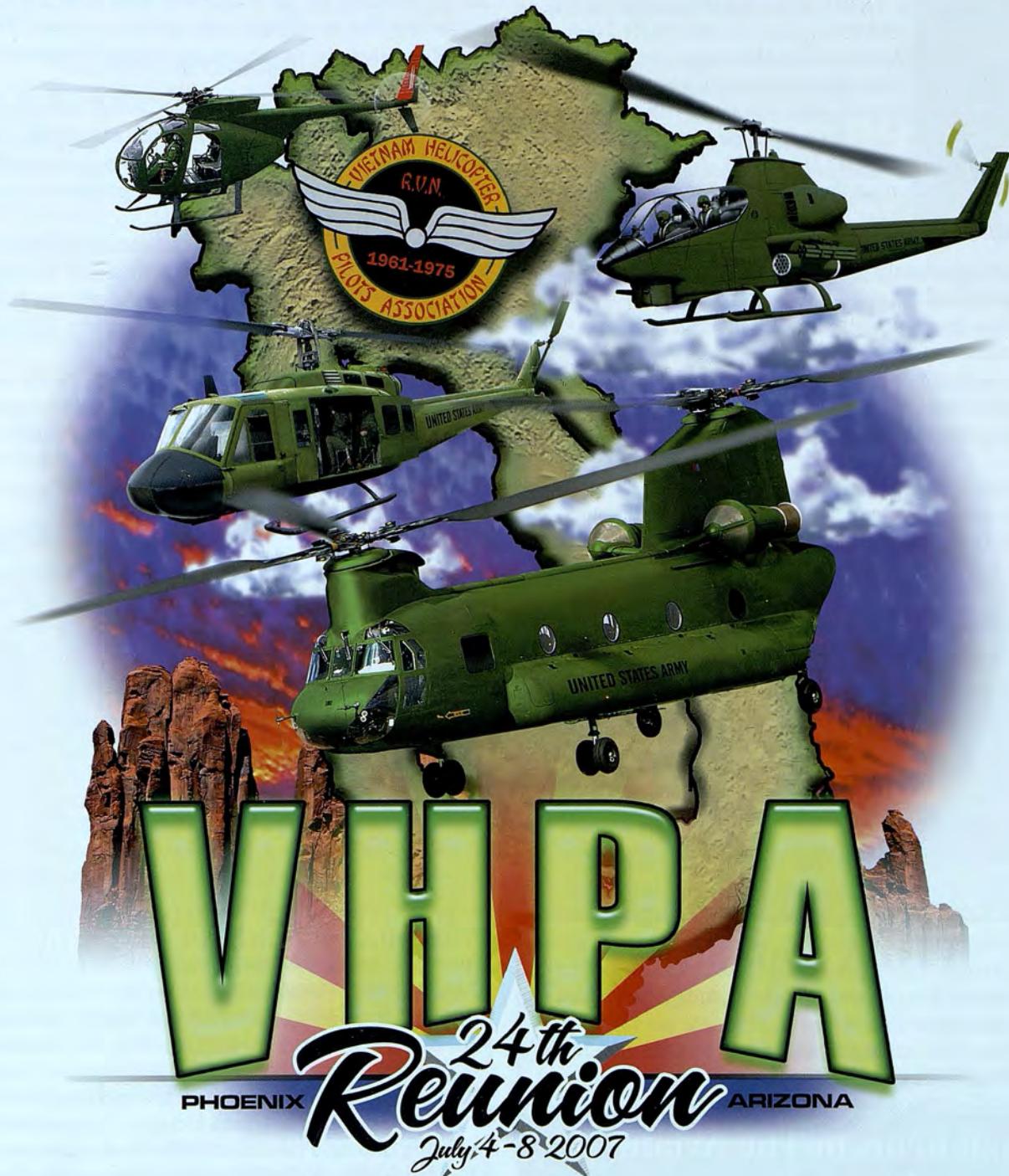




THE VHPA AVIATOR

Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association ®

March/April 2007 Vol. 25, No. 2



From the President

After overcoming a few technical/editorial delays, the registration for the 2007 Phoenix Reunion opened on Feb. 1.

I encourage you to sign up early because several side trips and tours have limited capacity and are filling up fast. We have planned a great reunion this year and I am really looking forward to it.



Angelo Spelios

By now, you should each have received a copy of the *VHPA 2006 Membership Directory*. I know you all have looked through it to try and find friends who you flew with in Vietnam.

Have you tried to contact that person? If you did, didn't you have a great time talking about old times? If he is not a member of VHPA, how about signing him up for a year? What a great gift this would make! I have signed up several buddies myself, and the gifts were well received.

We now have more than 7,600 paid members on our rolls. If each one of us would contact a buddy and sign him up, we could double our paid membership in a year. Finding old buddies we have not contacted since the war and getting reacquainted with each other is what VHPA is about.

Although the previous issue of *The VHPA Aviator* had a great amount of details about the upcoming Phoenix Reunion, *The Aviator* exists, for a large part, for you to

share your stories with everyone. So please submit your stories, anecdotes, etc., for publication in *The Aviator*. We want to read about your experiences during the Vietnam War, because that war is what binds us together forever. Every story is important to us, no matter how insignificant your story may seem to you.

Feel free to also submit letters and stories about things that have happened since Vietnam as it relates to our association and us.

When I ran for office for the junior member at large and vice president positions, I campaigned on volunteerism. Everyone who serves on the Executive Council and committees are all volunteers. If it were not for these volunteers, we would not have annual reunions, *The VHPA Aviator*, the *Directory*, the records/database, or other member services.

I have been on the Executive Council for five years. Every time *The VHPA Aviator* comes out, or the *Directory* is published each year, and we have the annual reunion, we feel pride that we are turning out products our members enjoy.

As you know, each year at the annual Business Meeting we elect a junior member at large and a vice president. I encourage you to run for one of these offices. It is necessary for our organization to have volunteers who want to serve.

In order to throw your hat in the ring, please submit a letter stating your intent by June 15 to Woody McFarlin, [REDACTED] Powder Springs, GA 30127; telephone: [REDACTED]

Looking forward to meeting you at the Phoenix Reunion this year.

—Angelo Spelios, President

Poker anyone?

The VHPA is considering organizing a friendly Texas Hold'em poker get-together at the Phoenix Reunion if there is interest.

A room, day(s) and times are not set yet and the VHPA will not be an official sponsor of the event.

However, if the interest is there and a simple set of rules is established, the VHPA may organize a formal tournament at next year's reunion in San Antonio and thereafter.

We envision a signup at the registration desk, with a small donation requested for prizes.

Only chips will be used in games. Check the reunion website where we may post a survey to gauge interest.

Please send an email to John "Jack" Salm at [REDACTED] or call [REDACTED] to indicate your interest.

A friendly poker tournament would be a great way to meet other VHPA members.

If you're interested, let us know or it won't happen.

— Jack Salm

VHPA statistics

- Between Jan. 23 and March 26, the VHPA added 23 new members.
- During this same period, members donated \$2,453 toward the VHPA Scholarship Fund.

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

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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 those officers, committee chairmen, and staff listed above.

Letters

Veterans overlook benefits due them

Recently I was thinking about an old Wolf Brand Chili commercial, which said, "How long has it been since you have had a bowl of Wolf Brand Chili? Well that's too long!"

For some strange reason, I converted that remembrance to a deserving veteran and thought, "Are you service connected?" and I mentally answered, "Well, why not?"

As a national service officer for the Military Order of the Purple Heart, I see this far too often. Veterans are unaware of the benefits for which they qualify or they have procrastinated and not filed for benefits, therefore, forfeiting hundreds of tax free dollars a month.

I recently ran into a former fellow VA employee and inquired as to his service connection, if any. He was brown water Navy and has diabetes, tinnitus and bilateral hearing loss.

With this combination of military experience, disabilities and spouse, he could be drawing \$398 a month. He will be coming to see me in the near future to file his claim.

I have another veteran who is status post prostate cancer surgery and has not completed his 21-526 Form for initial application for VA benefits.

Local benefits available

In addition to VA benefits there are numerous local, county and state benefits that go to waste due to no service connection.

In my county in Texas, for instance, with a determination of service connection of 50 percent or greater, a veteran can receive home tax exemption based on his percentage of service connection, a \$3 license plate, free or reduced park fees, and a free driver's license.

The most important aspect of filing a claim with the VA is summed up in three words, "GET A REP!" A doctor who treats himself has a fool for a patient.

Why deal with the VA on unfamiliar territory, when you can have a national service officer from a veteran's service organization help you through each step of the process at no expense.

Look for me at the Benefits Seminar on Saturday, July 7, in Phoenix. We have lots to talk about.

Vincent "Pike" Anderson
Military Order of the Purple Heart
National Service Officer
VHPA Member

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Letters

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Pilot with big family lost his life at Dak To

I let Feb. 3 pass without a mention of one of our pilots who lost his life at Dak To.

