



The VHPA AVIATOR

The Newsletter of The Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association ~ Issue 28-05 ~ Sept/October 2010

The Hero of this year's Reunion, the restored B-Model Gunship from the Wings and Rotors Air Museum makes a fly by during our July 3rd visit to the Classic Rotors Helicopter Museum. The museum is located at the Ramona City Airport, about 30 NM northeast of San Diego International (KSAN).



Our Front Cover photograph and the two photographs of the Ramona Airport Reunion event that runs on page 5 of this issue were given to us by Phil Meyers, a friend of the VHPA and the west coast Editor of Classic War Birds magazine.

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The VHPA Welcome's our new President for the 2010-2011 term...

If you missed our 27th annual reunion in San Diego, you missed a good time; great weather, friendly people, great facilities and activities and great camaraderie with our fellow aviators. That didn't just happen; it was due to a combined effort of Mike Law serving his first year as reunion chairman, Gary Roush as president and the Executive Committee, FritzCo our headquarters company, Military Reunion Planners, the Southern California Chapter and some individual standout efforts like Kenny Bunn and the beer keg project. Thank you all for the great effort and results.

As with all reunions, there are lessons learned, some adjustments are already in the pipeline for next year in Orlando. In addition to visiting with your fellow aviators, Orlando offers a huge family entertainment experience, so make your plans now to come early, stay late, and bring the grand kids.

As many of you know, our headquarters operation contract was placed out for bids this past year. After months of work by Gary Roush and the Executive Committee, Military Reunion Planners (MRP) was selected as our new headquarters operating company. We are now in a transition phase from Fritzco to MRP and relocating the headquarters office to Texas. Let me say a huge thanks to Marcia Fritz and her staff for all the years of support they have provided and a welcome to MRP. Additional information is provided in other areas of this issue and on the web site.

This year I saw a couple of examples of "you get a person to sign up for membership and get them to a reunion, they will find those reasons to return" many of us have known for years. In one case a member brought a friend, who lives in the San Diego area but had never joined our



Woody McFarlin, VHPA President

organization, over to the hotel for a look/see. That person is now a member. In another case, the aviator joined and came to the reunion to participate in a mini-reunion. He has already said "see you in Orlando". So we owe it to our fellow aviators to encourage those who have never joined or have never attended a reunion to do so. It'll be a rewarding experience for both of you.

Do you have a new idea for our reunions? A new idea of how we can better serve our membership? If so, e-mail myself or the Executive Committee. We don't claim to have all the ideas or know all the answers but we'll give consideration to anything you suggest that will be for the betterment of the VHPA.

~ Woody

Editor's Note: *Woody (McFarlin) is no stranger to the VHPA. He has had an active role in our administrative process for years, he also has served as the Vendor Room Coordinator for our Reunions for the last several years. Woody flew Huey's and Cobras for B Troop 7/17th Cav in 1968-69. He then served as a flight commander in the Aviation Armament Division and as Division Operations Officer at Ft. Rucker between tours. He was Operations Officer for F/8th Cav in 1972-73, then served as Flight Commander for the Joint Military Commission Aviation out of Saigon for a couple of months after the stand down. Now retired, still married to Original Wife, they have two sons and one grand daughter.*

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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

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

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2010-2011

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OUR ASSOCIATION:

Specific, Mission-Focused and Non-Partisan

The Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association is, simply put, an entity born of experiences shared and remembered, honorable in intent and pure in purpose. Strictly created to remember and honor those who flew helicopters during combat over the skies of Southeast Asia, our association now numbers over 8,000 active members who live throughout the United States and at scattered locations, world-wide.

The lifespan of our organization now exceeds the timeline of events that led to its creation, and continues to grow and sustain membership, participation and quality of products. This is amazing when one considers the length of the Vietnam War, the controversies of the time, and the ensuing events that have influenced our individual lives since the last U.S. helicopter pulled pitch in Saigon on April 25, 1975.

