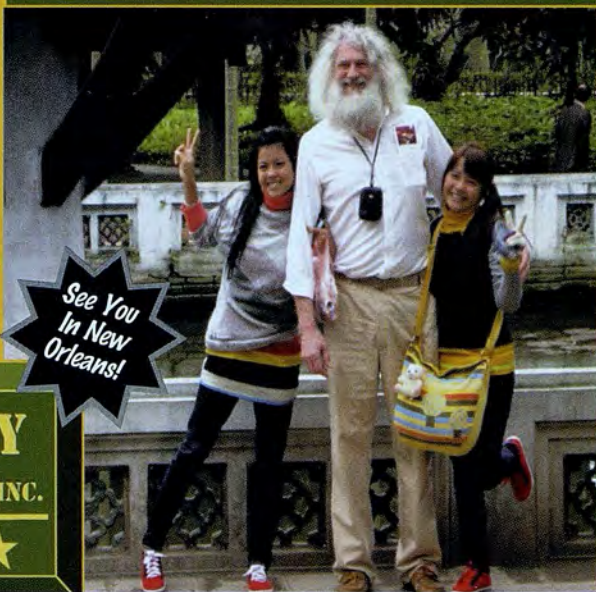
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**Want to start a Chapter
of the VHPA in your area?**

Contact Jack Salm for full details
and lots of help
(or)

The VHPA and Chapters share information and guidance with one another for the mutual benefit of each other. All of our Chapters are separate and independently managed organizations not under control of the VHPA. The VHPA is not authorized to act as an agent or a representative for any of the Chapters nor are any of the Chapters authorized to act as agent or representative for any of the other Chapters or the VHPA as a whole.

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

ARIZONA CHAPTER

The next meeting of the Arizona Chapter will not be until sometime in October (tentatively Oct. 6). We will conduct an election of new officers. For information call me Bill Sorenson at [REDACTED]

Bill Sorenson, President

SOUTH MISSOURI CHAPTER

Our Second Quarterly meeting was held at Cravin' Pizza, Springfield, MO. Thanks to Jim Ashford for hosting the meeting. Jim is retired Navy and has been very kind with allowing the Chapter Council to have our meetings at his restaurant. Cravin' is the birthplace of the South Missouri Chapter, and Jim has always been interested in our mission, our progress, and our growth. As a sign of appreciation, if you are in Springfield, go by Cravin' Pizza, say Hi to Jim, let him know how much you appreciate what he has done for our chapter, and have some exceptionally good food!

The Third Quarterly meeting will be in the Warrensburg, MO. area 25 August 2012. Time and place will be announced at a later date. Mark the date on your calendar and look for the updates on our website, vhpasmo.org.

Several of the Chapter members have assisted with Honor Flights throughout the state, as guardians and to welcome home to the veterans after their tour of memorials in Washington, DC. This is truly a heartwarming experience. If these flights are offered in your area, you will feel good by looking into the opportunities that are presented.

On 31 March, in conjunction with the first national Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day, a ceremony to recognize the soldiers who served in Vietnam, the City of Manchester, MO, hosted its first "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day". The ceremony joined the community together to honor the heroes with a long overdue Welcome Home!

Russ Emory, President

THE ALAMO CHAPTER

Our next quarterly meeting will be a business meeting, on Friday, 13 July. All members and their spouses or girlfriends are invited and encouraged to attend. Lunch will be served at the meeting, in or near our president's home at the Del Webb Resort, off Alamo Ranch Parkway. Members, please watch your E-mail traffic for details as the time nears.

We tentatively plan an overnight trip to the site of the National Vietnam War Museum, near Ft. Wolters, in September or October. Details will be discussed at the July business meeting.

Bob Dillon, President

FORT WOLTERS CHAPTER

The Chapter meeting in June was held at the National Vietnam War Museum site in Mineral Wells, Texas. The names of recent Vietnam veterans whose deaths were determined to be war related were added to the permanent Wall at the site. This has become an annual event and is well attended. The quarterly business meeting and lunch followed the presentation.

With the VHPA National Headquarters now located in the DFW area the Chapter plans on becoming involved in volunteering at the office. We feel this will help in recruiting new members for our Chapter and assist the Association in updating records while saving money. Training will be provided for all those who wish to help.

Our next meeting is September 8 at Logan's Road House in North Richland Hills. The meeting starts at 1130AM with lunch to follow at 1200PM. Our guest speaker will be Teresa Baker, Operations Administrator, from the new VA North Texas Health Care Center in Ft Worth. She will update us on all the new policies and answer our questions related to benefits and health concerns.

Mike Sheuerman, President

WASHINGTON STATE CHAPTER

This spring and summer has already been busy for our Chapter, starting in May with the Dedication of the UH-1 at the Museum of Flight on Boeing Field with MG Pat Brady (Ret) doing the honors. Please take time to read the excellent article about those ceremonies by our chapter member John Penny elsewhere in this issue.

We also will have had our early summer meeting on Father's Day Saturday, June 16th, at the Olympic Air Show, Olympia Airport. After that our next event will be the American Heroes Air Show, again at the Museum of Flight, where we will man a display and reach out to talk with all groups. If you're interested in helping out, please contact Steve Vermillion, the Chapter's Junior Member at Large, at [REDACTED] and let him know what you would like to do. We will also have our trailer mounted Huey

there, thanks to a loan from the Olympic Air Museum. The final activity I'll talk about is actually an effort to raise enough money to paint our beloved Huey. A number of our members made mention that the paint on our bird was getting a little rough and in need of some care. The lead guy in that effort is John Crossman and he's asking that each of our members donate \$20 or \$25 to this repainting fund. Please send your donations (tax deductible) to our Secretary, John Schafer CPA, [REDACTED] Seattle, WA 98102-3398. The plan is to have the repaint finished in time for the Veteran's Day parade in Auburn on 10 November 2012. See you in New Orleans.

Mark Hansen 2012 President

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

The So Cal chapter will have a recruitment and information booth at the American Heroes Air Show at Hansen Dam Sports Complex in the San Fernando Valley on Sat June 30th. The Air Show and static displays celebrates the dynamic role of helicopters in the military, law enforcement, fire service, homeland security and national defense.

Sven Akesson, President

SOUTH CAROLINA CELEBRATE FREEDOM CHAPTER

The festival and air show at Shaw AFB are behind us (huge success by the way) and you'd think we'd take a time out and cool our jets, but no, we saddled up 520, our ARA Bird and took it to Florence, SC for a visit with two High Schools. Over two days and two schools we had almost 700 students visit our display, listen to our spiel and would you believe 6 even signed up to join the Army!! HOOAH! The local recruiters were ecstatic because they've never had that kind of response from any event before (eat your heart out NASCAR).

Next week we take 520 to Indian Trail, NC to support VFW Post 2423. They are hosting the Moving Wall for a week and 520 will be set up for static display. Maggie, our flyer, will do a flyover during the opening ceremonies. Another HOOAH! Thanks to [REDACTED] Troy Comer.

Next month, chapter members will participate in a week long "Aviation Summer Camp" thanks to a grant by our State Aeronautics Commission. We'll have 50 students from High Schools all across the State participating. The first thing each one of them will do will actually fly a leg of a cross country flight, not in a simulator or even with a model airplane, but in a new Cessna 172 provided by our FBO, Eagle Aviation of Columbia, SC.

Larry Russell, President

NORTH ALABAMA CHAPTER

The North Alabama Chapter is still progressing in the restoration of the Mike Model Huey. We are getting to the point where painting might begin. There is still considerable sheet metal work to be done but this is also coming along. Several members are instrumental in keeping this project on schedule. Bernie Parr is responsible for providing the place for work and the storage of the aircraft and parts. He is the Chairman of this project. Another member is the "driving force" that keeps this project going. This is Les Haas. He has given many hours of his time in this endeavor and he has worked on many non-schedule work days. He is also responsible in obtaining valuable parts needed. It is specifically noted that he was able to procure external gun mounts along with Rocket Pods. The mission is to participate in the Veterans Day Parade this year with the project completed.

We would like to welcome new members, Bill Binkley, Ed Gruetzemacher, Louis Kronenberger and Jim Burch. We now have 39 members.

Jim White/President

NORTH CAROLINA CHAPTER

On May 4-6, the NC VHPA took 4 of our helicopters to an air show at Cherry Point Marine Corps Air Station in Havelock, North Carolina. This is probably one of the largest air shows in the southeast with attendance typically in the 150,000 spectator range. Our Huey was placed in a 5-star spot at the entrance with a B 52 parked about 100 yards away.

After talking with the B 52 crew, which included convincing them the Huey and the B 52 were distant cousins, they let us tour the inside of the B 52. We were allowed to visit the cockpit and the weapons control area but not the navigation area. Then, they visited our display.

Thanks to you and your colleagues for sharing your time with our group of Viet Nam helicopter pilots. Thanks for your service to our nation; we are very proud of all of you! Brock Nicholson, Bluestar26, Viet Nam '69-'70

Samuel B. Mc Lamb, Jr., President

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

MINNESOTA CHAPTER

Please be advised that the Minnesota Chapter will hold a meeting on 8 or 9 June a Friday or Saturday at 6 PM in Mai Village. They have great food and service and the drinks are outstanding. Mai Village is located in St. Paul, on University Ave, not far from the Capitol. You will feel like you are back "in-country". Call or e-mail me as the time draws near for any changes in the scheduling. [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

Ray Wilson, President

MICHIGAN CHAPTER

We had our charter VHPA Michigan Chapter meeting on 12 May 2012, at the AASF (Army Aviation Support Facility) in Grand Ledge MI. The turnout was light but hopefully a lot of the almost 30 men I have been provided names of will be at our next meeting.

(Which will be) on 15 September at the same place and the same time. The guard at Abrams Airfield will allow access to the armory starting at 17:30, and there will be a tour conducted of the relatively new Blackhawk hanger. Contact me at [REDACTED] or through e-mail [REDACTED] for full details and to reserve your spot.

Charlie Martin, President

North Carolina Chapter



Brock Nicholson of the North Carolina Chapter sent us this photo from their recent display at the Air Show held at the Cherry Point Marine Corps Air Station. Their Chapter's Huey was displayed about 100 yards from an Air Force B-52 which led plenty of time for both groups of displayers to visit both of the aircraft. Brock took this photo while they were all gathered bedside their Chapter's Huey. Blue Stars Brock Nicholson and Bob Inglis are on each end of the lineup and the Blue Star on the nose of the Huey makes the picture look even better.

North Alabama Chapter



The North Alabama Chapter is still progressing in the restoration of the Mike Model Huey. We are getting to the point where painting might begin. There is still considerable sheet metal work to be done but this is also coming along. Several members are instrumental in keeping this project on schedule. Bernie Parr is responsible for providing the place for work and the storage of the aircraft and parts. He is the Chairman of this project. Another member is the "driving force" that keeps this project going. This is Les Haas. He has given many hours of his time in this endeavor. He has worked on many non-schedule work days. He is also responsible in obtaining valuable parts needed. It is specifically noted that he was able to procure external gun mounts along with Rocket Pods. The mission is to participate in the Veterans Day Parade this year with the project completed.

We would like to welcome new members, Bill Binkley, Ed Gruetzemacher, Louis Kronenberger and Jim Burch. We now have 39 members.

Jim White
President



It's "Work Day" at the hanger of the North Alabama Chapter of the VHPA. Shown are Bernie Parr, chief Whip Cracker, Les Haas and Don Bison along with their newest love, an old Mike Model Huey undergoing restoration and preparation for painting.



Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office

Soldier Missing from Vietnam War Identified

The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office has announced that the remains of a serviceman, missing in action from the Vietnam War, have been identified and was returned to his family for burial.

On March 16, 1969, US Army Capt. Charles R. Barnes of Philadelphia, Pa., and four other service members departed Qui Nhon Airfield bound for Da Nang and Phu Bai, in a U-21A Ute aircraft. As they approached Da Nang, they encountered low clouds and poor visibility and communications with the aircraft were lost. Immediate search efforts were limited due to hazardous weather conditions, and all five men were eventually listed as missing in action. In 1999, another joint U.S.-S.R.V. team interviewed additional Vietnamese citizens about the crash and they were led to the crash site. In 2000, a joint U.S.-S.R.V. team excavated the site and recovered human remains and material evidence. Scientists used circumstantial evidence, and forensic identification tools such as mitochondrial DNA ID'd Cpt. Barnes remains. He was buried May 2, in Arlington National Cemetery.

The number of Americans returned and identified since the end of the Vietnam War in 1975 is now 980; another 63 US personnel, recovered post-incident and identified before the end of the war, bring the total to 1,043. Of the 1,664 unreturned American veterans from the Vietnam War, our POW/MIAs, 90% were lost in Vietnam or in areas of Laos and Cambodia under Vietnam's wartime control: Vietnam - 1,284 (VN-471, VS-813); Laos - 318; Cambodia - 57; Peoples Republic of China territorial waters - 7. Over 450 were over-water losses.

Congress recently passed a law that designates September 21st as National POW/MIA Recognition Day

South Carolina Chapter



Larry Russell, President of the South Carolina Celebrate Freedom Chapter greets the High School students in Florence, South Carolina during one of their recent static displays. During the two-day event over 700 students from the city's two high schools visited their display

The Jesus Nut

by Robert L. (Bob) Graham

**There are objects given to us by divinity
Without which we begin our journey in eternity.**

My first exposure to the "Jesus nut" was fifty-three years ago during OH-23 transition training. Can it be that long? It is a term that has special meaning to chopper crewmen. During training in Class 59-6 at Camp Wolters, Texas, I recall climbing the OH-23 mast, checking those two little air foils, paddles they were called. These in turn controlled the main rotor blades. I examined all those very necessary wiggling, rotating, and oscillating linkages and mechanisms with a silent curiosity, "What the hell really holds all this on the mast?" The instructors would say, "Be sure and check the Jesus nut." Well, of course, it did not really exist. They were imprinting our memory. One or all of those little nuts and bolts held a lot of pieces together that made the contraption fly.

Through my twenty-two active flying years, I would often call out to a comrade pre-flying, "Don't forget the Jesus nut!" Yes, even though it did not exist. It was a friendly reminder to be thorough. Could an aircraft nut come off? Well, not unless there were some extenuating circumstances. Nearly every nut on an aircraft has a safety wire insuring that, even loose, it cannot unscrew.

What image or construct does "Jesus" nut conger up in the minds of other chopper pilots? In my mind it's the last fastener, a big one, on a whole stack of rotating parts that keeps everything from departing. Even though I know that there is really no such nut, I have a mental image of this ultimate hex nut that kept me safely in the sky.

Amen, I say

To you

Faithful warrior

There are many on the helicopter you fly.

The Jesus nut – you know not which.

It is you I charge to check them all.

But it is mine without which you will fall.

Amen, I say

Slow forward seven years, a couple of thousand flying hours, to 1966 and the Centaurs of D Troop (Air Cavalry), 3rd Squadron, 4th Regiment, who are in possession of the only resident gunships on the 25th Division Base Camp, Cu Chu, South Vietnam. During most of 1966, the troop's four hogs and six heavy scouts were their new quick reaction direct air support. Centaur fire teams were committed, providing Base Camp Alert. Missions snapped by phone and radio to the operations center at all hours of the day and night. Nearly every qualified gunship aviator was on the roster. The team scrambled while lives depended upon them.

Aircraft preflight inspection fully completed, switches set, personal gear stowed, everything correct and ready. When your crew is squared away, things go smoothly. The goal; lying on the bunk or sitting in operations, is to pull pitch two minutes after the horn. The high alert status keeps individuals sharp and teams organized.

One April midnight I hit the left seat; LT Allred, without yet strapping, had the turbine coming up to full RPM. I quickly strapped in; the needles joined; I keyed the intercom, "coming up". LT Allred strapped in as I gingerly hovered the maximum gross weight Hog to the takeoff pad. At the pad I heard my wingman request clearance, and I turned the controls back to Allred for take-

off, so I could record the mission details from the Centaur Operations.

The scramble to the big horn was a call from a fortified hamlet near Bo Tri, along Highway 10, that ran southwest of Saigon. The small Republic of Vietnam local force defense was no more than twenty minutes southeast of Cu Chi in wet country. This classic triangular fortification of bunkers and barbed wire was where the local forces hankered down at night and largely let the Viet Cong roam. All the crews had visited this one on a routine "keep acquainted" tour of similar local force defensive areas in the division operational area.

We put the few lights of Cu Chi behind. That night 81mm illuminating rounds floated in the distant sky. The 1966 countryside belonged to the VC at night. Highway traffic did not exist, everyone in bed and the lights out. The local VC was relentlessly restless after dark. These very small fortifications were quite easy to find with a firelight in progress. Sparkling tracers would float in and out; there were bright flashes of grenades and mortars. It was a great light show from above.

The RVN local force systematically marked the attacking VC as we coordinated directly on the local FM command net. By the intersecting fire of two machine guns' tracers or an illuminating flair, they quickly designated targets. Allred led the fire team parallel to the defensive barbed wire as I triggered off the 40mm grenade launcher with its rhythmic thumpa-thumpa, followed by the wingman's quad 7.62 machineguns where the current attack was in progress. We were working too close to the defense for the irregularities of the rockets; plus, they destroyed the intricately laid barbed wire. Remember those high tech rocket system sights. A personalized, custom inscribed, grease pencil mark on the wind screen?

This was where the door gunners do their artful work on individual muzzle flashes, just devastatingly accurate fire at the low end of a firing dive. On the break, WHAM! It's like the sound of a hammer hitting the chopper body! I pressed the mike, "Taking a hit." Immediately on intercom the high door gun muttered tersely, "Damn, I think I hit the skid. The SOB was right under us, sorry!" "No worry", on to the nearby wood line. Three good rocket runs expend all our rockets in the VC assembly area.

All finished our gross weight now light. With only a few machinegun rounds in emergency reserve, we headed back to Cu Chi. There had been plenty of ground action and many little meteor-like tracer streaks, sparkling little spirals intended for us. We had not received a single hit. A productive mission was about to close.

As the team turned northwest, the dim lights of Cu Chi appeared as a very thin line on the horizon. At a light gross weight, I encouraged LT Allred to "hitch it up to 120 knots, and let's get home." As the airspeed touched 110, the UH-1B suddenly began to violently oscillate vertically. This was not an action similar to an out-of-balance front tire that one felt through the seat of his pants. This was strong: strong enough to make one's helmet flop. I grabbed the controls and started to gingerly decelerate. I pressed the mike, "Taking it down to the ground." Night or not, I preferred being parked in a hostile paddy to falling out of the sky.

The whole crew was doing an instant analysis of our dilemma. We had not taken any hits, lots of unremembered intercom chatter. The crew chief had the facts; our very strong 540 rotor system had a violent one per rev vertical vibration. Of course, we were ignorant of the true cause. Airborne at night a prognosis like that is pretty open-ended. Then someone muttered, "God, I hope the Jesus nut doesn't come off." It's that image! As we decelerated below 60 knots, again everything became smooth. It was instantly peaceful, just the quite low mellow hum of the turbine.

The Jesus Nut

One-to-one vertical vibrations

Not a pleasant sensation.

At night it caused the crew

Serious consternation.

Our wingman quickly moved forward alongside in a closer formation. I explained the situation and ordered them to keep us covered, making sure they were also in communications with the Centaur CP. I confirmed that if necessary, to be prepared to pick up the four of us if we had to set down in a hostile paddy. With the vibration gone, it was a slow, but smooth ride at 60 knots. A landing in nowhere was now absolutely inappropriate. Centaur Operations confirmed the alert status of the backup gun team. I asked for the troop aircraft maintenance sergeant on the radio. Even at 02:00 in the morning it was like SSGT Cooper had been standing in operations waiting for our call. He, the crew chief, and I had a brief exchange. I returned the controls to LT Allred, and we settled in at a steady 40 knots.

We concluded that the chopper would not fall out of the sky if we flew slowly. No one had to tell me to fly slowly, but it was consoling to know that everyone agreed. That "Jesus nut," believe me, I had this image of that "ultimate hex nut" coming off at night in the middle of nowhere. Flying slowly onward we were one highly tuned, attentive crew.

Being a little apprehensive, I requested an initial landing spot well clear of all other parked choppers. Ready for the worst, my fire team smoothly, but slowly, hovered to the Cu Chi Centaur Corral and the waiting maintenance crew. As I clicked off the master switch I gave the crew an aggressive thumbs up and a loud, "YES, on the ground again!" I checked through operations: there was MAJ Prosser, the XO, and the next scramble gun team at the ready if we had called. LT Alto, the aero rifle platoon leader, and MAJ Squires, the slick platoon lead, were there ready to move to alert status. Backup like that let me know I did not need to worry about no one caring. Another interesting night flight in Vietnam!

The following day I cornered SSGT Cooper to examine the bucking B model 540 hub. I wanted a piece-by-piece analysis of what had happened. In this case, the collective sleeve was loose. How should we have known? I also confirmed that there were a number of nuts holding all that stuff together. I'm still not sure which one is the Jesus nut.

I should have known!

In my little UH-1B Pilot's Pocket Information Manual,

it says all the below may be found to be the cause

of 1-to-1 vertical vibrations

Grips rolled incorrectly

Trim Tabs

Push pull tubes bent

Stabilizer bar out tube bent

Collective sleeve loose

Collective hub bearing loose

Rotor blade leading edge loose

Transmission mounts defective

If I know all this is OK while I fly, I will not fall out of the sky?

Version #2 W/ 4 Poems Copyright March 2012 Robert L Graham



Robert L. (Bob) Graham entered active duty in 1953 as a Sergeant from the Washington National Guard, graduated from Artillery and Guided Missile OCS in 1955. He completed Fixed Wing Flight training in Class 58-4 and helicopter transition Class 59-6. He was Operations Officer of the Centaurs, D Troop (Air Cavalry), 3rd Squadron, 4th Regiment, 25th Infantry Division at Cu Chi RVN, April 1966 until February 1967. He enjoyed a brief vacation at C&GS during which he was selected for the June 1968 activation, training and deployment of the Dragons, A Battery (Aerial Artillery) of the 77th Artillery at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. They joined the 101st Airborne (Airmobile) RVN December 1968, establishing the battery Dragon's Den Heliport at Camp Eagle. At rotation time, May 1969, he became Assistant G-3 Air at II Field Forces. Bob retired in March 1977 as a Master Army Aviator and resides in Fairfax, Virginia, with his wife, Diana. They are blessed with four children and nine grandchildren, ages four through twenty-one. He is a member of Virginia Poets Society and the Poetry and Memoir Workshops of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia.