WO Orrin Dyer of Rummel, N.H., had four children and I can't imagine the grief that family went through on that February day in 1968.

Larry S. was with Orrin that day and I know he is fortunate to be with us today. Larry remembers more from that day than he probably wants to, and I feel for him.

It was on the VHPA website that I found Larry, and we converse often.

There are many stories, a lot of them sad ones, but I know Orrin Dyer loved life and was a happy man who spoke often of his children. He joked, loved to sit up at night and chat, and was concerned for the safety of all of us.

Remember men's bravery

We can honor these men by remembering their bravery and telling others about them. I challenge everyone to tell a good story about a VN friend in his honor. Let us not forget any veteran from any war. God Bless and welcome home brothers.

I am in contact even today with that young AO Larry Skoglund who was the WIA with Orrin that day.

I spoke with WO Dyer's family a couple of years ago and reminded them how much he spoke and loved them.

Thanks for keeping records.

Paul Gardner

Aviator article mentions brother killed in action

I just finished reading the article in *The VHPA Aviator*, Winter 2006 edition, written by Gary Holmes.

It is a long story, how this article came to my attention, but I am eager to contact Mr. Holmes.

My brother, Carl Huttula, was the observer who was killed instantly while helping Thomas Thorne crawl to safety (Page 1 of the article).

Mr. Holmes mentions my brother, Carl, a few times in the article, as well as contacting my parents giving them the details of how he died.

Now, nearly 40 years later, we see this story of May 16, 1968, related in print.

Both of my parents are still alive and I am looking for-

Sheuerman's article brings back memories

It was great reading Mike Sheuerman's story in the latest *Aviator*.

I, too, flew out of Pleiku — Camp Emari with the 7/17 Air Cav. I was a scout pilot with them in 1968 and flew by the Air Force many times heading north to Kon-tum or Ployclang and even up to Doc To for some real excitement.

The story brought back so many memories, both good and bad, but we have to cope in our own way. We were just getting the Cobras into the inventory at that time, so we had the Charlie models most of the time.

They offered a transition that would cost you six more months in country. After scouting, I had just about enough of the war, thank you.

At any rate, thanks again. All of you in the VHPA are doing such a great job. I really appreciate your efforts.

Terry Bishop

ward to showing them Mr. Holmes' article when I see them in a few days.

I really appreciated reading this article, as it helps me more fully understand this tragic day and war.

Carl was just two years older than me and, even after 39 years, thinking of my brother brings me to tears.

Thank you very much.

Janice Huttula

Elma, Wash. 98541

Letter shows importance of telling our war stories

The following letter tells the importance of making our war stories public.

Our website at www.vhpaweb.org has more than 85 war stories posted, with more received nearly every day. The VHPA also has a six-hour DVD for sale with war stories and video clips presented at last year's reunion. Here is the letter:

I want to thank you again for posting three of my Vietnam War stories on your website some months ago. I have had some interesting responses, some from guys I actually served with which never would have happened if not for your website.

As a result of those contacts, I have some additional information on my 'Crash of the Pusher in Cambodia' story and wanted to ask if you could add some additional info to my story on your website, with an additional credit and three more photos? Please let me know and I'll get to

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Letters

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work on getting that to you and if so, how do you want those photos? Embedded or attachments?

Thank you,

Cliff Morley

My answer was: "Yes, we will do the updates. Please send the updated story in Word format with the pictures embedded as you want them or send the story in an e-mail with the pictures attached."

To everyone: This is what the VHPA is all about. Give us your war stories to post on our website or, better yet, come to the next reunion in Phoenix and get your story put on DVD. You might be surprised what avenues your stories will open.

Gary Roush
webmaster@vhpa.org

VHPA website helps track down old friend

This morning there was an email on my computer from a lady in Oklahoma.

Now, before you start to chuckle and guffaw, her message had nothing to do with a long lost love child I didn't know I had.

It was a request to help her locate a long lost stick buddy of her boyfriend. Seems he had been searching for this old friend whom he served with at Fort Campbell in the mid 1970s.

She located our website and started looking through it for help. She saw the section on photos from past reunions and took a chance. There, she found a photo of me with the missing friend.

She found my email address and now the two old friends are back in contact. The \$36 dues we pay is well worth the price of VHPA membership, considering all we get for the money.

Mike Sheuerman
VHPA membership chairman

Cobra question

114th Assault Helicopter Company

I am responding to the letter in the January/February 2007 issue of *The VHPA Aviator* with the question: Where did the name for the AH-1G Cobra originate?

As a member of the gun platoon of the 114th Assault Helicopter Company (Knights of the Air), 1st Aviation Brigade, I assure you it came from our call sign "Cobra."

We had a letter from Bell Helicopter requesting the call sign for naming the new aircraft. Since I was returning to

Veteran still looks up when he hears helicopters

When the air is cold and thin on the high plains of Colorado. When the air is just right. I still look up when I hear the sound of helicopter blades cutting through the air. I guess the pilot has to add pitch when the air is thin.

When the air is crystal clear you can hear them coming for miles. I've stood on the front porch and listened and watched for what seems like hours until they made their slow popping passage over my home.

The sound does not bother me anymore. In fact, it gives me comfort of a sort. Those dragonfly-like machines saved my life once. They dropped in supplies when they were most needed. They brought letters from home. And, yes, they brought hell to the NVA when we thought we least had a chance.

Yes, I still look up. Now, however, it's for a different reason. Every time I hear one and can look up to see it, I honor the guys who flew them so long ago in a land that time will not soon forget.

Norman Wallace
B Company, 1/69 Armor
RVN 1967-69

Fort Rucker after this tour (my second tour) to attend the Warrant Officer Advanced Course, it was decided I would take the framed letter to the museum.

We returned from missions one day shortly before the company stood down and the letter had been taken; this was unfortunate, since the letter was truly a piece of history.

Further authenticity is the old Revelle model "Huey Cobra Gunship" model of a Charlie model, the platoon's original aircraft, with the coiled Cobra on the nose; the coiled Cobra was the platoon insignia.

Many times we were accused sarcastically of "what an original call sign for a Cobra platoon."

In fact, it was more original than most of our Vietnam brother aviators realized, since the platoon's call sign was "Cobra" long before the AH-1 was fielded.

Ron Gerner, retired CW5
Director of Aviation Operations
U.S. Army Garrison, Fort Hood, Texas

129th Assault Helicopter Company?

VHPA member Greg Smith asked the question regarding the call sign "Cobra" in the January/February 2007 issue of *The VHPA Aviator*.

In his letter, Mr. Smith mentions the possible origin of the call sign as the 114th Assault Helicopter Company's gun platoon.

The 129th Assault Helicopter Company's gun platoon also used the call sign "Cobra." The 114th did have "in country" seniority (by a few months) on the II Corps' 129th and could possibly have been the reason Bell chose

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Taps

John B. Bolling

John B. Bolling, 61, died March 12 from injuries suffered when his UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter crash landed on March 10 at Fort Rucker's Skelley Stage Field near Opp, Ala.

The Fort Rucker Army Flier reported that Bolling was a retired Army captain and an E Company, 1st Battalion, 212th Aviation Regiment instructor pilot.

He and the three crewmembers on his aircraft were executing a routine flight-training maneuver when the accident occurred, the *Flier* said. The three other crewmembers suffered minor injuries and were treated at a local medical facility and released.

Bolling, who lived in Enterprise, graduated from flight training with Class 69-12 and then flew medevac missions in Vietnam in 1969-70.

After graduating from Sam Houston State University in 1968, he received a direct commission in the Army Medical Service Corps and was selected for flight training. He retired from the Army in 1988 and became a civilian instructor pilot.

Bolling is survived by his wife, Jody, and two children Robert H. Bolling and Betsy Lee.

John S. Bourquin Sr.

John S. Bourquin Sr., 60, died of cancer on Sept. 8, 2006, at his home in Elmer, N.J.

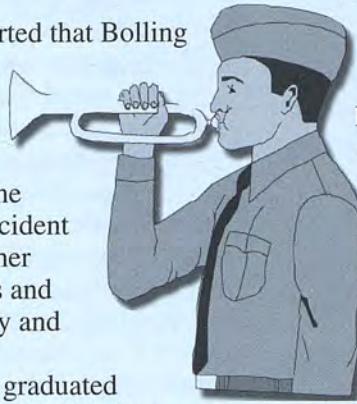
He graduated from Army flight training in Class 69-47, and served in Vietnam in 1970-71 with the 25th Infantry Division and the 1st Cavalry Division.

Bourquin worked as a machinist for General Mills.

He is survived by his wife and three children, a daughter and two sons serving in the Army.

George H. Freeberg

Retired CWO George H. Freeberg, 74, died, Jan. 10 in



Savannah, Ga.

He served in Korean War and was held prisoner for more than a year before escaping.

After the Korean War, Freeberg served four tours in Vietnam. He graduated from flight school with Class 58-5.