The Association endures, undoubtedly, because its goals are very specific. Lawfully defined within the Articles of Incorporation, the significant purposes of the VHPA are:

- To enhance and accredit the cohesiveness, esprit de corps, and traditions of valor of rotary wing aircrews that flew in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam Era.
- To seek out, using whatever means available, individuals who piloted rotary wing aircraft in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War and inform them of the existence of the VHPA and encourage all eligible individual to become members.
- To promote and perpetuate the bonds of brotherhood that bind a group of men who have shared and survived an experience fraught with danger yet filled with the essence of pride and satisfaction—an experience unshared except by these unique men.

The Articles of Incorporation successfully serve as a tool, as a mission statement, to refine our focus in a pure manner that intentionally transcends individual politics, religion and partisan differences. The VHPA does not address nor participate in political or philosophical issues outside the reference of our common mission statement, and therein lays the strength of the Association's endurance.

A small group recently petitioned the VHPA to disregard its fundamental charter and commence a partisan, polarizing effort on behalf of one state government currently involved in a political disagreement between other state governments. This group sought to change a future VHPA reunion location to further their partisan goal, an act that would violate the VHPA Articles of Incorporation and goals.

The VHPA, as a non-profit, non-political organization by law, cannot and will not undertake activities that could be construed as a political statement. The Association does not make decisions to hold or move a reunion based on politics, nor allow petitions and political/Partisan articles on the website, in the magazine or at reunions. The Association also enforces strict rules for campaigning of members seeking election to our VHPA Executive Council to ensure fairness and minimize membership polarization and fracture. Importantly, the VHPA will not allow its name to be associated in a Partisan manner by any individual or organization.

Throughout the lifetime of the VHPA, the leadership has steadfastly honored the Articles of Incorporation and maintained the honorable goals of our Association. Although a quick search will reveal literally thousands of organizations established to advocate, communicate, protest and defend countless issues, it is important to remember only one organization, the VHPA, is dedicated to specifically honoring those pilots who flew helicopters during the Vietnam War.

Let us continue to honor the intent and purity of our purpose. Forged by patriotism, tempered by fire and courage, and bonded into brotherhood by the shared experience of war—that is our organization: **The Vietnam Helicopter Pilot Association.**

Highlights of the VHPA's 27th Annual Reunion in San Diego, 2010

By Mike Law and David Adams

Here are but a few of the photos and stories from this year's Reunion.... Mike and I did the best we could to cover every event but that was almost impossible. We are sorry if we missed your special event, perhaps things will be different next year in Orlando, we certainly hope so!

Closing Banquet



US Marines from Marine Medium Tilt-Rotor Squadron 161 based at MCAS Miramar provided the Color Guard. Our friends from the New York City Police Emerald Society Bagpipers came all the way across our country to provide their support for our Missing Man tribute. Over 1,200 people attended the Closing Banquet and then moved outside to view a wonderful city-wide fireworks display.

Dinner on the Midway



We just about filled the entire flight deck of the USS Midway for our outdoor Bar Be Que dinner the night of July 2nd. There were dozens of aircraft on display, proctors conducted visits through the Squadron Ready

Rooms and the hanger deck, we were treated to a great USO show. Another highlight of the night was when VHPA Member Bobby Cormack (3rd from left in the photo) was introduced to the crowd, seems that Bobby was a young sailor on the Midway exactly 50 years ago, he even wore the same jacket he had when first stationed on the ship. A large amount of gratitude is also owed to our Marine Brothers in Arms for their support of our Reunion, their fully-flyable UH-1B was the real hit of the entire Reunion.

The California Chapter North's (CCN) Mobile Officer Club



After 10 years of faithful support to VHPA Reunions all over the country, the VHPA (represented by President Gary Roush holding the certificate) and the VHPA Reunion Committee (represented by Mike Law holding the plaque), present Mike Nord (in the center) and Ken Fritz (CCN's current president to Gary's right with a long overdue award and recognition for their service to our Organization.

Literally because of Mike Nord's passion (owning a tractor trailer driving school also helps!), hundreds of volunteer hours and donations from the CCN guys, a lot of people have really enjoyed the VHPA Reunions over the years.

The Annual Business Meeting

Approximately 400 Members attended this year's Annual Business Meeting. While there we elected two members to the Executive Council, voted on an amendment to our Constitution, learned about the financial "State of the VHPA", raised funds for our scholarship program and were updated on many more important items to our Association.