He may be reached at

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Ned Crimmin

TSgt, USAF, Ret

USAFSS Intelligence Analyst 1964-74

USAF Admin Supervisor 1974-83

Tours of Duty:

1963-64 Basic Lackland AFB, Tx
1964-68 RAF Chicksands, England
1968-71 NSA Ft. Meade, Md.
1971-74 Osan AB, ROK
1974-83 Vandenberg AFB, Ca



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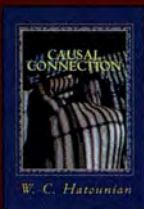
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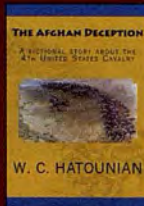


CAUSAL CONNECTION

Detective Milo Necalli, an energetic veteran investigator with the Phoenix Police Department's Night Detective Unit, is secretly delighted when he is assigned to investigate the death of a man who was found asphyxiated and shrink-wrapped inside an empty waterbed mattress.

THE AFGHAN DECEPTION

Colonel Martin Daniels and the 4th United States Cavalry are unwittingly thrust into the world of international politics and intrigue in this historical fiction novel set in 1879. The relationship between two colonels of cavalry, one American and one British, could forever alter the fate of the British Empire.



VHPA Member Bill Hatounian is a 24-year military veteran and a retired Army Aviator. He served with the 1st Squadron, 4th United States Cavalry in Vietnam and after active duty, he flew with the 997th AHC of the Arizona Army National Guard. He has recently retired from being both a pilot and a Lieutenant with the Phoenix Police Department and is enjoying retired life by writing books, being active and traveling with his wife.



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Benjamin Jess "Buddy" Epps Jr. Flew in Vietnam with the 128th AHC in 1965-66

CW4 (RA/Ret) Benjamin Jess "Buddy," Epps Jr. was born June 28, 1937, in Morganville, Georgia, pulled pitch for the last time on April 18, 2012. He is survived by his loving wife Audrey; two sons, five stepchildren, eight grandchildren, five great-grand-children and beloved BeBe and Spot.

Buddy joined the U.S. Army in December 1954 obtaining the rank of Sergeant before graduating from Flight School in 1961 and becoming a Warrant Officer. During his distinguished career as an Aviator, Buddy earned the Master Aviator Badge and at the time of his retirement he was qualified as an Instructor Pilot in every Army aircraft. Buddy served two tours of duty in Vietnam, two in Germany, one in Thailand, and several postings in the US including flying Army One for two Presidents. Buddy earned the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Bronze Star, the Purple Heart Meritorious Service Medal, 9 Air Medals, the Vietnam Service Medal, the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal, the Army Commendation Medal, and a Presidential Service Badge.

Low Flight - "Oh, I've slipped the surly bonds of earth and hovered out of ground effect on semi-rigid blades; Earthward I've auto'ed and met the rising brush of non-paved terrain And done a thousand things you would never care to Skidded and dropped and flared Low in the heat soaked roar. Confined there, I've chased the earthbound traffic And lost the race to insignificant headwinds; Forward and up a little in ground effect. I've topped the General's hedge with drooping turns Where never Skyhawk or even Phantom Flew. Shaking and pulling collective, I've lumbered The low untressed halls of victor airways, Put out my hand and touched a tree."

Charles Andrew Weseman Graduated flight school with Flight Class 67-03

Major Charles Andrew Weseman, US Army (Ret.), 72, passed away, Sunday, April 8, 2012. He was born in Roseburg, Oregon and was a veteran of the USMC and US Navy before retiring from the US Army.

Major Weseman flew a helicopter gun ship in Vietnam with Capt. Bill Cilenchino. Charles is survived by his wife, Munthana, and two brothers.

'Charles' Ray Dunn Graduated flight school with the US Air Force, flew in Vietnam with the Jolly Green Giants

'Charles' Ray Dunn, Ret. Col. USAF, age 74, beloved husband, father, brother, and friend died on Saturday, May 5th, 2012 after a heroic battle with cancer. Born in Northumberland, England, he graduated from grammar school in both England and Scotland with honors. He immigrated to the United States as a young teen and won a scholarship to Bishop Loughlin Memorial High School where he also graduated with honors.

After studying engineering at Brooklyn Polytechnic Institute, he joined the Air Force, became a jet pilot, helicopter pilot, and graduated from Navy Test Pilot School. He earned a BA in Electrical Engineering and MBA from USC. He served two tours in Vietnam as a rescue pilot with the Jolly Green Giants maintaining a life-long friendship with his fellow servicemen. He was



a crew member of the first non-stop flight of a helicopter across the Atlantic Ocean. He retired a decorated soldier from the USAF after 28 years. Some notable aircraft flown: UH-1/TH; T-33; HH-443B/F; HH-53; C-130B; HC-130; DC-130; CH-3; UH-1N, T-29. He then worked at Boeing for 15 years as Manager of Flight Test Operations and Chief Test Pilot for the V-22. Up until his death, he was a certified flight instructor and proud member of Conair Flying Club, Quiet Birdmen, and The Society of Experimental Test Pilots.

Distinguished awards include: 2 Silver Stars; 2 Legions of Merit; Distinguished Flying Cross; Meritorious Service Medal; Air Medal.

Survivors include his wife, Ellen Krucznicki Dunn, two daughters, one son, five grandchildren and two brothers. Contributions may be made in memory of Charles Ray Dunn to the Lymphoma Research Foundation National Headquarters 115 Broadway, Suite 1301 New York, NY 10006.

Dalton G. "Chopper" Willis Graduated flight school with Flight Class 69-03, flew in Vietnam with the 162nd AHC in 1969-1970

Dalton G. "Chopper" Willis met our Lord and Savior on Monday, May 7, 2012. He was 63 years old, a native of Baton Rouge and a resident of Sunshine, LA.

Dalton served in the U.S. Army as a helicopter pilot in the 1st Aviator Brigade in Vietnam. He worked as an insulator with Asbestos Workers Local 53 traveling around the United States. With the help of the 12 Step Program, he enjoyed sobriety for over 14 years. He loved to travel, read books, and play chess and dominoes.

Dalton is survived by his wife, Mary; his mother and his father, three daughters, one son, five stepsons, one sister, two brothers, a half-brother, eight grandchildren; one great-grandson; numerous aunts, uncles, cousins and friends. Please visit the online guest book at www.resthavenbatonrouge.com.

Dana Ed Keeney Graduated flight school with Flight Class 69-21, flew in Vietnam with the 1/9th CAV in 1970 under the Saber 15 callsign.

Dana Ed Keeney, also known as Ed, passed away Friday, April 20, 2012, at his home in Fort Walton Beach, Fla. Born in Prenter, W.Va., on May 23, 1949, Ed grew up in his hometown of Carlsbad, N.M.

He began his career in the U.S. Army as a warrant officer. Immediately after flight school Ed was deployed to Vietnam as an OH-6 Scout pilot in the 1st Cavalry Division. He flew 400 combat missions, was shot down three times within a 48-hour period, and was severely wounded the last time he went down. He was awarded the following medals for heroism: Distinguished Flying Cross with oak leaf cluster, Silver Star with oak leaf cluster, the Bronze Star with V, Air Medal with 14 oak leaf clusters, and the Purple Heart. Ed was also awarded the Master Aviator Wings, Meritorious Service Medal with oak leaf cluster, and National Defense and Army Commendation Medals. He retired out of Fort Rucker, Ala., as a Chief Warrant Officer Four (CW4) with 26 years of service.

After his military retirement, Ed continued his career in helicopter aviation, flying for Petroleum Helicopters Inc. (PHI). For over eight years Ed flew oil inspectors to the platforms in the Gulf of Mexico.

Ed was a man of faith and was a member of Calvary

Baptist Church. He was a loving husband, father and grandfather. He also was a member of the Emerald Coast Mustang Club and enjoyed his Shelby Mustangs. In his younger years, Ed was a 2nd degree black belt and instructor in Hapkido. He also enjoyed deep sea fishing, scuba diving, watching NASCAR races, making model cars, helicopters and planes. He will be missed dearly.

Ed is survived by his wife, Chong Keeney; five children, five grandchildren, his father, one sister and many close friends. Ed was interred at the Barrancas National Cemetery; donations in his name may be made to Calvary Baptist Church and The Emerald Coast Mustang Club.

Daniel D. Nichols Graduated flight school with Flight Class 67-08

Daniel D. Nichols passed away on April 16, 2012 after he lost his match with ALS commonly known as Lou Gehrig's disease.

Dan was born April 15, 1943 in rural Fayette County, Alabama; he went on to love and attended Auburn University earning degrees in Aeronautical Administration, Civil Engineering and a Masters of Business. Dan received an R.O.T.C. Commission to the Army in March 1966. He served during the Vietnam War flying helicopter gunships. During his military active duty service, he met and married Sharon Louise Burke a registered nurse from Wichita, Kansas and graduate of Wichita State University / Wesley Medical Center School of Nursing. Dan maintained active reserve status in the Army and later in the Air Force until he retired in March 1994.

In June 1977, Dan accepted a Civil Service position as a Civil Engineer with the U.S. Air Force. He retired from the Federal Civil Service in January 2006. In 2006, Dan and Sharon moved back to Auburn, Alabama which they always called home. Dan enjoyed serving in the Auburn Rotary Club, fishing, golfing, and helping friends. Sharon and Dan are survived by two sons and their wives, one grandchild and three sisters. Please make any contribution to Auburn Rotary Club Scholarship Fund, Attention: Auburn University Endowed Scholarship In Memory of Dan Nichols, P.O. Box 852 Auburn, AL 36831

Edward (Edman) Monhollen Graduated flight school with Flight Class 68-3 & 68-7, flew in Vietnam with the 48th AHC in 1968-1969 under the Joker 58 callsign.

Edward (Edman) Monhollen, 65, died peacefully at his home in San Antonio, TX with his family by his side. Ed was born Sept 19, 1946 in Keith, WV and graduated from Woodward High School Toledo, Ohio with the Class of 1964. He received his bachelor's degree from USC and Masters from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University.

Ed enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1967 and served his country proudly as a gunship pilot in the Republic of Vietnam where he survived a helicopter crash and went on to accept his appointment as a commissioned officer in 1970. He retired as a Major in 1987 and went on to continue his aviation mishap investigation career with Sikorsky Aircraft and then hung his own



TAPS

shingle as a consultant until 2005.

Famed for his unmistakable laugh, Ed brought a tear to many an eye on the golf course, in the Pub and in living rooms near and far.

He is preceded in death by his father, his father-in-law, one brother-in-law and one son-in-law. He is survived by his mother, his mother in law, his wife Cynthia Salinas Monhollen, three daughters eight grandchildren, two brothers, two sisters and numerous sister-in-laws, nieces and nephews. Interment was held at the Ft. Sam Houston National Cemetery. Expressions of sympathy may be made at www.sunsetnwfuneralhome.com

Eugene L. Osmondson, USMC

Eugene L. Osmondson, Col. USMC, (Ret), Ed. D was born at the family farm in Wilkin County, Minnesota on September 8, 1932. He died on Saturday, May 19, 2012 at Carpenter's Creek, Pensacola, FL.

An American patriot, he served his country as an infantry rifleman in Korea in 1951-52, and as a helicopter rescue and transportation pilot in Vietnam in 1967-88. He was awarded the Purple Heart in Vietnam and was a 100% disabled American Veteran.