He received many medals and commendations, including two Silver Star Medals and two Bronze Star Medals.

On completion of his military career, Freeberg chartered planes in Minnesota and West Virginia.

He later moved to Savannah, where he obtained his real estate license and served as a deputy sheriff for nine years with the Chatham County Sheriff's Department. He taught at the Police Academy at Armstrong College and weapons training for the sheriff's department.

Freeberg is survived by his daughters, Dee Dee Freeberg of Montana and Barbara Ann Jones of Virginia; stepdaughters, Sherry Sanchez of Savannah and Crystal Cummings of Texas; and stepson, Carl Cummings of Atlanta.

Richard Edison Gilpin

Richard Edison Gilpin, 59, of Jacksonville, Fla., died Feb. 25 after a seven-month battle with lung cancer.

A veteran of the Army, Gilpin served as a helicopter pilot with the 498th Medical Company in Vietnam in 1968-69. He graduated from flight school with Class 68-7.

He retired as an air traffic controller and was working as an instructor at the Hilliard facility.

Gilpin is survived by his wife of 35 years, Linda; and daughter, Robyn Gilpin McCormick.

Steven A. Helm

Steven A. Helm, 58, died of an illness Feb. 26, 2006, in his Lisle, Ill., home.

In flight school, he was a member of Classes 68-18/68-30. He served in Vietnam with the 61st Assault Helicopter Company in 1968-69. Helm achieved the rank

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to call the AH-1G the "Cobra."

On the other hand, the 129th's gun platoon could have been the inspiration for such a name.

In either case, there were two gun platoons using the same call sign and, I am sure, providing the same excellent coverage and support in their respective AO. My warmest regards to all "Bite and Strike" 129th members.

Vic P. Gilliland

Cobra Alemaster 1971-72

**Letters for publication
in *The VHPA Aviator*
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Taps

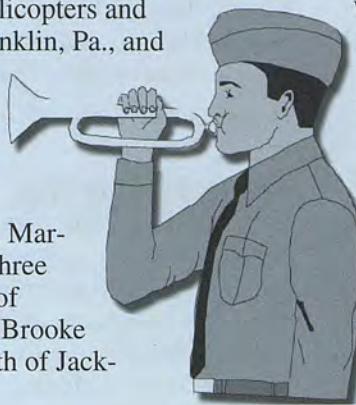
Continued from Page 6

of captain while flying in Vietnam.

After the military he flew helicopters and jets for Joy Manufacturing of Franklin, Pa., and served with the National Guard in Washington, Pa.

Upon moving to Illinois, he was the owner and chief pilot of Wings West.

He is survived by his mother, Margaret Helm of Oil City, Pa.; and three daughters, Bailey Morgan Helm of Downers Grove, Ill., and Kristan Brooke Helm and Kelly Regan Helm, both of Jacksonville.



John-Michael Orlando Hendrix

John-Michael Orlando Hendrix, 58, died Nov. 13, 2006 in Granite Falls, Wash., as a result of complications

from pericarditis.

He joined the Army in 1968 and graduated from flight school with Class 69-13. Hendrix served three tours in Vietnam. His first tour was with the 1st Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division; his second tour was with B Troop 2/17th Cavalry, 101st Airborne Division; and his last tour was with C Troop 2/17th Cavalry, 101st Airborne Division.

Hendrix flew the OH-6A and among his many awards were four Distinguished Flying Crosses.

While serving as a scout pilot in B Troop, he met and married a nurse from the 85th Evac Hospital at Phu

Bai. I had the pleasure to fly John and Patti to Da Nang so they could catch their honeymoon flight.

He left the Army after Vietnam and he continued flying helicopters. For several years he flew for a big oil company. When Hendrix finally quit flying, he turned to writing. He wrote the book *To Have and To Hold*, which told about his Vietnam experiences as well as his love for Patti.

All of us who had the pleasure of knowing John, miss him, especially his daughters, Heather and Heidi.

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Thinking About Retiring or Changing Jobs?

If so, we invite you to take advantage of our free retirement analysis.

Considering that it's likely a person who is 65 years old today will live past age 85, it is important to plan appropriately for retirement. Regardless of your current age, you should ask yourself:

- Can I afford to retire when and how I would like?
- What should I do with my 401(k) and pension plans?
- Is my asset allocation suitable for my risk tolerance?

A personalized retirement analysis can help you identify your goals, review your assets and understand such influences as market risk and time horizon. Your Financial Advisor can assist you in developing an appropriate retirement savings and investment strategy. After all—your retirement may need to last more than 20 years.

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**Attend Reunion 2007
in Phoenix**

Taps

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Farewell, Banshee 14. We will see you again on lower Banshee pad.

—Steve Pullen, Banshee 11

Alan Dean Hix

Alan Dean Hix, a retired Army lieutenant colonel, died July 19 at his Sherwood, Ore., home after a 10-year battle with lung cancer. He was 64.

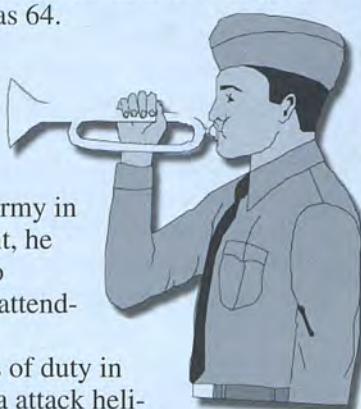
After graduating from high school, Hix opened his own service station. He later became a journeyman cabinetmaker.

He was drafted into the Army in 1965. After his first enlistment, he was offered the opportunity to become an Army aviator and attended flight training.

Hix later served two tours of duty in Vietnam, flying AH-1G Cobra attack helicopters with B Troop, 3rd Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry.

His received his associate of science degree in aviation management in 1977 from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University at Fort Knox, Ky. In 1984, he graduated from the Naval War College in Newport, R.I., and received a master of science in management from Salve Regina College.

In 1987, after 22 years in the Army, Hix retired from active duty to Portland, where he began a new career in Oregon's fledgling display industry. He became the first employee of InFocus Corp., serving as vice president of operations. He helped build InFocus into a company valued at more than \$60 million when the company went



public in 1990.

Hix later joined Sarif in 1997 as vice president of operations. He then joined Clarity Visual Systems in 2000, again as vice president of operations.

As a member of the Columbia River Yacht Club, he and his wife, Cindy, enjoyed cruising the Pacific Northwest in their yacht the "At Ease." They split their time between homes in Sherwood and Palm Springs, Calif.

He is survived by his wife of 31 years, Cindy Hix; daughter, Shelli Kregel; sons, Scott Hix and Alan Hix Jr.

Robert E. "Bob" Lee

Robert E. "Bob" Lee, 70, of Safety Harbor, Fla., died Nov. 8, 2006.

He served 28 years in the Army as a helicopter pilot, serving several tours in Vietnam. Lee was recipient of the Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star Medal and Meritorious Service Medal.

He worked 16 years as a culinary instructor for Pinellas Technical Education Centers and was a graduate of Austin Peay State University, Clarksville, Tenn.

Survivors include his wife, Ann, and five children.

John Robert "Josh" Logan

John Robert "Josh" Logan, 78, of Cape Coral, Fla., died Dec. 7, 2006.

He is survived by his loving wife of 55 years, Patricia.

Josh and I were in Germany at the same time. He was in H-37s and I was a H-34 man. Our units worked together many times supporting USAREUR training maneuvers.

One time, both units were sent to Bad Toltz to support the 10th Special Forces along the Bavarian Alps. The H-34s arrived first and we set up in an empty hangar. Cots with sleeping bags were laid out in a neat row.

Then came the three H-37s, landing across the field. Open went the clamshell doors and out came three private autos and the crews. Josh being one of them, drove to

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WANTED

Looking for memorabilia from Air Cavalry, Assault Helicopter, NETT, UTT, ICCS, Support, Medical, Transportation and Special units. Patches, Uniforms, Headgear, unit "Business" cards, Propaganda, Printed matter, Plaques, Souvenirs, Party Suits & Novelty items are all of interest. This material is wanted for use in historical exhibits and information for a book. I have numerous references. What can I do for you?

John Conway



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Taps

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town for plush living.

I raged at Josh about this gross difference many times, but in spite of it all we became fast friends. Then came LBJ's Vietnam War and we were both called back to CONUS and wound up at Fort Benning and both into the forming 178th ASHC.

Josh was always interested in many things and now it was studying Vietnamese; Mot, Hai, Bo, Bon etc. just in case of a shoot down. Not a bad idea and I joined him in the endeavor. We didn't get far beyond Bier LaRue.

The 178th wound up at brand new, still under construction, Phu Loi. Josh and I in the same tent and that is where troops really get to know one another.

The accident in which John Seeley was killed affected Josh until the end of his life. Josh held his feelings in, but we all know it bothered him.