As per our constitution and by-laws, if you don't go to these meetings, you can't vote on any of these matters. Much of the VHPA's success after 27 years is due to the guys who come to these meetings. **THANK YOU AND HOPE TO SEE YOU IN ORLANDO!**



Historical Presentations and War Stories Seminar



In the Aviator for March-April last year, we ran a story about Ret. Col. Bill Reeder that detailed his experiences as a Pink Panther, his shoot down and capture in 1972 while flying in the Easter Offensive

and his subsequent terrifying imprisonment until his release years later. In that story Col. Reeder confirmed that he never would have survived that ordeal if it wasn't for the help he received from a South Vietnamese Flight Officer and fellow POW, Xanh Nguyen. Col. Reeder repeated his story to this year's HP&WS Seminar and he even brought along his best friend Xanh Nguyen to introduce to the crowd. The story of these two men's ordeal was even more electrifying in person than it was in print; if you were not able to be there, contact HQ for a CD of the entire HP&WS presentations.



Mini-Reunions

Photos from the Mini-Reunions of the 118th AHC Bandits, the 7/17th Cav, and the 361st Avn Co's Pink Panthers. If you would like to see your picture with your unit in next year's Aviator, start making some calls and cooking up some plans for your own Mini-Reunion in Orlando!

Vendor Room Activities



The Vendor Room was in full swing at this year's Reunion. Along with the usual Vendors we also had several new Vendors and separate VHPA Chapters offering items for sale. One new member of this group was the Combat Helicopter Pilots Association who set up a membership information table and display about their society.

San Diego Harbor Cruise



Over two hundred members of the VHPA enjoyed a 3-hour San Diego Harbor Sightseeing Cruise. We all enjoyed the company of friends new and old alike (new and old as in "friends", not age, let me be clear about that). We also learned that it's certainly not the Dad's Navy any longer, today's Navy is fully modernized in both offensive and defensive weapons.

Quilt Show and Tell

Cheryl Ranes, a long-arm professional quilter, made this T-shirt quilt and presented it during the first ever VHPA Quilt Show & Tell. More than 40 ladies and 2 guys attended this event. There will be more events like this in Orlando.



Trip to Coronado Island for their 4th of July Parade



The SoCal Chapter of the VHPA and the Distinguished Flying Cross Society participated in Coronado Island's 4th of July Parade. It was a great event and enjoyed by all who either participated, or viewed the Parade. A special Thanks also go out to their local chapter of the VFW, the beer was as cold as advertised, the hot dogs as tasty as advertised but their Welcome as even greater than advertised!

Visit to Ramona Airport for the Museum Tour & Helicopter Rides.



The Ramona Airport is home to the Classic Rotors Museum which has a flyable CH-21. The Wings & Rotors Museum positioned both their flyable UH-1B and OH-58 at the airport for this event. VHPA Founder Larry Clark also brought his restored UH-1B to Ramona plus Al Doucette displayed/flew his special (built from scratch) radio controlled helicopters. Helistream Helicopters brought a Super Huey to Ramona and provided paid flights to several members and their guests. All in all it was a great day of celebrating the history, and the future, of rotary-wing aviation.

The San Diego Park and the San Diego Zoo



Truly two of San Diego's greatest attractions and neither failed to surpass everyone's expectations. The park is filled with many interesting buildings and exhibits. The San Diego Zoo is home to many rare and intriguing creatures from nearly every region of the earth, and the displays show how much care is taken in making every animal feel as at home as possible. A day at the zoo is truly a day not counted against you, makes us all young again.

Another special "Thank You" must also go out to every member of this year's Reunion Planning Committee and their Chairman, Mike Law and also to the Members of the VHPA's SoCal Chapter and their President, Tom Crosby. All of these men, and their wives put in countless hours of hard work to make sure this year's Reunion was one of the best we have ever had. You guys will truly be a tough act to follow!

Official San Diego Reunion Photographer – Picture Phoenix - Military Reunion Photography

Richard Camer of Picture Phoenix took most of the photos shown in these few pages along with all of the posed, commercial photos that were taken during the San Diego Reunion. Richard and his partner visited mini-reunions, the MOC, plus most of the events and displays. They have graciously agreed to share many of the pictures shown here with our readers.