During his adult life he was involved with many community organizations, serving as a volunteer and a leader. For his dedicated efforts, he received many awards attesting to his leadership and his work with the organizations. When asked to summarize his life's work he remarked, "If in this comedy and tragedy of life, I have played my part well, applaud me and send me on my way. If I have failed in my performance, stand away from the stage and let me pass."

In his immediate family, he is survived by his wife, Betty S. Osmondson; one daughter, two step daughters, one grandson, his son, Scott Osmondson, is deceased. Other family members include his brother and sister-in-law, his half sister and numerous cousins, nieces and nephews.

Col. Osmondson asked that donations be made to the American Legion Post 78, 6025 Spikes Way, Milton, FL 32583 or to a veteran's organization of your choice in your community. Express your condolences in our guestbook at pnj.com/obits

George H. (Hank) Echols III, graduated flight school with Flight Class 66-23 and 67-01. Flew in Vietnam with the 173rd Avn Bn and the 189th AHC (1967-1978), and with B Troop, 3/17th Cav (1969)

Hank Echols (66) Passed away February 17, 2012 at his home in St. Cloud, Florida after a battle with cancer. Hank is survived by his wife Angela R. Echols (A WOC original wife!), one son and one sister. Hank's wife Angie is a good friend of all of Hank's Classmates and well as many of his Vietnam combat brothers. We all grieve with Angie in her loss of Hank. He was born in Atlanta, and grew up in East Point, Georgia. He graduated from Russell High School and attended Florida State University.



Hank was a member of WOC Flight Class 66-23 at Fort Wolters, Texas and a graduate of Class 67-01 at Fort Rucker, Alabama. Hank served two tours in Vietnam. The first (1967-1968) was with the 173rdAVN BN and the 189th AHC. On his second tour (1969), he served with B Troop, 3rd/17th Cavalry.

Hank held a commercial Rotary and Fixed Wing pilots license as well as a dispatchers license. Hank flew as Aircraft Commander in lift ships, scouts and gunships during his tours in Vietnam. During his tours he received many combat medals to include two DFC's, Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Combat Air medal with 40 oak leaf clusters to name just a few. He was qualified in all Bell Helicopters as well as the Hughes 500 and the OH-6 Cayuse. Hank's favorite aircraft was the AH-1G Cobra and he was the company Standardization Instructor Pilot for the aircraft on his second tour.

After the Army Hank worked for Delta Air Lines and retired as their Director of Flight Control and at the time of his death Hank was employed with the FAA as an airline safety inspector. In addition to his passion for all things aviation oriented, he was an avid clay target shooter. He, Angie and their two terriers traveled extensively around the country in their motor coach to different tournaments.

Hank loved his family, his Delta family his FAA family, his skeet family and always his combat brothers both those lost and those who survived. Some close to him were Buster, Larry, Pete, Barnes, Din, Brown and too many others to list.

I first met Hank some 46 years ago at Fort Polk during basic training. We were both from Georgia, both heading to flight school and both showed up for basic in 3-piece suits. The everlasting bond between us was set for like that day. We shared many experiences together and he was truly the brother I never had. Hank had so many friends that loved him dearly and he left a living legacy that will always be with us as he was truly an officer, a gentleman and a man of integrity. This we will always remember.

Per Hank's wish no services were held. Condolences may be made to www.osceolamemgds.com. Words can not truly express the loss of my brother and friend Hank Echols.

*Rick Clifford
1st Cavalry Airmobile
"D: Company, 227th Aviation Battalion
RVN - 1967-1968*

George Linden "Tommy" Allen graduated flight school with Flight Class 59-07, he flew in Vietnam with both the 8th TC (1961-1962 and the 200th ASHC (1967)

Mr. George Linden "Tommy" Allen, age 80, of Smithfield, died Thursday, May 03, 2012. Born in Johnston County, Mr. Allen was a US Army Veteran.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Rachel Lee Allen, one son, one daughter, two brothers, two Sisters, a Special Sister-In-Law, five Grandchildren and two Great-Grandchildren. You may share your memories and condolences with the Allen family by visiting www.minshewfuneralhome.com

Gordon Spencer Hall graduated flight school with Flight Class 65-02, he flew in Vietnam with the 121st AHC in 1965-1966.

Gordon Spencer Hall, 83, of Memphis, died in his home on April 21, 2012.

Mr. Hall was a "late arrival" veteran of WWII, an active veteran of the Korean War and a decorated combat veteran of the Vietnam War. He flew helicopters in Vietnam and earned 27 air medals; 2 with "V" device for Valor, the Army commendation Medal and was twice recommended for the Distinguished Flying Cross for two sorties involving rescue of personnel. He had 21 years of continuous active duty. Following his military retirement in 1966,

Mr. Hall, while operating with an artificial right eye, had a career of 30 years of civilian flying, including agricultural pilot, a flight instructor and as a charter and corporate pilot in both airplanes and helicopters. Mr. Hall published his book, "Tiger Lead, Your Flight is Up" his memoirs of a 52 year aviation history that details his tour of combat duty in Vietnam.

He was preceded in death by his wife of 56 years, Rosalie Hayhurst Hall and by his sons, Martin G. Hall and Glenn C. Hall. He is survived by two daughters, three sons, nine grandchildren, nieces and nephews, and a sister

Herbert T. Kerr Graduated flight school with Flight Class 67-23 and flew in Vietnam with the 176th Aviation Company in Chu Lai in September 1971-September 1972 under the Minuteman 14 call sign. He also flew with the 68th Assault Helicopter Company in Pleiku.

Herbert T. Kerr passed away at his home in Sedalia, Missouri the age of 68 on 23 February, 2012 after a prolonged fight with cancer.

Herbert served his country honorably in the US Marine Corp and later in the US Army during the Vietnam War. He was a helicopter pilot and a member of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilot Association and Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 2591. He was stationed at Ft. Ord, in California retiring in 1983. He enjoyed golfing, fishing, and traveling.

He is survived by his wife Sandy, one brother, two sons, one step-son and one step-daughter and eight grandchildren. Memorial contributions may be given to VFW Post 2591 in care of Rea Funeral Chapel.

Howard E. Kessinger, Jr.

Colonel Howard E. Kessinger, Jr., (USA, Ret) USMA '50 passed away at sunset on April 27, 2012 in Frisco, Texas at the age of 82, he died after a short and vigorous battle with cancer. Howard was born in San Antonio, Texas on May 21, 1929 to Brigadier General Howard and Ruth (McFarland) Kessinger. (USA, Retired, USMA, Class of 1924) He was a graduate of USMA, West Point, New York, Class of 1950. The afternoon of his graduation, Howard married Joan Ashe Kessinger, the love his life. They have been married for 62 glorious and adventuresome years.

During his military career, Howard served as a field artillery man, fixed wing and helicopter pilot, and Director of IT. He served in Germany, the Korean conflict, two tours of duty in the Vietnam War, Japan, and several United States locations to include Director of Training at the helicopter center at Ft. Wolters, Mineral Wells.

His decorations included Legion of Merit (2 OLC), Army Commendation Medal, Air Medal, World War II Victory Medal, Army Occupation Medal, National Defense Service Medal (1 OLC), Viet Nam Service Medal (6 Campaigns), Viet Nam Campaign Medal W/60 Device, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Viet Nam Cross of Gallantry W/Palm and Senior Army Aviation Badge.

He retired from the Army in 1976 and began a ten year career teaching high school science and mathematics in Jacksboro, Texas. Howard was awarded Teacher of the Year in 1988-89. He also taught the gifted and talented course and constructed scenery for the drama class productions. Many of his students have gone on to careers in science, medicine, engineering and education. After his years in the classroom, Howard was elected and served on the Jacksboro School Board (JISD) for 19 years (1991-2010). He considered his greatest accomplishment the funding and construction of the new and renovated Jacksboro elementary, middle and high schools.

Other than his family, Howard's greatest passion was Boy Scouting. Wherever Howard lived, he became an active leader and mentor to thousands of boys. He began as den dad and grew through cub scouting leadership roles to Webelos leader and then the Scout Master for several Boy Scout troops. His last and longest Scout Master position was with Troop 194 in Bridgeport, Texas. Howard and Joan sold part of their ranch to establish the Sid Richardson Scout Ranch in 1968. In addition to local scout troop participations, Howard also held several advisory and leadership positions at the Boy Scout district and council level. He was awarded the Silver Beaver award, Boy Scouting's highest adult award in 1978. He had a district camporee named in his honor in 2008. In 2010, Howard taught his favorite hobby, wood carving, at the 100th anniversary National Boy Scout Jamboree in Fort AP Hill, Virginia.

Howard is survived by his wife, Joan Ashe Kessinger; five children, eleven grandchildren, one great granddaughter, two sisters other family members and a host of friends. Donations in the name of Howard E. Kessinger, Jr. can be made to Boy Scout, Troop 194, Bridgeport, Texas.

James Michael Basta, (LTC Ret.) Graduated flight school with Flight Class 65-5, flew in Vietnam with the 54th Sig Bn (1965-1966), A/7/17th Cav (1967-1968) and the 34th Support Group (1971-1972)

James Michael Basta, (LTC Ret.), 72, a Tampa resident for over 30 years, passed away on Tuesday, April 24, 2012.

James graduated from the University of Scranton in 1961 and entered the Army through the ROTC program in which he was a distinguished military graduate and commissioned a Second Lieutenant. He retired as a Lt. Colonel after 24 years of active military service, which included tours of duty in Germany, Taiwan, and three years in Vietnam during the war where he flew both fixed wing and helicopter aircraft. He was awarded numerous medals,



including the Legion of Merit, Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star, two Purple Hearts, Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal, and Army Commendation Medal. James was a member of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association of Florida (VHPAF). He pulled their static display helicopter to events all over the state, including numerous veterans' functions, parades, and schools educating the public and especially children on aviation and the Vietnam War.

Jim is survived by his wife of 50 years, the former Marie Honcharik, his high school sweetheart; and his four children and nine grandchildren. Burial was held at the Florida National Cemetery. The family requests donations be made to VHPAF at Veterans Memorial Park, 3602 US Hwy. 301 N., Tampa, FL 33619; or St. Timothy Catholic Church Youth Building Fund, 17512 Lakeshore Rd., Lutz, FL 33558. Words of comfort may be expressed at LoylessFuneralHome.com

Joseph William Cody

Ret. U.S. Army Major Joseph W. Cody, 70, of Charleston, went to be with our Lord on Saturday, April 21, 2012. Major Cody enjoyed a distinguished military career as an Army aviator and signal officer, which included two tours of duty in Vietnam. He was an honors graduate of Officers Candidate School and completed flight training at Ft. Rucker, AL. Among his many achievements, Major Cody was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. He enjoyed flying fixed wing aircraft and helicopters, and tested new equipment and trained new pilots. He concluded his military service at Ft. Bragg, Fayetteville, NC.

Following his military service, he co-founded Cody Realtors, Inc. with his wife and was a Master Mason of the Etian Lodge #95 of Mount Pleasant, SC.

Survivors include his wife, Nan E. Cody of Charleston; one son, one daughter and two grandchildren.

An online guest register is available at: www.floydmortuary.com.

Larrie Phillip Goldsmith Graduated flight school with Flight Class 69-41 & 69-39, he flew in Vietnam with the 335th AHC in 1970.