Josh was twice commander of Post 8463 VFW, Cape Coral, Fl., a very large post. He was a strong supporter of our 178th reunion group, even flying out to California to the reunion there.

He wasn't well and all noticed it, but Josh said nothing, being the trooper he was.

I visited him at home a couple weeks before he finally traveled west and he was the same stoic, honest, uncomplaining, upbeat pal a person could ever want. Rest in Peace, Josh.

—Jack Knotts

Josh Logan was one of the original 'seasoned' pilots that went over with the 178th. He had previously flown CH-37s.

I remember Josh as a fine pilot who had his share of bad experiences early in 1966. First surviving the tragic crash of Boxcar 162 and shortly thereafter being shot down and wounded while on the ground.

That would have been enough to spook a lot of folks, but Josh kept on plugging and flying. He was always a pleasure to crew for.

—Steve Niedbala

CE, then FE, on Boxcar 153 in 1966

Michael A. Moore

Michael A. Moore died Jan. 14 after a hard-fought battle with cancer.

He was born on March 27, 1948, in Denver Colo.

Moore was a member of Flight Class 69-31 and served with A/25 Aviation, 25th Infantry Division, as a UH-1M, infinite pilot.

After his return from Vietnam, he enrolled in the Uni-

versity of Colorado, where he earned a BS degree in history.

Moore was an active member of the Colorado Army National Guard until forced to retire due to his illness. He completed 38 years of active and reserve duty, retiring as a CW5.

He was the driving force behind the curriculum being taught at the High Altitude Training Site (HATS) in Eagle, Colo.

His contributions and dedication to the training of helicopter pilots in the art of mountain flying was instrumental in the saving of lives and equipment in military helicopter operations. He used to say, "We stand on the shoulders of Giants" Well, he truly was a giant on whose shoulders many generations of helicopter pilots will proudly stand upon.

Many people walk in and out of your life, but true friends leave footprints in your heart. Mike left many footprints behind. We were lucky to have Mike Moore as our friend.

He is survived by his wife, Rhonda, and his children, Andrea, Ryan, Michael, Colleen, Shaun and Lindsay.

— Joe Dobek

James H. Paulin Jr.

James H. Paulin Jr., 63, died Dec. 1, 2006, in Houston, Texas.

He graduated flight school with Class 66-13 and served two tours in Vietnam, with the 9th Infantry Division in 1966 and as a Cobra pilot with the 334th Attack Helicopter Company in 1968.

Paulin was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, Silver Star Medal, a Purple Heart Medal, and numerous Air Medals for his combat flying.

Upon completion of his military service, he graduated with a bachelor's degree from the University of Texas and since 1972 had resided in Houston, where he worked his way up to vice president of development for the Sam Houston Race Park.

Paulin loved to fly and was very proud of his airplane, a T-41B painted in Army colors, and his OH-23 helicopter. He was a member of the Aerial Law Enforcement Response Team (ALERT) in Houston and flew the unit's UH-1H and OH-58A helicopters. Paulin flew many search and recovery missions across the state.

During tropical Storm Allison in 2001, he flew numerous rescue missions in Houston. After Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf coast in 2005, Paulin flew supplies to Mississippi in his T-41B. He also worked as a volunteer with the Collings Foundation to preserve and restore combat aircraft that have served our armed forces.

Paulin is survived by his wife of 34 years, Mary; a son Ryan; and a daughter, Heather.

Raider 21, it was a privilege flying with you and you will be missed. We will see you at the next LZ.

— Dick Wilson, Blue Max 64

— Doug Scott, Bulldog 17

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Taps

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James Michael Riley

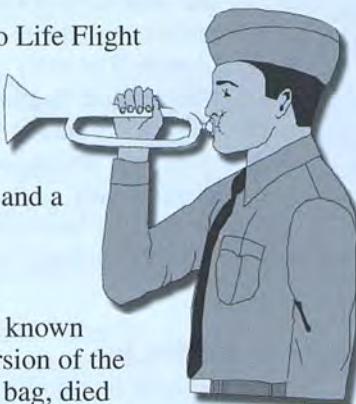
James Michael Riley, 68, of Parma, Ohio, died March 9 after a lengthy battle with cancer.

Riley was a helicopter pilot with the 25th Infantry Division in Vietnam.

Before enlisting in the Army for the Warrant Officer Flight Training Program, he served a four-year enlistment in the Air Force and worked as a police officer in Portland, Maine.

Riley served as a Metro Life Flight pilot.

He is survived by his children, James Michael Riley II, Julie Ann Pierce, and Jeffrey Thomas Riley; and a sister, Theresa Morris.



Hans Weichsel

Hans Weichsel, who is known for sketching out a new version of the Huey on the back of a barf bag, died March 13 in San Antonio, Texas.

Weichsel joined Bell Helicopter in 1950 and retired in 1984 as a vice president/general manager. He worked closely with Larry Bell in the early days of Bell Aircraft Co.

Weichsel helped open the door to the use of helicopter in the Korean War partly because of kindness to a little girl with a lollipop.

It was August 1950 and the Korean War was in its early stages. Larry Bell, along with Weichsel and Joe Mashman, had flown to Army headquarters in Fort Monroe, Va., in a Bell 47 to convince the brass the helicopter would be beneficial in Korea.

Bell and Mashman, Bell's second helicopter pilot, went inside to try to talk with Army officials, while Weichsel, Bell's sales engineer, waited with the helicopter and polished it with a rag.

While Bell and Mashman were met with closed doors, a little girl of perhaps 7 or 8, and holding a lollipop, approached Weichsel — and, as children will do, began to explore the helicopter with her sticky fingers.

Weichsel patiently wiped down the helicopter after her. When the little girl finally asked for a ride, Weichsel, who privately wanted the child to leave, finally told her she could have a ride if her father came with her. Of course, Weichsel had no idea that the little girl's father was a general — and one who would open doors for Bell.

The company went on to work with the Army to come up with designs to meet customer requirements.

While trying to reconcile the nine-man design of the Huey with the 13-man requirement of the Army, Weichsel sketched a new version of the Huey on the back of an airsickness bag. Although that sketch wasn't the version finally adopted, it laid the foundation for the Huey that is recognized the world over for saving lives — and for transporting troops in and out of harm's way. He also was part of the group that came up with the initial design of the Model 201 — or Sioux Scout.

Mashman, Bell's second helicopter pilot, worked closely with Weichsel.

He is quoted in *The Bell Helicopter Textron Story* as saying, "Back in those days, the military didn't know enough about helicopters to come up with a design spec. So it was Hans Weichsel's ingenuity, in figuring out what the military would be responsive to, that gave engineering an insight into what sort of design we needed or what to improve. And he was responsible for a lot of the designs — many of which were improvements on early production helicopters — some of which were based on my observations."

William B. Wieland Jr.

William B. Wieland Jr., 60, of Jefferson Hills, Pa., died in a fire at his home on Feb. 4.

He was born in Pittsburgh, Pa., on June 30, 1946.

Wieland graduated from flight school with Class 66-19. He served in Vietnam with the 187th Assault Helicopter Company and the 118th Assault Helicopter Company in 1967-68.

After leaving the Army, he was employed as a helicopter captain with USX Corp. at Pittsburgh International Airport, and as purchasing agent, estimator and helicopter instructor for Cast and Baker Corp. in Canonsburg, Pa., where he had been working for the past 19 years.

He is survived by his wife, Pamela, of Moon Township; and children, Kenneth Wieland of Orlando, Fla.; Melanie Rae Wieland of Moon Township; Jennifer M. Steele and Aimee R. Steele both of Washington, Pa.

Register online for Reunion 2007

www.vhpareunion.org

Reunion 2007

July 4 reception launches Phoenix get-together

Usually, the VHPA Reunion Welcome Reception and the Fourth of July don't coincide.

An exception occurs for our 2007 Reunion in Phoenix.

Our arrival day, the first official day of the reunion, is Wednesday, July 4.

Your National Reunion Committee (NRC) has planned to begin the reunion with a "bang."

As we've discovered from past reunions, people arrive hungry and tired. This is especially true with a Western venue. So activities will begin a little earlier for this arrival day.

In keeping with tradition, all of you attending your first reunion are invited to a reception geared especially to first timers – pilots, spouses, and guests. At the reception, scheduled from 6-7 p.m., you'll be introduced to the Executive Council, National Reunion Committee members, and Headquarters staff.

You'll also receive a short briefing so you'll understand what to expect during the reunion. It will be your time to ask questions and feel comfortable on your first "mission." This is a no-cost event, but you'll need to wear your name badge for admission.

At 6:30 p.m., the Grand Canyon Ballroom doors open to begin the Welcome Reception. Your admission ticket and name badge will allow entry to air-conditioned comfort, a sumptuous buffet, and a party band that will have you dancing.

Of course, the "meet-and-greet" is the best part. You'll greet those you haven't seen since the last reunion, and meet pilots you haven't seen since your last mission in Vietnam. We guarantee, this aspect alone is the worth the price of admission.