Rick also told us that several people were unable to catch up with him on the morning after the Closing Banquet plus there were several more guests that also didn't get a chance to pick up their photos. Rick wants the VHPA to know that he will give anyone who gets in touch with him his best effort to find the pictures you are interested in buying; he keeps all of his pictures on-file for many years.

You may contact Rick at [redacted] or by e-mail at: [redacted]

To Mike Law, 2010 Reunion Chairman and the membership of the VHPA

It was a great pleasure to host the VHPA this year and Lorie & I appreciate all your hard work and your wonderful Association's partnership with us.

I wanted to let you know that I spoke with our Hotel's General Manager this morning regarding the elevator situation and the inconvenience your attendees experienced. We are aware that the elevator situation was annoying and caused issues for the attendees. In exchange for their inconvenience we would like to do something for the VHPA that would in the end, benefit all members.

Therefore, even though we can not return or use the 12 kegs of beer that your Association ordered, we would like to rebate the cost of them to your master bill. Hopefully this \$4,378.28 rebate will help ease the pain caused by our South Tower's unfortunate elevator problems.

Mike, it was wonderful working with you over the past year, please let me know if I can be of any further service. We sincerely hope that every member of your fine Association enjoyed their stay in San Diego and that they return and see us again.

Best regards,

Susan Avery and Lorie Falcone-Kuo
San Diego Marriott Hotel and Marina

MISSING A MUG FROM THE 4TH VHPA REUNION ON THE QUEEN MARY?

REUNION ATTENDEES, is anyone missing a plastic mug from the July 1987 Reunion on the Queen Mary in Long Beach? If so, contact Mike Sheuerman at [REDACTED]

You left it in the Sticket Inn in San Diego and I have it. There is no charge for storage or shipping, and, by the way, THAT WAS A GREAT REUNION! All in favor of going back there in 2013 instead of San Francisco say "Aye".

Mike Sheuerman, Panther 15 5/71-4/72
Sticket Inn Officer, 361stACE/AWC

Vietnam Helicopter Pilot's Association Convention in San Diego

By: Haywood P. Norman, IV

The 2010 reunion in San Diego has come and gone. For our members who were unable to attend and missed a chance to rekindle old friendships, swap war stories, or investigate the archives of our various personal histories, you really missed out on a great reunion.

The third of July parade and the 4th of July fireworks display that stretched five miles long and could be seen for several minutes over the bay, was marvelous. The great weather made sightseeing a memorable experience.

We aren't getting any younger, and the opportunities to reestablish these old contacts and friendships are getting fewer in number. I have yet to go to any reunion that I was not afforded the opportunity to find at least one former connection from my time in the military, both at home and abroad. But, you are in luck; the reunion for next year is already in the making and will be in Florida. So, you can bring children, grand children and for some of you maybe even great-grand children. Start now and try to encourage someone you know who has never attended and make plans to come. *Those friendships are happily awaiting your return.*

Meet our New Contractors

Greetings from Military Reunion Planners! We are extremely proud to have been selected by VHPA to provide both Reunion and Headquarter services for the next few years. MRP has been providing



professional reunion services to veteran's groups for over 20 years. Our objective is to provide both a cost and service benefit for the VHPA in the coming years.

We are implementing measures to enhance your total reunion experience as well as delivering improvements in customer service, organization, and efficiency. As an example, MRP moved over 1000 VHPA members to the USS Midway event this year in about 30 minutes (versus 90 minutes it took last year), giving you more time on to enjoy the event. MRP also revamped the banquet seating system to offer greater flexibility and choice of seating, improved success rate for specific reservation requests, and faster banquet entry.

As your new VHPA Headquarters, we intend to improve service levels and responsiveness on a daily basis for the entire VHPA membership. MRP's staff of seasoned professionals are committed to serving you with an increased level of dedication to your needs. Please be patient during the transition period as we gear up for assumption of operations on October 1, 2010. Note that the same 800-

number will be in effect (800-505-VHPA). Your complete satisfaction is our goal and cheerful, efficient service our pledge. Please let us know how we are doing.

Mark your calendar NOW and plan on attending next year's reunion in Orlando!