Larrie was a man of many talents, interests and diverse abilities. He was fortunate to put them to use in his lifetime. Larrie, "Butch" to his family, graduated from Porterville High School in 1959, leaving behind a pole vaulting record and winning many shot put medals. After graduation he became a firefighter for the California Division of Forestry but this was not his passion. He then enlisted in the army, graduating from Officers Candidate School as a pilot and was sent directly to Vietnam as a helicopter pilot. Larrie was injured in battle December 15, 1969 and was badly hurt. After a long recovery, Larrie did return to the forestry service with an early retirement from the military. He received the Purple Heart, Air Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal, National Defense Service Medal and finally, the Army Aviation Badge.

He did not give up his love of flying and did some crop dusting and opened an airplane charter business. His other loves were painting and motorcycles. He leaves behind many beautiful paintings. In 1986, his passion for Goldwing motorcycles drove him to design and

manufacture a camper/trailer for motorcycles. He and his wife, Beverly, took many motorcycle trips throughout Canada and the U.S as members of a Christian motorcycle club. Larrie also had a passion for bowling, winning numerous awards and competitions while achieving a perfect 300 bowling record on several occasions. This led him to own two bowling shops, first in Visalia and later in Fresno, CA. His failing health caused him to slow down and was ill for a very long time, succumbing finally to be with the Lord on February 20th of 2012, where he is finally at peace.

Larrie is survived by his loving and devoted wife of 50 years, Beverly, two daughters and one son, one brother and one sister, nine grandchildren eight great grandchildren. Remembrances may be made in his name to Grace Community Church in Visalia, CA. Email: info@gccvisalia.org. Condolences may be e-mailed to info@salseranddillard.com

Nathan J. "Jack" Lewis Jr. Graduated flight school with Flight Class 68-503 & 68-3, he flew in Vietnam with the 162nd AHC in 1968-1969 and the 120th AHC in 1969.

Nathan "Jack" Lewis, Jr., 64, of Jasper, passed away, Monday, March 19, 2012.

Jack proudly served his country as a Warrant Officer helicopter pilot with the 162nd and 120th AHC in the Vietnam War.

During his long career, he worked as a Senior Reactor Operator for TVA, and retired from the USNRC in 2004. He was recently working at the Bellefonte Nuclear Power Plant in Hollywood, Alabama. Jack was also a member of the Presbyterian Church of Beechmont, KY, and Olive Branch Lodge, 297, FFAM in Jasper, TN, as well as Alhambra Shriner's, Chattanooga, TN.

Mr. Lewis is survived by his wife, Lana Lewis; his parents, one son, one daughters and one grandson. He will be deeply missed by his family and friends.

Norman David Carter Graduated flight school in 1981. He flew in Vietnam with the 118th Aviation (1963-1964) and A Co, 169th ASHB 101st ABN (1967-1968)

Lt. Colonel Norman David Carter (U.S. Army, Ret.) passed away suddenly on Monday, June 4, 2012.

David was born in Greensboro on September 16, 1938 and retired in 1979 as a Lieutenant Colonel after 24 years of service in the U.S. Army. He served as a paratrooper, Green Beret and helicopter pilot. He served two years in combat in Vietnam and was awarded the Silver Star, Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star, 57 air medals and the Purple Heart while serving there. He and his wife Dawn owned Benchmark Financial Services, an insurance and investment firm, and they retired from that business in 2010.

David and Dawn, his devoted wife of 27 years, were able to spend many years traveling the United States in their motor home. David also traveled many miles on his motorcycle and scooter with his great group of friends. No one can express the loving kindness and support that David showed to his family and friends. He was always available to help, to lead or to provide to those he loved and to those who loved him. He leaves a lasting impression to continue his example.

He is survived by his wife, Dawn, three sons,

two daughters, one sister, three grand daughters, numerous nieces and nephews. Memorials may be made to the charity of the donor's choice. Online condolences may be offered at www.forbisanddick.com.

Noel M. Harvey Graduated flight school with Flight Class 68-503 & 68-03, he flew in Vietnam with the 162nd AHC in 1969-1969 and with the 120th AHC in 1969.

Maj. Noel M. Harvey, U.S. Army, retired passed away on March 19, 2012. He was raised in Maryland until age 12, when his family moved to Alaska. He graduated from Morgan State University, Maryland, and was commissioned into the U.S. Army. He served three tours in Vietnam as a helicopter pilot and infantry company commander. His decorations include four Bronze Stars with Valor, a Purple Heart, a Meritorious Service Medal, the Air Medal, the Army Commendation Medal, the Army Achievement Medal, and the Combat Infantryman Badge.

After 20 years of service, Noel retired in Anniston. He furthered his education by receiving a master's degree in education and an education specialist degree in education, both from Georgia State University. He was a member of Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church, the Knights of Columbus, the Kiwanis Club, and the Civil Air Patrol.

Harvey is survived by his wife, Florence Jean Arrigo Harvey, of Anniston; one daughter, one son, four grandchildren, one sister, one brother and seven nieces and five nephews. The family requests memorials be made to the Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church, 16 Morton Road, Anniston, AL 36205 or to the American Cancer Society, 1100 Ireland Way, Suite 101, Birmingham, AL 35205. Online condolences may be made to the Harvey family at www.klbrownmemorychapel.com

Richard (Rick) Frederick Sendelbach, Jr. Graduated flight school with Flight Class 69-25 & 69-27

Richard (Rick) Frederick Sendelbach, Jr., died Friday, August 12, 2011 at 7:30 P.M. at Columbus Hospice after a valiant battle with cancer. He was surrounded by beloved family and friends as was fitting for Rick as he enjoyed people and was always gracious and hospitable.

Rick Sendelbach was born December 9, 1947 in Americus, GA and was the first of four children. He enjoyed gardening, reading and spent his volunteer time helping homeless people and animals. He was a creative chef, cooking for the homeless shelter when he lived in Atlanta, and served on task forces for the homeless in Atlanta and Columbus. In recent years he assisted with caring for feral cats through various volunteer animal groups and made lasting friends with like-minded people who love animals. He is survived by his two rescued cats, Rascal and Allison. He was a member of Columbus Mensa and enjoyed playing chess and learning about numerous topics. Mr. Sendelbach was a graduate of Pacelli High School and went on to attend Emory and Georgia Tech Universities studying applied mathematics and doing pioneer work in early computer systems analysis.

He was an Army veteran serving in Viet Nam dur-

ing 1970-71 as a Warrant Officer Assault helicopter pilot. He received multiple decorations to include the Bronze Star with oak leaf cluster, Air Medal, Army Commendation Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Army Aviator Badge, Good Conduct Medal, Viet Nam Service Medal, Viet Nam Campaign Medal and two Overseas Bars.

He worked at Fulton National Bank in Atlanta as an Applications Programmer and Samaritan Health Services in Phoenix, AZ, returning to Atlanta he worked for many years at Southern Co. as senior systems analyst. In 1997 he moved back to Columbus to be closer to his family and worked for Advanced Systems Technology and Science Applications International at Ft. Benning as a Systems Analyst.

He is survived by one brother, two sisters and numerous nieces, nephews and great-nieces and great-nephews. In lieu of flowers, donations may be sent to Chattahoochee Valley Episcopal Ministries, www.cvemjubilce.org or Allied Cats www.alliedcats.com.

Those who wish may sign the online guest registry at www.mcmullenfuneralhome.com

Richard Kenneth Macauley Graduated flight school with Flight Class 70-15 & 70-17, flew in Vietnam with C/3/17th Cav in 1970-1971 under the Charlie Horse Cherry callsign.

Richard Kenneth "Rick" Macauley passed away from pneumonia suddenly on May 3, 2012. Rick was born in Rochester, New York on August 18, 1946, the family moved to Las Vegas when he was six years old, and he always considered it his home. Rick graduated from Las Vegas High School and the University of Nevada Reno majoring in journalism. While growing up in Las Vegas, Rick enjoyed scuba diving, fencing, martial arts and scouting where he received his Eagle Scout Award.

After a year long nationwide trip in his milk truck he joined the Army, became a decorated helicopter pilot, and served in the 3rd of the 17th Air Cavalry. As a result of his service, he wrote the book "Charley Horse: America's 'Day by Day' Air Cavalry, Vietnam War Correspondences".

After his military service Rick returned to Las Vegas where he married Bonnie Ann Davis and adopted their wonderful son Skyler. At this time he was instrumental in funding the Ronald McDonald House, was an active member of the Las Vegas JC's, and started the Nifty Nickel newspaper. He also worked as a photographer/reporter for the Las Vegas Sun.

Rick moved to Reno to pursue his life as an author and a teacher of grantsmanship. There he met his companion Mary Mingo. Rick was active in the Reno Air Race Foundation, the local Boy Scouts, EAA, and the Aviation and Aeronautics Advancement Alliance.

He is preceded in death by his father and mother. Surviving are his brother and sister-in-law, his son and daughter-in-law, Skyler and Angela Macauley, all of Las Vegas and his companion, Mary Mingo of Reno. Memorial contributions may be made to the Reno Air Race Foundation or to the local Boy Scouts of America area council.

Robert G. Shain Graduated flight school with Flight Class 60-01, flew in Vietnam with the 116th AHC in 1965-1966 and the 188th AHC in 1967-1968 under the Thunderbird 5 callsign.



Lt. Col. (ret) Robert G. Shain (Bob) passed away Sunday, April 29 2012 at Doylestown Hospital in Pennsylvania surrounded by his family. Born in Iowa City, IA on Dec 2, 1934, Bob was a 1959 graduate of the Military Academy at West Point. He served in the US Army for 20 years as an infantry officer as well as a fixed-wing and helicopter pilot. He completed 2 tours of duty in Vietnam and was awarded the Legion of Merit, 2 Distinguished Flying Crosses, 2 Bronze Stars, 27 Air Medals with V for valor, Meritorious Service Medal, Vietnamese Medal of Honor & Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry. He served as commander of the Executive Flight Detachment and pilot of Presidents Nixon and Ford's helicopter, Army One, from 1973 to 1976. Following his retirement he enjoyed a long professional career in the aeronautics industry.

Bob was an active supporter of the National Rifle Association and a member of the Military Officers Association. His greatest joy was spending time with his family. He is survived by his wife of 52 years, Sherry, two sons and one daughter and their family's three children. He is also survived by one sister in law and many nieces & nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents and an older brother Air Force Maj. E. Rox Shain.

Burial and funeral honors will be at Arlington National Cemetery at a later date. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Doylestown Hospital, Development Department, 595 West State St, Doylestown, PA 18901 www.dh.org or The MDS Foundation, 4573 South Broad St., Suite 150, Yardville, NJ 08620 www.mds-foundation.org/donate/

Robert Patrick, Jr. Graduated flight school with Flight Class 68-507 & 68-7, flew in Vietnam with B Co, 158th AVN, 101st ABN in 1970-1971 under the Lancer 33 callsign.

Robert Patrick, Jr., age 67, of Hartford went to be with the Lord on Wednesday, April 25, 2012 after a long battle with Alzheimer.

Rob was a decorated helicopter pilot in Vietnam, who was shot down yet managed to land the copter without losing or hurting anyone on board. He was able to get the crew out even though he was surrounded by the enemy. Rob graduated from Pittsburg Station with an Automotive Technology degree, worked with UPS as a Fleet Manager, and retired as a Building Manager. Rob operated "Corvettes Forever" for many years. He loved his cars and built many from scratch. Rob opened and managed many of the Discount Auto Parts Stores in this area. Rob and his wife owned "Our Favorite Things Shop" in Bonifay, FL.