Hungry after that long flight to Phoenix? Look at the buffet included in your Welcome Reception ticket price:

Salad station

- Fresh greens, mushrooms, cucumbers, red onions, garbanzo beans with vinaigrette and ranch dressings

- Cole slaw with black beans, roasted corn and cilantro vinaigrette

- Smoked red bliss potato salad

Chile bar

- Black bean chile and chile con carne
- Diced onions, diced tomatoes, crispy tortilla strips, sour cream and scallions
- Pepper jack and cheddar cheeses

Carved oven roasted tom turkey

- With orange cranberry relish, mayonnaise and mustard

- Served with silver dollar rolls and butter

Carved seasoned top round roast beef

- With creamed horseradish and a whiskey glaze
- Served with silver dollar rolls and butter

Pasta station

- Prepared to order
- Penne pasta and wild mushroom

ravioli

- Alfredo sauce and marinara sauce
- Toppings of fresh vegetables, bay shrimp, sliced mushrooms and garlic focaccia

Desserts

- Apple cobbler with vanilla bean ice cream
- S'mores
- Cookies
- Brownies

Of course, there will be cash bars with all your favorite spirits and wine. And we continue the tradition of 12-ounce beer for a special, VHPA price of \$3.

To burn off those accumulated calories, you'll hit the dance floor with Arizona's premier party band, *SNAKE EYES LLC*. It's a four-piece band, plus a female vocalist, extra percussion, and two horn players.

For those of you who'd rather talk than dance, we're

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Dave Rittman photo

This is the rear of the hotel, the photo taken from one of the many interlocking pool areas.

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confining the sound system to the front of the ballroom, in the vicinity of the band. There will be plenty of space for the "meet-and-greet" crowd to mingle and talk without shouting.

Of course, this being Independence Day, we haven't forgotten fireworks. A local company, Southwest Fireworks, has extensive experience in the Phoenix area.

It has produced spectacular fireworks for municipalities, corporation events, and associations, including United Services Automobile Association (USAA).

Southwest Fireworks president Dan Nelson promises to "pull out all the stops for an organization like VHPA."

Fireworks will not be available anywhere in the vicinity of the Marriott Desert Ridge Hotel. VHPA is producing and presenting an extravagant, personalized display specifically for our members.

Again, your Welcome Reception ticket and VHPA badge will be needed for access to our private, fireworks viewing area.

Still ready to party and "belly up to the bar" with those you haven't seen in years?

Following the fireworks, you'll return to the ballroom where *SNAKE EYES IIc* will continue entertainment. The bars will remain open, and the band will continue playing until the "last ship clears the LZ."

As you see, one ticket buys an awful lot. So go to the online registration on the VHPA website www.vhpa.org and be certain to check the box for the Welcome Reception.

Your one ticket gives you access to the Welcome Reception, live entertainment, a great buffet, spectacular fireworks and a nonstop party.

See you in Phoenix on the Fourth of July.

— Joe Bilitzke

New seminars, vendors at reunion

The Phoenix Reunion is going to have several new

events, starting with the Veterans Benefit Seminar on Saturday, July 7, and the Women's seminar on the same day.

For the Benefits Seminar, we will have several speakers, including one of our own, Vincent R. "Pike" Anderson. Pike served with C/2/17 in 1968-69, call sign "Condor 26."

Pike is a national service officer with the Military Order of the Purple Heart, and is one of the service officers who assists guys like you and me in the processing and filing a VA claim.

For those of you who are unfamiliar with the process of filing for a claim with the VA, Pike is the man to talk to. He can answer questions about what is covered and what is not, what you need to file a claim, and where to get the records you need.

Many of you are eligible for compensation from the VA for your service-connected disabilities, but have either failed to file or do not know you qualify.

Anyone out there who doesn't want what could be a couple of hundred to a couple of thousand dollars a month in earned compensation? Wondering how you are going to retire when you cannot see how with the cost of health care? I am a perfect example of someone who never really understood what I qualified, or even if I did qualify, but when a service officer sat down with me, I ended up with a package of benefits and compensation that still amazes me today.

And all because one individual took the time to explain the rules to me. It changed my life, and it could change yours.

I will be at the seminar and would be happy to discuss this with any of you in detail. Trust me when I tell you that right now, you may be leaving beaucoup dollars and benefits that you earned in that live fire exercise across the sea uncollected.

One of our new vendors this year will be Mike Foster who is with Dynamic Aviation. Mike had two tours in

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Vietnam, one with the 173rd Assault Helicopter Company, Lai Khe (November 1966- November 1967) and a second tour with the 224th Aviation Battalion (RR) where I flew RU-21s out of Da Nang and later Bear Cat (November 1969-November 1970).

Mike is looking to hire more than 100 pilots with openings for U-21 and C-12 drivers, both in CONUS and OCONUS. We also need A&P mechanics. The compensation is very generous and, if any of you are interested, check them out at www.dynamicaviation.com

Mike will be manning a booth in the Vendor Room so you can get all the information regarding this opportunity.

The Women's Seminar, also on Saturday, July 7, will be an opportunity for all the "significant others" who have lived with us all these years to talk about some of the common issues they have experienced living with Vietnam-era helicopter pilots.

I am working with the Vet Center in Phoenix to bring in an individual who can help facilitate the meeting and make sure that our "better halves" get the most from sharing their common experiences.

I will update all of you with more information regarding this seminar in the next issue of the Aviator.

I look forward to seeing you all at the reunion. Do not forget to tell your wives/significant others about the Women's Forum on Saturday.

— Rich Buzen

Golf at Wildfire

This year we will be playing golf on the property where we are staying.

The J.W. Marriott Desert Ridge Resort & Spa has 36 beautiful holes designed by two great golfers. Arnold Palmer designed one course and Nick Faldo designed the other.

We will be playing on the Nick Faldo course, which is

a real test of your golfing skills.

As always, you will be able to pick your own team for the four-ball scramble and enjoy the beautiful Arizona morning. We will tee off at 8 a.m. on July 6 and hope to finish by 1 p.m.

After we finish, we will retire to a room in the hotel for a lunch and give away prizes. As in past years, it will be mostly door prizes.

We then will go on our own to enjoy the rest of the afternoon and get ready for the Lee Greenwood concert.

I am looking for sponsors for to help with the prizes. Anyone who would like to sponsor, please contact me through Headquarters. I will get back to you ASAP.

I will talk to you at the luncheon about what I have in store for the future.

— Mike Whitten



Dave Rittman photo

This photo is taken from the putting green, looking toward the JW Marriott Desert Ridge Resort & Spa.

Lee Greenwood to perform for VHPA

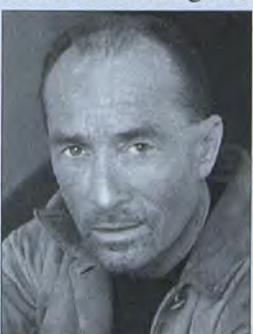
Lee Greenwood — best known for his song *God Bless the U.S.A.* — will perform an exclusive concert at the 2007 VHPA Annual Reunion in Phoenix.

If you attended the last VHPA reunion in Washington, D.C., you heard our own Mike Roulier and the WOC Chorus sing their rendition of *God Bless the U.S.A.*

Now, as a special addition to the 2007 Reunion, you can hear the man who wrote the song.

Written in the early 1980s, the song was brought back to popularity with the launching of Operation Desert Storm in 1991. Ten years later, the attacks on 9/11 saw the song re-enter the Top 20 on the country charts as a new patriotism swept throughout the country.

Greenwood continues to perform across the United



Lee Greenwood

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States, but there's a special place in his heart for the military and military organizations.

When you register for the reunion, don't forget to check the box for tickets to this special performance. Your ticket not only gives access to the Lee Greenwood Show, but you'll also enjoy the best Phoenix rock band, The Screamin' Javelinas.

The band has been performing in the Valley since 1997, and plays in venues that include Cricket Desert Sky Pavilion, Alice Cooperstown and the Hard Rock Café. This infectious group of talented musicians plays a mix of classic rock, modern rock, country and originals.

As the lead-in band to Lee Greenwood, these four entertainers will have you warmed up and ready for the headliner.



This is one of the outside dining and bar areas at the JW Marriott Desert Ridge Resort & Spa.

Dave Rittman photo

Doors open July 6 at 7 p.m. The Grand Canyon Ballroom will welcome you in air-conditioned comfort with theater-style seating.

Don't forget to add the Lee Greenwood show to your ticket selection on the registration form. It will truly be a memorable reunion experience.

— Joe Bilitzke

Local tours

Two Phoenix-area tours will provide you with the opportunity to see and experience unique venues. Both are in the morning, so they will take advantage of the early morning temperatures, but will still require the appropriate sun-screen and head covers to protect you from the Arizona sun.