It promises to be a huge event with terrific attendance and many exciting offerings such as lunch with an Astronaut and tour of Kennedy Space Center, the Fantasy of Flight attraction with vintage airplane rides, Disney World (aka the "Mouse House") including the fabulous Hoop-De-Doo Musical Review and Dinner Show, Universal Studios, featuring the brand new Harry Potter attraction, Daytona Speedway, Arabian Nights Dinner Theater, and much more. (Be a hero and bring the whole family). Of course there will also be a great program of enhanced in-house events such as the War Story contests and Historical Presentations.

We look forward to serving you in the coming years and welcome your feedback and suggestions. We are also available to help with your individual group reunion plans - we service all branches. Feel free to call MRP at [REDACTED] or email me personally at: email address below.

Until next time,
Ray Casey, President
Military Reunion Planners, LLC

Scenes from the San Diego Zoo...



175TH OUTLAWS PRESENT ORIGINAL PAINTING TO ARMY AVIATION MUSEUM



Col Bill Callender presenting painting and unit history to Steve Maxham, Army Aviation Museum Curator.



MWO (Ret) Jim Spiers with painting

On August 10, 2009, five former members of the Outlaws met at the Army Aviation Museum, Fort Rucker, Alabama to present the original painting of the Outlaws and Mavericks in a "hot" landing zone in the Republic of Vietnam. This painting was commissioned by the Outlaws of the 175th, with renowned combat artist Joe Kline rendering the painting.

The painting was a dream of MWO (Ret) Jim Spiers who spearheaded the effort, and negotiated it through numerous iterations of drawings before the final layout was decided on. Initial funding for the artwork was underwritten by many 175th Outlaws and Mavericks, again with Jim Spiers spearheading the effort.

Those attending the ceremony reflected in the above photo were Col (Ret) Bill Callender (Maverick Lead) from Mobile, AL; CWO Jim Spiers (Maverick pilot) from Brooklet, GA; SP/4 Steven Smith (Out-



(Left to Right) Harry Khachadourian, Bill Callender, Steven Smith, Jim Spiers, and Frank Estes

law Gunner); SP/6 Harry Khachadourian (Aircraft Technical Inspector) and Col (Ret) Frank Estes (former Maverick 31 and Maverick Lead) from Ozark, AL.

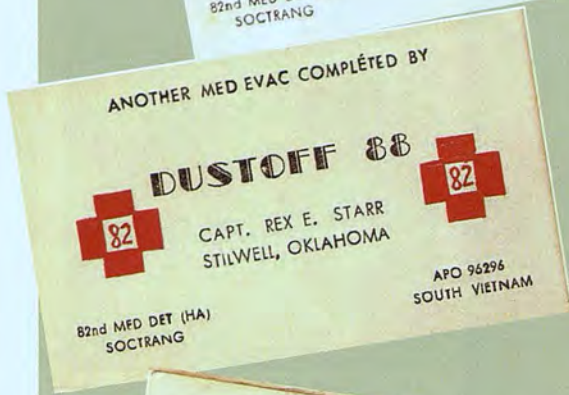
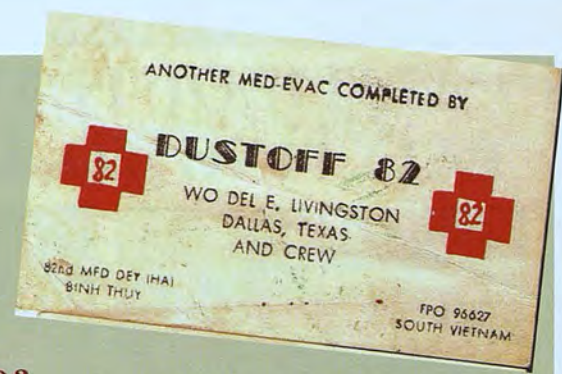
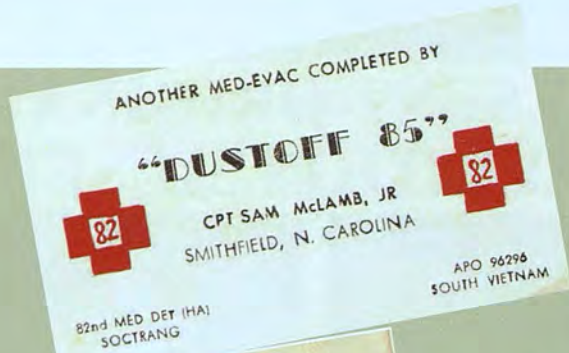
Col Bill Callender made the presentation to Steve Maxham, the Army Aviation Museum Curator who said "This is an awesome painting that will add significantly to our depiction of Vietnam era combat aviation operations. It will hang in a prominent place in our art gallery."