Mr. Patrick is survived by his wife of 43 years, Barbara; two sons, two sisters, and many cousins. He is also survived by his mother-in-law, four brothers and many nephews and nieces. In lieu of flowers, you may make donations to The Alzheimer's Association or Gentiva Hospice, P.O. Box 1708, Enterprise, AL 36331. Please sign the guest book at www.dothanecagle.com

TAPS

Thomas C. Blecha Graduated flight school with Flight Class 70-01

Thomas C. Blecha, 71, Topeka, formerly of Lakeview, Ark., passed away Sunday, May 27 at Stormont-Vail Regional Medical Center following a short illness. He was born in St. Louis, Mo., Aug. 14, 1940 and graduated from Northwest High School in House Springs, Mo., in 1959. He enlisted in the U.S. Navy, serving eight years as a machinist's mate and later joining the U.S. Army, where he flew helicopters during three tours in Vietnam. He later returned to the states as an instructor pilot at various bases. He retired from the Army in 1981 as a Chief Warrant Officer 3, and went on to fly helicopters for Air Logistics, servicing oil platforms in the Gulf of Mexico, for another 14 years.

He moved to Topeka in 2003 to be near his high school sweetheart, Susan (Hoene) Morley. While in Topeka, he volunteered at the Colmery-O'Neil VA Medical Center and was a life member of the VFW. Tom was married to Mary Campbell, and later divorced. Tom is survived by his two sons, six grandchildren; a brother and many nieces and nephews. Memorials may be made to the American Diabetes Association.

William Edgar Ogle, USMC

William (Bill) Ogle, 65, passed from this earth on Friday, April 20, 2012, in Franklin, Pa.

Bill attended Texas A&M until he joined the U.S. Navy, to serve his country during the Vietnam War. During his time in Vietnam he was assigned to the US Navy Helicopter Attack (Light) Squadron Three, The Seawolves. Bill piloted helicopters where his bravery and service earned him over numerous combat medals including The Distinguished Flying Cross and two Purple Hearts.

Bill was an outgoing man whose apparent wit and intelligence made it possible to have a conversation with anyone. These skills helped him throughout his life including starting a trucking business and later a computer business. However, it was in his ministry that he felt a real calling. Bill loved his work with the Church of Christ and was the minister at the Franklin Church of Christ and other churches in Pennsylvania and Ohio. Bill always had an open heart and open door to any in need and he did so by offering comfort, support, food and even a place to stay.

He is survived by one brother, many children and their families, Bill will also be mourned by his "other

families" The Seawolves and his brothers and sisters in Christ. Bill's final resting place will be at Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors.

Archie R. Taylor, USAF

Archie R. Taylor, 95, joined his beloved wife Rosaleen on February 29, 2012. Archie was born in Des Moines, Iowa on April 12, 1916, and moved to Phoenix in 1928. He attended Phoenix Union High School, enlisted in the Army in 1940, won his pilots wings in 1943 and served throughout WWII until he was released in 1948.

He was recalled to active duty for the Korean War, served as a CH-53 rescue helicopter pilot in the Vietnam War and finally retired from the U.S. Air Force in 1970.

Archie is survived by five sons, seven grandchildren and their children. Contributions may be made in Archie's name to Phoenix VAMC Hospice (9903), 650 E. Indian School Rd., Phoenix, AZ 85012.



From the Editor of the VHPA Aviator

I thought I would talk about a subject I'm going to be bringing up at our upcoming Reunion, plus another subject I would like each of our readers to think about.

First - I'm proposing a change in our current practice of printing all TAPS entries at our next Reunion. We all can see our TAPS entries are growing at an accelerated pace. Everyone out there knows why this is happening but what you might not know is thanks to advances in technology, it's now possible to search world-wide for obituaries of not only our inactive and active Members, but of many other membership-eligible men who have never joined our Association. I estimate that printing the full obituaries of these "newly-found" men will cost the Association close to \$10,000.00 this year.

So, here is the change in policy that I am going to propose to the membership at this year's Annual Business meeting. That we continue to publish full TAPS entries upon the deaths of any Member, current or inactive, any man who's death is reported to us by our membership, and any man who's death is reported to us by their families through the VHPA website.

The deaths of all men that were not reported to the Association IAW the above ways (i.e. obtained through a search of published obituaries), will be noted in the Aviator by listing only their name, their place of death, their Flight Class dates and their Vietnam service information (if available). We will then link the remaining portion of those obituaries to their names in the Membership Services portion of our website for all to read. Anyone not having computer access can call HQ and they will either be read, or mailed a copy of the completed obituary.

I know this is a big change and I want your input on this, either at the Reunion, by e-mailing me (Aviator@VHPA.org) or as a last resort, calling me at

The closing part of this article is about our TAPS entries themselves. You need to know that when I receive a death notice that doesn't include a lot of details, or a link to an on-line obituary, then I can only do a Google search to see if any more info is available. Once that information, if any, is captured, I then go to the VHPA database because even if the it is a "civilian" obituary, it often doesn't include the deceased's flight class and Vietnam service information. Occasionally, what's in the VHPA's database is the only thing I can find on the man, especially when the person that notified us of the death didn't provide any additional details.

So how do we all make sure what I say about you in the Aviator is really what you want us to carry upon your death? You don't have to write your own obituary, but you should update the information the VHPA maintains on you. If you are "dues current" go on-line and do it yourself, e-mail our HQ or call HQ and someone there will be glad to help. If you're no longer dues current, or if you are interested in updating the Association about another man, again e-mail HQ or call them to ask for help. We have a great interest in maintaining current information on all our membership-eligible men.

Tell your family about your Vietnam service, and indeed your entire military experience. What you did during your enlistment counts more than you realize so help your family share it with us. And please be truth full in what you tell them, enough said about that.

Next, if you are notifying the VHPA about the death of a member, or a man eligible for membership, do all that you can to get his story told correctly. We have a form on our Website for your, or anyone else (your kids or your wife perhaps?) use. It's not the best form in the world so we're now working on a better one but either will work and what you enter will get to everyone that needs



to know. If possible, also send us a good link to an on-line obituary.

Please don't assume someone else has notified the VHPA about a death. Notify HQ yourself and let them know the details and if possible, back that up with an e-mail to me (Aviator@VHPA.org). I review every e-mail before I start to build the next Aviator so even a one-sentence e-mail saying "David - did you know John Smith passed away last week in Houston?" gives me a lead to follow.

I know that many of our Members are not very comfortable at a computer, let alone in being "on-line" so please remember that everyone at HQ, and here at the staff of the Aviator are here to help. We would all prefer to work through e-mails, but we do recognize the need for phone calls.

Last, honestly, the best obituary I could run for any man is the one that's written and sent to us by the people that knew and loved him the most, his family and his friends. Never hesitate to send me your thoughts on the man you knew better than the rest of us, I'll do everything I can to see that your words are passed out to the membership.

Thanks for your support of both the VHPA Aviator and the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association!

David Adams
Editor of the VHPA Aviator

Lee Greenwood sings for a special Vietnam Vet at his unit's Reunion

by Chris Cannon of New Channel 5
in Nashville, Tennessee,
used by permission

FRANKLIN, Tenn. - Members of 15th Medical Battalion of the 1st Calvary Division in the Vietnam War met Thursday night in Franklin, Tennessee. No one at the gathering expected to have a country star entertain them.

"We hold a reunion each year in different locations, this year it's going to be in Nashville," said organizer and former aircraft commander Art Jacobs. This year the one hundred former soldiers and their families got together at the Cool Springs Marriott for their reunion in honor of Jerry Dick.

Dick was the door gunner on a medevac helicopter in the jungles of Vietnam on July 24, 1968 when the aircraft was hit by enemy fire. "We made an attempt to rescue some guys on the ground and Jerry was shot in the head," Jacobs explained. Dick was severely injured, for some time it was not known if he would survive. But he did, although he was dis-



abled. "Jerry you took a bullet for me, on 24 July 1968. You are my hero, you always have been. And Jerry tonight, you're everyone's hero," Jacobs told the crowd as he choked back tears. When Jacobs heard his friend would make the trip to this year's reunion, he wanted to do something special.

He got the idea to have the legendary Lee Greenwood perform his anthem God Bless The U.S.A. at the reunion and after working through some scheduling conflicts, Greenwood was able to attend and perform the song for Dick. "I have such a love for the military,

and we really need to give tribute to the guys and the gals who have served in our military," Greenwood explained. Lee's entrance from a side door to the meeting room came as a complete surprise to Dick and the rest of the men and women in attendance.

Dick had made the trip to Franklin in a special van with his brother and sister-in-law traveling with him. Dick presently lives in a small town in Wyoming.

Here's a link to the full story: <http://www.newschannel5.com/story/18135708/a-singing-surprise-at-vietnam-veterans-reunion-in-franklin>
Chris Cannon can be reached at: [REDACTED]

MIA -POW event in Maine

Russ Warriner, the Chairman of this event sent us this press release to pass on to the Membership...

The excitement is building here in Old Orchard Beach, Maine for our event planned for 21-23 September, 2012.

For those who would like to see a Cobra that served in Vietnam in C Battery 2/20, that aircraft will be traveling from Columbia South Carolina to Maine by trailer under the escort of Many bikers. The trip will most likely start the trip north on Tuesday 18 September and arrive in Maine on Friday. Any biker that is interested in being part of this trip should contact us so we can get an idea how many wish to join the group escort. This aircraft will stay in Maine Friday, Saturday and Sunday. The trip back for this aircraft will most likely leave on Monday morning. It is possible that an escort may happen on the return trip. However, none has been planned yet. If any bikers would like to head up a escort for the trip going south. Please contact Russ Warriner, Chairman of the weekend event.

For those who want to see an H-model Huey, one that is going to be here for the event, one that served in HHB 2/20, 1/9 and another unit, it will fly in and offer flights to anyone who wishes to do so. There is a ball game planned for the event, a program to honor POWs, Gold Star Mothers, Gold Star Wives, food vendors and an area set up just to assist veterans.

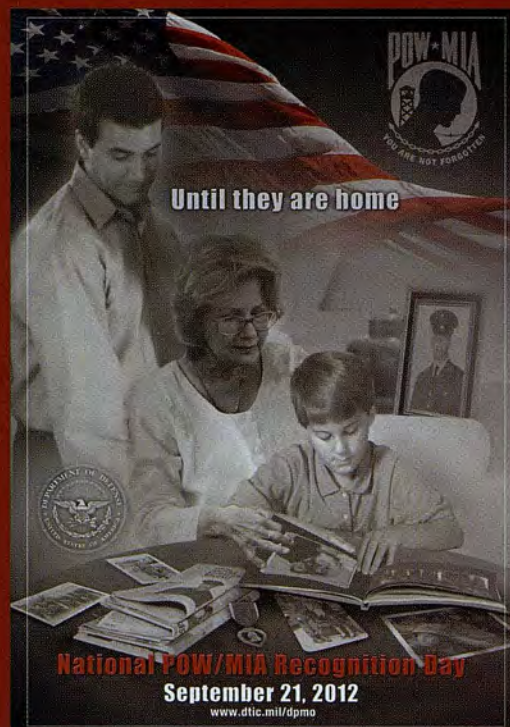
Although things are just starting to crank up for this event, it is advisable to get a room as early as possible as rooms are expected to go as fast as they become available. Although only hotels who become sponsors are going to be listed in our program book and on our website, there are lots of other hotels in the area that are available.