River rafting

You will be taken into the beautiful town of Fountain Hills and on into the Yavapai Indian Reservation on to the

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Deadline for VHPA scholarships is May 1

Do you have a child, grandchild or great-grandchild who is ready to start college or university or is already attending a college or university or grad school?

Could you use a \$1,000 to help pay the costs? If so, now is the time to apply for one of the two VHPA Memorial Scholarships administered for us by AAAA.

These scholarships are awarded on merit, not need.

The deadline to apply is May 1. VHPA currently has two \$1,000 scholarships available annually to descendants of current VHPA members.

Go to www.quad-a.org, click on SCHOLARSHIPS, read the requirements and APPLY. Make sure your descendant or descendants state on the application that he or she is applying for one of the two VHPA scholarships.

Last year the grandson of a member living in Arkansas received our scholarship. But 14 other applicants for the VHPA scholarship received other AAAA

scholarships, grants and low-interest loans — and we only had 25 applicants total.

VHPA has only one requirement to be eligible for our scholarship — you must be the descendant of a dues-current member of VHPA. That's it. When we are all gone, the requirement will change to "the descendant of a pilot who flew helicopters in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam conflict — 1961 to 1975."

Since AAAA administers our scholarship for VHPA, all student applicants or the VHPA father/grandfather must be a member of AAAA.

Guys, get your descendants to apply today. Don't wait. Don't put it off.

The VHPA Scholarship Committee looks forward to a record number of applicants for our scholarships.

Mike Sheuerman
Scholarship Committee

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Bush Highway, passing a fantastic Lake on the Salt River Project, one of our major sources of water.

There, you will be able to see some unique cacti and lush, green plants of the Sonoran Desert. All this before you get on the float trip.

At the launch point, everyone will be fitted for a personal floatation device and given a river safety speech before floating down the river 4-7 miles, where the buses will meet us for the return trip.

On the river you may see such wildlife as wild horses, bald eagles, hawks, blue herons, egrets, mule deer, javelinas and rattlesnakes.

Jeep safari

A short ride will take you to one of the many desert trails where guides will share Old West stories and history of the area. Typical drive time to the desert trail is about 20 minutes.

The ride takes you on off-road trails, where you will see a variety of vegetation, mountain ranges and breathtaking views.

These areas have natural desert landscape, clear skies, and lots of fresh air.

While on the trail, you will have the opportunity to stop along the way and get a first-hand look at the desert.

Guides will lead you on a nature walk for about 30 minutes. This not only gives you the opportunity to stretch, but to get a better understanding and first-hand look at the desert environment.

It's a great way to enjoy the rugged, yet sensitive, desert found here in Arizona. Those who take this tour always find them to be enjoyable and educational.

— Dana Young

Pima Air & Space Museum

One of the focus tours for the Phoenix Reunion is a trip to the Pima Air & Space Museum just outside of Tucson.

The tour will include transportation, lunch and access to the museum. In addition to more than 150 fixed-wing

aircraft, there are more than 30 helicopters on display at the museum.

The museum has five large hangars totaling 100,000 square feet of exhibit space. An original World War II barracks contains an extensive model collection, arranged chronologically, showing virtually all U. S. military aircraft from pre-World War I to the present.

The museum enjoys a reputation as one of the best anywhere.

As you enter Hangar No. 1, you move toward an exact replica of the 1903 Wright Flyer, the aircraft with which the Wright Brothers made history.

Early aircraft such as the Waco RNF, Fleet Model 2

and the Focke-Wulf Fw-44J Stieglitz also are located in Hangar No. 1. Out the north door of this building can be seen President Dwight D. Eisenhower's "Columbine" and the DC-6 used by Presidents Kennedy and Johnson. The DC-6 is open for guided tours.

Some 100 feet north of the DC-6 is the Space Gallery and Arizona Aviation Hall of Fame.

The Space Gallery features a full-scale mockup of the X-15, the rocket-powered aircraft that broke the envelope of space.

Leaving the Space Gallery and walking southwest past the SR-71 Blackbird, the world's fastest jet aircraft, you arrive at Hangar No. 3, which houses a B-24 Liberator bomber, one of about 12 known to exist, the B-25, A-26, TG-6 and other World War II-era aircraft.

A new display, "World War II Combat Gliders," was dedicated on the 50th anniversary of D-Day — June 6, 1994.

Immediately south of this building is Hangar No. 4, which houses the B-29 and C-46 aircraft, among others. A formal dedication was held in October during a reunion of the 330th Bomb Group to which this B-29 was assigned during World War II.

With some 65 acres of display area, comfortable

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shoes are a must. A walk through the museum takes about three hours, but you could easily spend all day. A tram operates daily, weather permitting.

— Dana Young

Go-carts capable of 120 mph

For those of us who had to trade in flight for four wheels, driving a go-cart at the Bondurant Super Kart School is a unique opportunity to feel the same adrenalin rush we experienced flying low-level at 80-120 knots.

The go-carts are, according to the spec sheet, capable of speeds as high as 120 mph, go from 0 to 100 mph in 6 seconds, and are capable of cornering at 2.5Gs.

We are limited to 200 participants, but VHPA members who take advantage of this will spend four hours at the track. The day will include:

- Introduction: To begin, there is a driver briefing that covers the unique controls of a kart, including driver safety, flags, and the rules of racing.

- Getting

Ready: The driving starts with an open practice session for all competitors in no particular order. This gives everyone the opportunity to learn the karts and the track.

In your second session you will be broken down into teams for a 20-minute, open practice session. During this session, you will want to plan and practice your pit stops, determine the driving order, how long each person will drive, etc.

- The Race is an hour in length. After one hour, the checkered flag will fall and the team with the most laps wins. The winning team will receive Bondurant T-shirts and a podium presentation.

- Rules: Each team will have to make at least five pit stops with driver changes.

Put a group together and see who has the "right stuff" to get the checkered flag at the end of one hour of competitive Super Kart racing.

— Dana Young

See Arizona from a balloon

One of the unique events available to Phoenix Reunion attendees is the Hot-Air Balloon Ride.

This tour is limited to 75 people, so, if you plan to add this to your list of "things to do," act fast.

This is an early morning event, so you will still have time to participate in reunion activities scheduled for the afternoon.

Your adventure begins upon arrival at our Sonoran desert launch site. You will receive a preflight briefing, where you'll learn more about the hot-air balloon and how it flies, plus other facts you should know to make your flight enjoyable.

All flights begin with the inflation of the balloon.

Once your balloon is inflated, you will join your pilot in a luxurious, oversized basket that has plenty of room to allow everyone to enjoy the ride.

During the flight, you have an unobstructed 360-degree view to take excellent photographs.

Flights generally are close to the ground, usually less than 400 feet. At this altitude, you are able to see the

sights and sounds of desert life.

The pilots often decide to rise higher to give you a marvelous view of the valley. By changing altitude, the pilots also may be able to change direction by finding a shift in wind currents.

Throughout your flight, ground crews follow over desert lanes and roads so they can be ready and waiting for you upon landing, always a gala occasion. You are greeted in the traditional manner, with flutes of champagne and gourmet food.

— Dane Young

Grand Canyon tour available

Based on member requests, we have arranged a two-day, one-night, tour of the Grand Canyon following the Phoenix Reunion.

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The tour will leave the JW Marriott Desert Ridge Resort & Spa on Sunday morning, July 8, at 9 a.m. and proceed to northern Arizona, where you will see Sedona, Flagstaff, the Painted Desert and the Navajo Reservation en route to the Grand Canyon.

A box lunch will be provided along the way.

Grand Canyon activities will center at the historic Bright Angel Lodge. Once there, you will be able to take walking tours along the canyon rim or take advantage of a

free shuttle that takes you to sites not available to motor vehicles.

Overnight accommodations will be provided in Tusayan, just outside the park, or in Flagstaff, depending on availability. Dinner will be on your own and there are numerous restaurants to choose from.

The tour will return to the Phoenix area after breakfast and arrive at Sky Harbor Airport at 2 p.m. or the JW Marriott Desert Ridge Resort & Spa at 3 p.m.

— Dana Young

Scholarship fund is one of a kind

The George Bartol Memorial Scholarship Fund was established in 2004 by his wife and daughters.

The fund is an IRS-recognized, tax-exempt organization.

Bartol is remembered by his family as a dedicated soldier, father, husband, son and brother who died at age 59 after an 18-month battle with brain cancer.

He served two tours in Vietnam with the 540th Transportation Company in 1965-66 and A/1/9 Cav, 1st Cavalry Division in 1968-69.

He flew 180 combat missions to complete his second tour of duty in Vietnam and was discharged from the Army in 1970. His military honors included the Bronze Star Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal, Air Medals, and the Vietnam Campaign Medal.

Bartol flew commercially for Petroleum Helicopters for 33 years before being diagnosed with terminal brain cancer at the age of 58 in 2003. His medical condition forced him to retire. He was given a 100 percent service-connected disability by the VA, which recognized his illness had resulted from heavy exposure in Vietnam to Agent Orange and/or aircraft fuel.