The painting and its attendant history placard now hang in a prominent place in the art gallery on the second floor of the Army Aviation Museum. Signed, limited editions of the painting are being made available to former members of the Outlaws by contacting Joe Kline at [REDACTED] or www.joekline.com, or Jim Spiers at [REDACTED]



B/228th Assault Support Helicopter Battalion "Field Expedient Fix" by Harold E. Bennett

We landed our Chinook on LZ Bird (approximately 16 km southwest of Bong Son in II Corps) during my second tour in Vietnam in 1966-67 because of a leak around the oil filter pan on the forward transmission. The crew chief jammed a tree limb (cut to fit) between the metal pan and the floor to put pressure on the leaking seal. I started the aircraft up and there were no more leaks - so we flew it to LZ English where a more permanent fix could be applied.



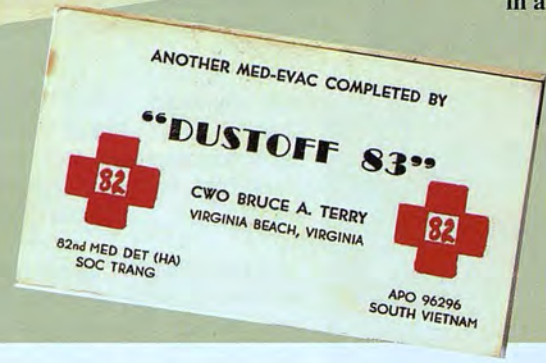
TAKE MY CARD?

Tom Hirschler sported this great set of Business Cards from Vietnam at our Reunion in San Diego. Seems members of the 82nd Medical Detachment (Dustoff) out of Soc Trang would drop off their cards when making a pickup.

I know there were other Pilots out there who had their own Business Cards for use in Vietnam, I was one of them. So how about everyone sharing their card with our Membership?

You can scan your card in and e-mail me the image (Editor@VHPA.org) or call me [REDACTED] and I'll give you a mailing address, scan in the card and send it back to you. We'll run all the "Business Cards" submitted in a later issue.

David Adams



STMP, Inc. "Save The Montagnard People, Inc"

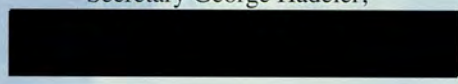
STMP is the oldest, largest and most active Montagnard Assistance Organization working to assist refugees in the U.S. and we also help preserve the Montagnard culture. We also strive to secure human rights for Montagnards in Southeast Asia.

STMP, Inc. is recognized by the Montagnard Dega Association, The American Legion, Special Forces Association, Special Operations Association, Air Commando Association and the Navy Seals.

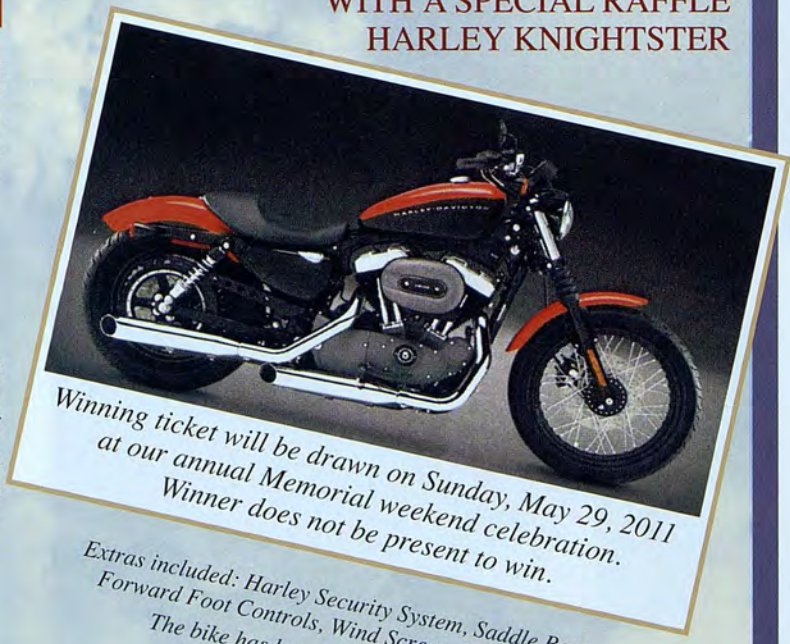
STMP, Inc. is a 501-C3 non-profit organization. We are a 100% unpaid volunteer group of individuals from all walks of life who have joined together with the intent of preserving the culture of these persecuted people. We've been working together for 25 years. To celebrate, we have only 2,500 tickets to offer at \$20.00 each or 3 for \$50.00.