Please go to our website and click on LODGING or go to this link: <http://www.vfw7997-pow-mia.com/looding.php> For those who wish to come by RV, we expect some local sponsors for that as well and as soon as that happens, we will add a link for that website page.

We believe that the only person to become a POW that served with the ARA will be here, we can not think of any better way to HONOR Mike O'Connor than to have him here and others who served with him here at the event. Come early and take time to enjoy some New England Sea food and see the area. Be sure to Visit the Maine Military Museum. You will not believe all the items from all the wars this place displays.

Russ Warriner, Chairman

E-Mail: [REDACTED]
Event Web Site: www.vfw7997-pow-mia.com



The 2012 POW/MIA Recognition Day Poster were unveiled on June 14th, 2012. Each individual may order up to 100 copies of the poster but please do not place multiple orders.

You may order your free poster by filling in the electronic form at:

<http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo/posters/>

or by calling [REDACTED] and leaving your information.

Whether ordering by phone or electronically, please specify your name, number of posters requested, mailing address and telephone number.

Sharon Hodge
Associate Director, Government Affairs
Defence Prisoner of War - Missing Personnel Office

VIETNAM HELICOPTER PILOT AND HIS CHOPPER REUNITE

By Cpl. Thomas A. Bricker,
Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow and used with permission

MCLB BARSTOW, Calif. — Have you ever had “the one that got away” only to get him or her back later in life? For one man, a love that was once lost, has now resurfaced in his life after more than 40 years.

Curt Lambert, a photographer aboard Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow, recently discovered an aircraft he once flew in Vietnam is now on display at National Training Center Fort Irwin, Calif. Lambert, a former Army chief warrant officer two aircraft pilot with the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, flew the UH-1H Utility Helicopter ‘659’ Huey during his time in Vietnam. “I was in Vietnam from August 1970-71 and most of my missions were flown with 659 after I received my aircraft commander orders,” Lambert recollected.

Lambert joined the Army right out of high school to fly helicopters. Originally intent on joining another service, Lambert was on his way to a recruiter’s office with a friend, when he was distracted along the way. “A friend of mine wanted to join the Navy or Air Force, something that was safe. While we were walking to their offices at the recruiter’s station, I saw a mannequin with a flight suit and a sign that read ‘Join the Army, and fly helicopters right out of high school.’ Something in me just gave way, I did a right face and walked in to sign up. I still don’t know what possessed me to do it. I think it was because it was the most exciting thing I could have done after school.”

During his time in Vietnam, Lambert flew many different missions in 659, ranging from support of his unit’s infantrymen to missions with the Army of the Republic of Vietnam over Cambodia. Although there were medevac units in Vietnam while he was there, much of Lambert’s work consisted of running these missions for his own unit’s men. The bond formed between Lambert and his helicopter while in Vietnam was unrivaled. Countless hours of Lambert’s time in Vietnam were spent flying 659. “I loved that piece of machinery; I absolutely loved it,” he explained. “I mean, cars can be run into the ground but this thing just kept going.”

After a safe return to the states and his contract completed with the Army, Lambert went on to pursue a career in photography and raise a family, but not without wondering what became of the bird he flew during his time in Vietnam. He has several photos of the chopper in Vietnam but never knew what happened to it afterward, he explained.

Lambert uses a forum-like website to keep in touch with other soldiers who served



with him and in the 11th ACR and I was through one of his buddies online, Lambert learned what had become of his lost love. “I was contacted by someone who was a crew chief for 659 after I was with it, who asked if I had seen my helicopter after it was moved to [NTC] Fort Irwin,” Lambert said. “He told me he had been out to see it several times. When he told me, I was amazed. It was hardly believable.”

Lambert has lived in the High Desert area for more than 30 years, and was a mere 40 miles away from the bird that kept him safe more than four decades ago. Lambert contacted Fort Irwin’s museum to confirm whether a helicopter out there was, in fact, the same he flew in Vietnam.

The answer had the same impact for Lambert as it did for his friend, indeed, it was his aircraft. “The 659, now known to those here at Fort Irwin, as the ‘McKnight’ has been here at this base since 1998,” explained Neil Morrison, museum director at NTC Fort Irwin.

“It’s known as this in commemoration for Col. Matt McKnight, a soldier who also flew it in Vietnam as a lieutenant and on its last mission, a humanitarian mission. It was on its way to Fort Irwin when it was called on to help rescue civilians whose aircraft collided over a lake along the way,” he added.

When Morrison was contacted by Lambert in regards to 659, he found it just as surprising as Lambert did, but for other reasons.

“I was astonished that a former pilot of this helicopter lived so close,” he said. “I had no idea that could happen.”

After a few weeks of preparation, Lambert made a trip to Fort Irwin to see his former helicopter, the first time he would see it in more than 40 years. When he saw it for the first time, emotions ran high and nostalgia ran through him as expected.

It was an incredible moment,” Lambert said. “I didn’t think the odds of this happening could even exist.”

There isn’t much more to be done now that Lambert and 659 have reunited. It’s time now to introduce her to the family and catch her up with what she’s missed over the years.

“I’m planning to bring my grandkids down to show them 659,” Lambert explained. “They’ve always been interested in military stuff and I think it would be cool to show them something so closely related to the family,” he concluded.

Time spent in the Military

Written by Colonel Stu McIntosh, USAF, Ret, sent to us by a VHPA Member

Occasionally, I venture back to one or another military post, where I’m greeted by an imposing security guard who looks carefully at my identification card, hands it back and says, “Have a good day, Sir!” Every time I go back to any Military Base it feels good to be called by my previous rank, but odd to be in civilian clothes, walking among the servicemen and servicewomen going about their duties as I once did, many years ago.

The military is a comfort zone for anyone who has ever worn the uniform. It’s a place where you know the rules and know they are enforced – a place where everybody is busy, but not too busy to take care of business. Because there exists behind the gates of every military facility an institutional understanding of respect, order, uniformity, accountability and dedication that becomes part of your marrow and never, ever leaves you.

Personally, I miss the fact that you always knew where you stood in the military, and who you were dealing with. That’s because you could read somebody’s uniform from 20 feet away and know the score.

Service personnel wear their careers on their uniforms, so to speak. When you approach each other, you can read their name tag, examine their rank and, if they are in dress uniform, read their ribbons and know where they’ve served.

I miss all those little things you take for granted when you’re in the ranks, like breaking starch on a set of fatigues fresh from the laundry and standing in a perfectly straight line military formation that looks like a mirror as it stretches to the endless horizon. I miss the sight of troops marching in the early morning mist, the sound of boot heels thumping in unison on the tarmac, the bark of drill instructors and the sing-song answers from the squads as they pass by in review.

To romanticize military service is to be far removed from its reality, because it’s very serious business – especially in times of war. But, I miss the salutes I’d throw at senior



officers and the crisp returns as we crisscrossed with a “by-your-leave” sir.

I miss the smell of jet fuel hanging heavily on the night air and the sound of engines roaring down runways and disappearing into the clouds. I even miss the hurry-up-and-wait mentality that enlisted men gripe about constantly, a masterful invention that bonded people more than they’ll ever know or admit. I miss people taking off their hats when they enter a building, speaking directly and clearly to others and never showing disrespect for rank, race, religion or gender. I miss being a small cog in a machine so complex it constantly circumnavigates the Earth and so simple it feeds everyone on time, three times a day, on the ground, in the air or at sea.

Mostly, I don’t know anyone who has served who regrets it, and doesn’t feel a sense of pride when they pass through those gates and re-enter the world they left behind with their youth.

*Face it guys - we all miss it.....
Whether you had one tour or a career, it shaped your life.*

BOOK REVIEWS

A DIFFERENT LIGHT by Jennifer Thomas is a memoir of her "tour of duty" in Da Nang as a bookkeeper and counselor with the Red Cross. As a somewhat naïve 22 year old, Vietnam was challenging and life changing for her. The absurdities of the Vietnam War and plight of a people torn and displaced shocked her sensibilities. As a female "round eye" she received intense scrutiny by the virtually all-male military she had come to help.

Thomas' arrival in-country in October 1967 was in much the same way as thousands of American GIs. Stepping off the plane onto the ramp at Tan Son Nhut Air Base she encountered the damp, oppressive climate with its noxious smells, and the noisy commotion of a central hub of the war.

Her in-country processing took her into Saigon, formerly a city of 1 million but now crammed with 5 million, many of whom were refugees living on the "edge."

After processing in Saigon, she was sent to Da Nang for her job with the Third Marine Amphibious Force (III MAF) and shared quarters with another female Red Cross worker at 7 Yen Bai Street. It was a pretty quiet neighborhood until Tet; the noise and fear would continue for a long time. Thomas learned the "ropes" of her assignment at III MAF and the facilities in the area including Camp Tien Sha, Freedom Hill, Red Beach, and MAG 16 at Marble Mountain. Visits to the orphanage at

China Beach and meeting "the forgotten innocents" was something she found hard to fathom.

Her work is important, keeps her very busy, and ranges from the day to day book keeping for the area Red Cross activities, and checking Christmas Ditty Bags for demoralizing hate mail. She also handled the numerous and sometimes tragic "Health and Welfare" messages from families back home and helped process emergency leave requests along with providing emotional support when needed. She often felt as though she was on display. Service men found all sorts of flimsy reasons to drop by her office and she never lacked for company at her mess table and invitations to what passed for social events in the war zone. She also learned some officers are not gentlemen.

Thomas does an excellent job of describing the people she encountered in Vietnam from the American Marines, sailors, soldiers, and nurses to the orphans, and refugees whose tragic plight tore at her. This is a very personal memoir of the Vietnam War seen in "a different light" by someone who went there to help and found her energy and compassion challenged. It is a perspective of the war well worth reading.

A Different Light: The Vietnam War From a Woman's Point of View (\$20 soft cover, \$9.88 EBook, 345 pages) by Jennifer Thomas, ISBN: 978-1453505250 is available directly from the author at <http://bookstore.xlibris.com/>, your local book store, Amazon, or other book suppliers.

FIFTY YEARS OF FLYING

by VHPA Life Member John Thomson who served with UTT in 63/64 and Cobra NETT in 67/68 is the memoir of his adventurous lifetime of flying. He was hooked on flying after his first ride in a "barnstormer" at a small Tennessee airport where he did odd jobs. He obtained his private license at 15, forging his age, by trading his time working at the airport. Achieving his goal of flying for the military took a more circuitous route. Enlisting in the Army Air Corps in 1947 at age 16, he soon found himself in Panama as a jet mechanic. He was initially turned down for flight school because he needed two years of college. Then he didn't qualify because he was married and later because he was too old!

However, he reapplied anyway and received a waiver.

Graduating as the "old man" of class 62-1W, Thomson (aka the Grey Fox) was soon in RVN flying a UH-1B with machine guns and rockets for UTT. Later assignments included Ft. Carson where he also served TDY for the Gemini Orbital Mission, and a

stint at Ft. Wolters as an instructor. He flew with the Cobra New Equipment Training Team (NETT) at the Bell Plant and Hunter AAF and was deployed to RVN to set up the Cobra transition school. After RVN, he received his "dream world" assignment at Edwards AFB testing and flying a wide variety of helicopters and fixed wing aircraft including his favorite: the P-51 Mustang.

Retiring as a CW4 in 1974 he worked for Bell Helicopters in Iran until the fall of the Shah, when he returned to Tennessee and operated a small flight school and charter company before taking a job in Brussels performing contract heavy maintenance test flights on US Army helicopters based in Europe. After Brussels, he traveled some and then retired when he was unable to pass his flight physical without some special exams.