Because of the sacrifice George made for his country, he was honored at the Vietnam Wall in Washington, D.C., in April 2004.

Education was always very important to Bartol. He made many sacrifices to ensure the education of his three



The late George Bartol with his wife and daughters.

daughters.

This scholarship fund was created to carry on his memory and to help deserving students with financial assistance. The scholarship fund also strives to create awareness of primary brain tumors. At this time, they are the only organization in the United States offering college scholarships like this.

To qualify, students must have a parent currently battling a primary brain tumor or have a parent who has died from a primary brain tumor. Children of Vietnam Veterans who are not receiving Chapter 35 benefits are strongly encouraged to apply.

Last year, the fund awarded \$9,000 in scholarship money. With additional fund-raising, the family hopes to increase the number of scholarships.

The fund receives more than 200 scholarship inquiries per year.

The George Bartol Memorial Scholarship Fund will be hosting its annual golf scramble on Aug. 25 in the Orlando, Fla., area. If you would like more information about the scholarship fund, an application or information on the golf scramble, please contact Heather Bartol Shields at [REDACTED] or via email at [REDACTED]

To donate directly to the George Bartol Memorial Scholarship, please go to www.firstgiving.com/George-Bartol

PHOENIX REUNION SCHEDULE

Tuesday — July 3 — Early Arrival

1-5 p.m. Pre Registration
8-12 midnight Early Bird Gathering

Wednesday — July 4 — Arrival Day (yes, it's the Fourth of July)

9 a.m.-8 p.m. Registration
6-7 p.m. First Time Attendee reception
6:30 -11:30 p.m. Reception and Fourth of July party
— Dinner Buffet
— Fireworks
— Premiere Phoenix Party Band "Snake Eyes"

Thursday — July 5

9 a.m.-6 p.m. Registration
5-9 a.m. Hot Air Ballooning
7-11 a.m. Jeep Riding
7:30-1:30 p.m. Bondurant Racing go-cart racing
— Race time 8:30-12:30
8 a.m.-12 noon River Rafting
9 a.m. -4 p.m. Luke AFB
8 a.m.-12 noon Mini Reunions
1-5 p.m. Mini Reunions
1-4 p.m. War Story Contest
2-4 p.m. Scholarship seminar
6-10 p.m. Pool party w/ entertainment & food

Friday — July 6

9 a.m.-6 p.m. Registration
7 a.m.-2 p.m. Golf
6:30 a.m.-6:30 p.m. Pima Air and Space Museum Tour
8 a.m.-12 noon Mini Reunions
8-11 a.m. Boeing Apache Line tour
1-4 p.m. Historical Presentation Forum
1-5 p.m. Mini Reunions
6-8 p.m. Pre-concert by The Screamin' Javelinas
8-11 p.m. Lee Greenwood Concert

Saturday — July 7

9 a.m.-12 noon Registration
10 a.m.-12 noon Annual Business Meeting
9:30 a.m.-12 noon Spouse & Guest Brunch (Fashion Show)
1-3 p.m. Veterans Benefit's seminar
1-3 p.m. Women's seminar
1-4 p.m. Historical Presentation Forum
1-5 p.m. Mini Reunions
5:45 p.m. doors open Final Banquet

Sunday — July 8

Departure Day
Optional Post Reunion Grand Canyon Tour

VIETNAM HELICOPTER PILOTS ASSOCIATION

24th Annual Reunion • Phoenix, AZ • July 3-7, 2007

NATIONAL REUNION REGISTRATION FORM

Register online at www.vhporeunion.org or mail completed form to:

VHPA Headquarters, 5530 Birdcage St., Suite 105, Citrus Heights, CA 95610-7698

Fax signed credit card authorization to: (916) 966-8743

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

EVENT

No. of people

Price

Total

Registration through 4/30/2007*

@ \$60

Registration after 4/30/2007*

@ \$70

Registration for under age 21

@\$15

Early Bird Event (July 3)

No charge

Welcome reception for first reunion attendees only (July 4)

No charge

July 4th Party

@ \$75

Hot Air Ballooning (July 5)

@ \$160

Jeep Riding (July 5)

@\$80

Go Cart Racing (July 5)

@\$225

River Rafting (July 5)

@\$80

Luke AFB Tour (July 5)

@\$35

Pool Party w/BBQ (July 5)

@\$30

Pima Aviation Museum (July 6)

@\$65

Golf w/Lunch (July 6)

@ \$90

Boeing Apache Tour (July 6)

@ \$20

Lee Greenwood Concert (July 6)

@ \$55

Spouse/Guest Event (July 7)

@ \$40

Final Banquet/Dance (July 7)

@ \$75

Non-registered guests at banquet only

@\$95

Grand Canyon (single occupancy)

@\$375

Grand Canyon (double occupancy)

@\$570

Total from sidebar

XXXXX

XXXXX

VHPA dues (if not dues current)

1 year

@ \$36

VHPA dues (if not dues current)

3 years

@ \$99

Life membership

@ \$540

GRAND TOTAL

T-SHIRTS

QTY.	SIZE	AMT.
	S@\$18	
	M@\$18	
	L@\$18	
	XL@\$18	
	XXL@\$19	
	XXXL@\$20	

SIDE BAR TOTAL:

QTY.	BANQUET MEAL
	Beef
	Fish
	Vegetable

Membership Fund contribution:

\$ _____

Scholarship Fund contribution:

\$ _____

General Fund contribution:

\$ _____

Vietnam War Museum contribution:

\$ _____

REFUND GUARANTEE

No refunds will be given for any reunion fee or event unless VHPA HQ receives cancellation notification no later than the published cancellation date.

However, if a Refund Guarantee fee of 10 percent is paid at time of registration, a full refund will be made for any event cancelled at any time.

*Each person 21 and older must pay full registration fee. (Except non-registered banquet guests.)

CREDIT CARD PAYMENT

MC or Visa No:

Expiration date:

Signature:

CHECK or MONEY ORDER PAYMENT

In lieu of a credit card, you can mail a check or money order payable to "VHPA Reunion 2007" with form.

Reunion 2007

VHPA Scholarship seminar planned at Phoenix

Attention all VHPA members!!

The VHPA Scholarship program is beginning to grow!

We now have two \$1,000 VHPA Memorial Scholarships awarded each year and another partially funded. New funds are beginning to flow into the VHPA Scholarship fund at an increasing rate.

Plus, many in our membership are asking how they can contribute to the scholarship program in ways other than outright cash donations. The answer: There are many ways it can be done. So, therein is the reason why your Scholarship Committee senses a need for a Scholarship Program Seminar this year at the annual reunion in Phoenix.

If you work in the insurance, money management, or are experienced with similar foundations or scholarship programs and would like to be a part of the seminar panel, send your resume and details of your work expertise to:

Tom Payne
VHPA Scholarship chairman

Tulsa, OK 74137

If you have questions about how you might be able to contribute to the panel, call Tom Payne at [REDACTED] noon to 9 p.m. daily.

There will be a limited number of panel members (3-4) selected by June 1, 2007, and notified. Only those selected panel members will be eligible to make a 10 to 15-minute (maximum) presentation.

There will be plenty of time for audience questions and participation as we explore new and creative ways of funding our VHPA Memorial Scholarship Program.

Tom Payne
Tulsa, Okla.

Crandall

Helicopter pilot receives Medal of Honor after 41 years

President Bush on Feb. 26 presented the Medal of Honor today to retired Army Lt. Col. Bruce Crandall, 41 years after heroic actions in Vietnam the president said demonstrate the best of America and its military members.

Bush praised Crandall's heroism during the Battle of Ia Drang Valley in November 1965, when he repeatedly flew into intensive enemy fire to rescue and resupply besieged 1st Cavalry Division ground troops.

Crandall proved himself "a daring pilot, a devoted soldier and a self-less leader" during the first major ground battle of the war at Landing Zone X-Ray near the Ia Drang River, Bush said.

Crandall transporting troops

Early on Nov. 14, 1965, Crandall, then a major commanding A Company, 229th Assault Helicopter Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), was transporting a battalion of soldiers into Landing Zone X-ray, Bush recounted.



Bruce Crandall now

After several routine lifts into the area, the ground troops came under a massive attack from the North Vietnamese Army.

During Crandall's next flight — a flight that left three soldiers on his helicopter killed and three more wounded — he remained at the landing zone in direct line of enemy fire so four wounded troops could be loaded aboard, the president said.

After returning the wounded troops to base for treatment, Crandall knew his mission was finished, Bush said, but couldn't bring himself to abandon the ground troops who were outnumbered and low on ammunition. Crandall asked for volunteers to fly back to LZ X-ray, and Capt. Ed Freeman stepped forward.

"In their unarmed choppers, they flew through a cloud of smoke and a wave of bullets to deliver desperately needed supplies," the president said. "They carried out more of the wounded, even though medical evacuation was really not their mission."