Thomson wrote this memoir for his friends and family. It is a reminder of the incredible lives many VHPA members have lived beyond their service and sacrifice in RVN. He pursued his goal of flying until it became a reality, then worked many years doing what he loved.

Fifty Years of Flying (\$14.00, 136 pages) by John Thomson, ISBN: 978-0615446394 is available from <http://www.adventureindiscovery.com> your local book store, or other book suppliers.

THE TRIALS OF THE INITIATE

by VHPA Member Robert Mitchell who served with HHT/7/1 CAV in 1968, is book two of Take the Long Way Home Forks, his memoir of healing the wounds of war and reintegrating into American society. In this book Mitchell narrates his continued search for transformation and belonging with travels through Europe and back and forth to the USA.

Like many young Americans at the time, Mitchell "bums" around Europe taking odd jobs and finding new friends. In France he meets and marries Coraline, "a strong, mentoring woman," and settles in Tunisia where their daughter is born. Feelings of rejection experienced by many Vietnam vets led to further wandering in Mexico and Morocco but he failed to find "my inner guiding spirit." When the Vietnam War ends in 1975 he repatriates, moving his wife and daughter to Santa Cruz, CA. Other moves and relocations ultimately ended his marriage.

What followed for Mitchell was a challenging adventure in an underground of disheartened hippies, Vietnam street vets, recovering drug addicts, a religious cult, and peyote. Hanging onto fragments of faith in his own inner strength, he began to communicate and reconnect with his family and returned home to Chicago in the summer of 1982. Mitchell's journey of 15 years, from when he

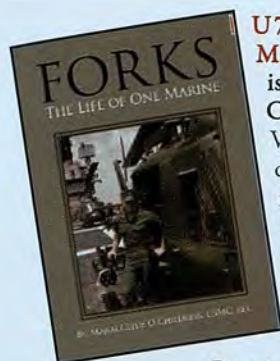
left to join the Army, came full circle and his reintegration into society and normal life began. Still dealing with his "demons" he worked hard to surround himself with what he calls "normal people."

Mitchell says he wrote these books to explain his inner process of transformation. Many Vietnam veterans have stories that are not so different from Mitchell's long journey home; some never completed that journey. Those who serve in war are affected in both body and mind in many unpredictable ways. Any judgment of these "wounded warriors" needs to be tempered by understanding and acceptance; "There, but for the grace of God, go I."

Robert Mitchell is retired and living in Maryland after 27 years as a secondary school teacher and writes and lectures on the issues of secondary education.

The Trials of the Initiate: Transforming the Warrior Spirit (\$14.95, paperback, 294 pages) by Robert Mitchell, ISBN: 978-1468025637 is available at create-space.com/3739392, your local book store, Amazon, or other book suppliers.

By VHPA Life member: JOHN PENNY



U7FORKS: THE LIFE OF ONE MARINE

is the memoir of VHPA Life Member

Clyde O. Childress who served in RVN with VMO-6 (call sign Klondike) in 66/67. A quote from Yogi Berra: "When you come to a fork in the road, take it," inspired the title. Childress defines a fork in the road of his life as a moment of decision. This very personal narrative takes the reader through many "forks" from his youth, life in the Marine Corps, and civilian life.

Born in Virginia, he moved with his family at a young age to Florida and then on to California during WWII where his parents worked in a defense plant. The family went back to Virginia at the end of the war and Childress excelled in high school, especially in music. He built a telescope and observatory with his father, and took his first flight lessons. His was not, however, an idyllic childhood. He says his father's often abusive and erratic behavior was like living with "Jekyll and Hyde."

Childress enrolled in aeronautical engineering at Virginia Polytechnic Institute in 1957 but soon ran out of money. He "maxed" the tests for Air Force flight school but while awaiting a class slot was persuaded that the Air Guard was a quicker route to the cockpit. However, his enthusiasm waned upon learning he would just be a "weekend warrior" after completing flight school. Shortly thereafter, he came to the most significant "fork" in his life

when he accompanied a friend to a Marine recruiter, and learned he could become a Marine pilot. He was soon on his way to boot camp.

Childress served a tour of duty in Morocco before being accepted as a Marine Aviation Cadet where he was assigned to helicopters for his advanced flight training. He served afloat and ashore until March 1966 when he reported to VMO-6 in Da Nang where he flew UH-1E gunships. He states it is hard to describe his intense Vietnam combat experiences "but perhaps it will serve as some kind of release from the nightmares I have forty years later." After his tour in RVN, he served in a variety of assignments, was the first Marine to attend the Army Flight Test School and was sent to the Aviation Safety Officer's School at Monterey. By February 1970 he received orders for another tour in RVN but was instead assigned to VMO-2 in Okinawa. When this tour ended, health and marital issues brought new "forks."

In 1977 Childress retired from the Marine Corps to start a new life. He built a successful career, became a community leader, learned to sail, and built his dream house. He has worked to support humanitarian organizations and those who have served this county. I recommend this memoir of a life of service and sacrifice. Childress is donating the proceeds from the sale of this book to the Wounded Warrior Project. Semper Fi.

Forks: The Life of One Marine

(\$29.99 hc, \$19.99 sc, \$3.99 E-book, 204 pages) by Clyde O. Childress, ISBN: 978-1465337108 is available from <http://bookstore.xlibris.com/>, Amazon, Barnes and Noble, and your local book store.



LEAVE NO MAN BEHIND

by George Galdorisi and VHPA Life Member Tom Phillips is the book on combat search and rescue (CSAR). This meticulously researched book is a history of CSAR from WWI to the War on Global Terrorism and Iraq. It provides multiple narratives of heroic rescues and an in-depth discussion of CSAR plans and policies.

WWI land and sea plane rescues were "spur of the moment" and this approach persisted as the norm in the early days of WWII.

However, WWII saw a revolution in the means, methods, and tactics of rescuing downed aircrew and the creation Army and Navy units specifically dedicated to search and rescue. Military leaders were especially attuned to the fact that effective CSAR recovered hard to replace, highly trained aircrew for the war effort and boosted morale for aircrew members.

During WWII, innovations, including improved communications and coordination of sea and air assets, proved crucial to a successful rescue operation. As WWII came to a close in the Pacific the future of CSAR was ushered in by the clattering of a Sikorsky YR-4 piloted by 2Lt. Carter Harmon who picked up a pilot and three passengers of a downed Stinson L-1 from the jungles of Burma. The helicopter would change CSAR and warfare forever. The helicopter rescues at the end of WWII, the ongoing development of the helicopter and its expanded role in Korea including behind the lines CSAR, are well documented. The next war would be defined as "the helicopter war."

CSAR had a slow beginning in Vietnam, with many hard lessons to be relearned. Although an Air Rescue Center was established in Saigon in 1962, it "owned" no rescue assets and relied on South Vietnamese, US Army, and Marine assets as situations developed. As the war ramped up and the air war moved to North Vietnam and west to the Ho Chi Mien Trail, both the Navy and Air Force were challenged to develop CSAR mission capable helicopters, tactics, and policies in an increasingly dangerous AAA environment. As the war progressed, Navy CSAR units acquired the HH-3A (Big Mother) and the Air force moved on to the HH-3E (Jolly Green Giant) followed by the HH-53B. But there is more to putting together a successful CSAR mission and the authors aptly outline the evolution of the planning and launching of these missions, some of which were deep in North Vietnam and involved a complex and layered choreography of over 100 aircraft to accomplish the mission.

This is the first book to cover the complete history of CSAR and finishes with a discussion of its future. Though the documentation requires lots of statistics, it is a very readable book. The authors interviewed many of the living participants from over 120 Vietnam rescues and share them with us in detailed narratives that make for riveting reading. This book is a fitting tribute to those who lost their lives that others may live.

Tom Phillips will speak on US Navy Combat Search and Rescue operations during the reunion at 2:30 pm on August 2nd

Leave No Man Behind: The Saga of Combat Search and Rescue (\$20.59 hard cover, \$12.64 Kindle, 656 pages) by George Galdorisi and Tom Phillips, ISBN: 978-0760323922 is available from your local book store, Amazon, or other book suppliers.

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Members of the Washington State Chapter of the VHPA gather in front of 15140 for a group photo.

Former Huey from B Co, 158th AVN, 101st Airborne (the Lancers) Receives Place of Honor in Boeing Field Museum

*By Washington State Chapter Members
John Penny and Doug Decker*

Memorial Day Weekend at the Museum of Flight (MoF), at Boeing Field in Seattle saw a number of events including the ceremonial unveiling of the museum's first "Huey." The addition of this iconic aircraft of the Vietnam War to the museum's collection was well attended by VHPA Washington Chapter members, Vietnam veterans, museum officials, and the public.

This specific "Huey" made a 41 year journey from the days in Vietnam when it served with B/158th AVN 101 ABN, call sign Lancer, in Operation Lam Son 719, to its place of honor in the Great Gallery of the MoF. Serial #69-15140 also served with the Alaska National Guard until 1994 and was acquired by the MoF from King County, WA. Former Lancer pilots Keith Boyd, Tom Sieker, and Doug Decker along with Lancer crew chiefs Dennis Souza, and Gary Bowman were honored with the privilege of unveiling the Huey.

The keynote speaker, MG Patrick Brady, MOH, was awarded America's highest military honor for flying three different UH-1Hs through intense enemy fire to rescue 51 wounded soldiers in Vietnam on January 6, 1968 while serving with the 54th Med DET. Brady spoke in recognition of the helicopter pilots of the Vietnam War and the Huey. On a lighter note, he spoke of the courage fighter pilots attributed to the helicopter pilots in The Fighter Pilot's Prayer. He noted with some dismay that it has taken a long time for the "Huey" to find its rightful place in America's aviation museums and commended the MoF for completing this addition to their collection. Later, Brady gave a lecture on the "Role of the Huey in Vietnam" and signed copies of his book; Dead Men Flying.

Brian Reynolds, President of Northwest Helicopters, which since 1989 has specialized in refurbishing, operating, and maintaining UH-1H helicopters for commercial and government use, introduced the crew responsible for the meticulous restoration of this Huey. He stated this project was a particular honor and labor of love for all of his staff.

There have been a number of "Huey" dedications at museums, parks, and memorials all across this country. There are VFW "gate guards" and VHPA Chapters have acquired Vietnam era helicopter airframes for use in parades and displays. It is nice to know that there are still many airworthy examples some of which make appearances at VHPA reunions. The UH-1H still "soldiers on" in civilian colors in use by search and rescue organi-



"Lancer" veterans (L to R) Keith Boyd, Dennis Souza, Tom Sieker, Greg Bowman, Doug Decker enjoy seeing their old friend.



MG Brady speaks at the Dedication of Huey 15140.



UH-1H Number 69-15140 comes to rest in the Great Hall of the Museum of Flight

zations and forestry departments and in the "uniform" of other countries. When they fly over I can't help but look up and remember a time...the only thing missing from the ceremony was the signature sound track!

Photo Credits: VHPA Chapter members, Doug Decker, Mark Hansen, and Dennis Souza. Ted Huetter, MoF, Seattle, WA.

Editor's Note: Former Lancer's with stories about this "Huey" are invited to share their stories with the VHPA. Also, if you know of other Huey's being restored or sitting in places of honor that haven't been written about, please let us know.