Continued on Page 22

Museum acquires mysterious painting

It can be described as eerie, haunting, or surreal, but however one interprets it, the painting donated to The National Vietnam War Museum qualifies as mysterious.

The painting was donated by Mac Shafer of Shafer Oil and Gas Properties in Mineral Wells in remembrance of his parents, Marilyn and Arthur Jack Shafer, who worked for Southern Airways, which trained helicopter pilots during the Vietnam-era.

"I did it in honor of my parents and for the men and women who served our country during that time," Shafer said.

He acquired the painting, "The Night Has Eyes," in an art swap with Ace Cook who had purchased it at an estate sale more than 12 years ago. The seller told Cook the painting came from a relative of the artist, who is known only as R.W. from the initials scribed on the bottom right corner of the artwork.

Rumors surrounding the work suggest the artist was a veteran, confined in a mental institution, who transferred his recurring nightmares to canvas. The painting also is



alleged to have hung in the hospital where the unknown R.W. was a patient.

The 45 by 70-inch oil painting is executed primarily in red and black, and is framed in black, providing an overall tone of darkness. The soldiers pictured are obviously North Vietnamese and Viet Cong, and easily recognizable as

such to anyone who served in Vietnam.

The eyes bring to mind to all Vietnam veterans the feeling that the enemy was constantly watching them during the long dark nights.

Jim Messinger, museum treasurer, accepted the painting on behalf of the museum and agreed with Shafer the painting is surreal and surrounded by mystery.

"I found it overpowering when I first saw it," said Messinger. "It's a rather fantastic piece of artwork and it will be an asset to the museum."

Anyone with information about the artist is encouraged to contact The National Vietnam War Museum at P.O. Box 146, Mineral Wells, TX 76068, or online at www.nationalvnwrmuseum.org

Ohio River LZ Chapter celebrates 20th reunion

The Ohio River LZ Chapter celebrated its 20th anniversary, with more than 124 pilots and guests.

Gathering at Louisville's downtown Holiday Inn's top floor hospitality room, the group enjoyed the company of one another while a stream of Vietnam-era videos and slides, as well as pictures of past and the current reunion, were shown.

Hosted by past chapter president Bob Hamilton, the Friday-Sunday event included cocktails and hospitality, helicopter flights, tours and a banquet.

The weekend's high point was member Bob Poe's invitation for each of the pilots to fly one of two Bell Jet Rangers at a nearby airport.

Poe owns and operates five Jet Rangers at Whirl-Away Helicopter Inc.

Members were given the controls and commanded to take off en route to past glory while completing a short trip. Non-pilots — spouses, children, and grandchildren — were invited to ride along on the flights.

Guest speaker at the Saturday banquet was Miss America 2000, Heather French-Henry.

She is the daughter of a Vietnam veteran and has become an outspoken champion for veterans' rights.

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in Phoenix**

Crandall

Helicopter pilot receives Medal of Honor after 41 years

Continued from Page 20

Crandall would have been a hero if he had stopped there, Bush said. "But he didn't stop," he said. "He flew back into X-ray again and again — 14 times he flew into what they called the 'Valley of Death.'" He made those flights recognizing the extreme risk to his own life, he said.

Over the course of the day, Crandall flew three different choppers, with two of them damaged so badly they would no longer fly. "But he kept flying until every wounded man had been evacuated and every need of the battalion had been met," Bush said.

By the day's end, Crandall and Freeman had spent more than 14 hours in the air, evacuating 70 wounded men and providing a lifeline that allowed the battalion to survive, Bush said.

"To the men of Ia Drang, the image of Major Crandall's helicopter coming to their rescue is one they will never forget," Bush said. He noted that one officer who witnessed the actions called them "without question, the most valorous I've observed of any helicopter pilot in Vietnam."

The battalion commander said that without Crandall, his battalion would have been overrun, Bush said, and another officer said, "I will always be in awe of Major Bruce Crandall."

Bush noted that while others have praised Crandall, he never thought of himself as a hero. "There was never a



Bruce Crandall in 1965

consideration we would not go into those landing zones," Bush said, quoting Crandall. "They were my people down there and they trusted in me to come and get them."

Crandall's character and leadership have grown clearer over the years, Bush said. He went on to make more rescue flights, served a second tour in Vietnam, retired from the military and worked in his local government in Washington state.

Perhaps most telling, Bush said, was Crandall's decision to withdraw his own name from consideration for the Medal of Honor to ensure that Freeman would receive his. Bush presented Freeman the honor in July 2001.

"Today, the story comes to its rightful conclusion" as Crandall finally receives his Medal of Honor, Bush said.

"In men like Bruce Crandall, we really see the best of America," he said. "He and his fellow soldiers were brave, brave folks. They were as noble and selfless as any who have ever worn our nation's uniform."

Bush remembered the comrades who gave their lives and those still missing and said the sadness their families ensured hasn't diminished with time.

The suffering and grief could have been far worse, he said, had it not been for men like Crandall. "For the soldiers rescued, for the men who came home, for the children they had and the lives they made, America is in debt to Bruce Crandall," he said. "It is a debt our nation can never really fully repay, but today we recognize it as the best as we're able, and we bestow upon this good and gallant man the Medal of Honor."

Several books about the battle recognize Crandall and Freeman's contributions. Among the most well-known is the bestselling "We Were Soldiers Once ... and Young," co-written by Lt. Gen. Harold Moore, commanding officer of infantry units in X-ray, and Joseph Galloway, a combat reporter who was in the landing zone during the battle.

After receiving the Medal of Honor, Crandall joins 111 other living recipients of the award, 60 of them awarded for actions in Vietnam, according to the Medal of Honor Society.

Interested in advertising in *The VHPA Aviator*?

The cost for a black-and-white ad is only \$125 for a quarter-page ad, \$250 for a half-page ad, and \$500 for a full-page ad

Contact Mike Sheuerman at membership@vhpa.org for details

Jack Salm

Writer survives 'stupid human tricks' as an aviator

Most of us TV watchers have seen "Stupid Pet Tricks" on The David Letterman Show or on its own show.

What about stupid human tricks? Growing up, we all went through a phase of dare and double dare, and did dumb things. The ego is a very fragile thing, even when we are young.

When I was in my early years, we were playing follow the leader. We were at an abandoned reservoir.

The cement tanks were empty, but were concrete and we were going to cross a beam about 12 inches wide and about 30 to 40 feet above the cement floor. It was also about 40 feet across.

I went across with the rest

Common sense told me this was not a good idea, but I wasn't going to "wimp out." So, I went across with the rest. Stupid? Damn right!

I have written in other articles some of the crazy things I have done throughout my life. I sometimes think I am lucky to be around.

Camping on the beach during World War II and watching a submarine surface not far beyond the surf, scaring the hell of us.

My flight to Birmingham in marginal weather when good sense told to do a 180 and return to Fort Campbell.

Flying without lights over Kentucky Lake and buzzing the towboats.

Inadvertently flying across the DMZ in Korea and almost doing an encore at the Czech border on a flight to Grafenwoehr.

Flying in formation into clouds when other pilots were not instrument qualified. Very hairy. Low-level at

night before night vision goggles — not smart.

Pre-flights are meant to cover everything. Realistically a pre-flight is only as thorough as the person doing the inspection. Time usually dictates how thorough — usually not much more than a walk-around, but it does pay to check the fuel tanks.

Explanation would be difficult

It would be very difficult to explain to an accident board why you crashed the aircraft when 2 of the 3 tanks were full or why only 1 wing tank was full. One empty wing tank can make for a very sloppy takeoff.

While in Nam I was in the 48th AHC, the "Blue Stars" Their motto is: "Skill not Luck." Good motto, but not 100 percent accurate.

You can have all of the skill in the world, but without some measure of luck, you are toast. I feel I have been a very lucky fellow. While flying an L-19 "Bird-dog" and having an engine failure right over an airfield was luck. Bringing the aircraft to a successful landing required skill.

The old saying "There are old aviators, there are bold aviators, but there are no old, bold aviators" is probably not true. Some of you out there were bold and are now old. Go figure!

Send stories to *The Aviator*

I'm sure many of you have interesting stories to tell. Jack Swickard, editor of *The VHPA Aviator* would welcome articles from VHPA members. Can't spell? Don't know grammar or punctuation? Doesn't matter. Your articles can be proof written and/or edited. Mine certainly have to be. Give it a try.

Send your articles to swickard@vhpa.org

WANT TO BE ON THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE?

There are two officer positions to be elected to the 2007 VHPA Executive Committee.

The positions are Vice President and Junior Member at Large.

If you are interested in either position, please submit a letter of intent to me no later than June 15, 2007.

I will send you the complete application packet by return mail.

Send your letter to:

Woody McFarlin

Powder Springs, GA 30127

Evenings: [REDACTED]

wmcfarlin@kennesaw-ga.gov