For questions and to purchase tickets, contact:

Secretary George Haderl,



HELP US CELEBRATE THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF STMP WITH A SPECIAL RAFFLE HARLEY KNIGHTSTER



Extras included: Harley Security System, Saddle Bags, Forward Foot Controls, Wind Screen & Sissy Bar. The bike has less than 300 miles on it!

It just keeps getting Better and Better – we hear from the Flight Surgeon who checked out that shot down aircrew in our last issue's story – "There Wasn't a Billboard that said Welcome To Laos"

Dear Members of the VHPA

At my Rotary Club this past Friday, I was presented a copy of your July/August 2010 of the VHPA Aviator by my friend Col. (Ret.) Charles Heberle, one of your members. Charlie remembered that I had been a Flight Surgeon for the 390th TFS of the 366th TFW based at DaNang AB in 1970. I well remember the day when my good friend Lt. Don Boulet and Capt. Jim Robinson went down in hostile territory. Their rescue by WO Woods, Lt Shafer, Spec. Graff, and Spec. Gordon was just outstanding in every way.

Although I was one of the thousands of "drafted" physicians during the Vietnam war, I had volunteered to be a flight surgeon and it was my great honor to be part of the 390th TFS. I flew missions with the men, grew very close to them, and did the best I could to provide good care for them. Here in the Tacoma, WA area where I now live and still practice medicine are many retired Army Aviators from that time, and they seem to always be amazed when I relate what great respect USAF fighter pilots had for those brave (formerly) young helicopter pilots. Mr. Marshall's story well illustrates this point.

When they got back to DaNang and all were properly examined and given treat-

ment, I made sure all were grounded--and the party started! I'm here to confirm Spec. Gordon remark--y'all really did have BRASS BALLS!! This title is one of the highest compliments, a fighter pilot would bestow upon another warrior deemed to be courageous. Enclosed is a picture of Boulet and Robinson's return to DaNang. I am on the extreme left, Don Boulet is second from the left, Jim Robinson is fourth from the left, and our squadron commander LCol Ted Cadou is on the extreme right.

With gratitude for the great work and service of the men of VHPA,

J James Rooks, JR MD FACS (aka Jim/Doc/Quack-{my derogatory but now beloved nickname})
Former USAF Flight Surgeon 366th TFW, 390TFS, DaNang AB 70-71
E-Mail: [REDACTED]



Editor's note: Dr. Rooks also attached to his e-mail a 6-page account of the mission and subsequent crew's rescue that was written by one of the men that was shot down that day - Don Boulet. I can vouch for the fact that it's an outstanding read in every way and I will be glad to share it with anyone in the Association that would like their own copy, but it's just too long to run it in the Aviator by itself. Simply e-mail me at Editor@VHPA.org and I'll send it right back to you.

David Adams

Looking for Military Memorabilia from the Vietnam War



I am interested in acquiring any and all Memorabilia that pertains to Helicopter Operations in Southeast Asia. Items of interest include unit patches, insignia, calling cards, scarves, headgear, personalized helmets, propaganda, flight gear, badges, pins, wings, plaques, paper items, souvenirs, unofficial/novelty items, flags and guidons, artwork and even uniforms and "Party Suits" of the era!

These items will be used in Patriotic displays 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.vhpamuseum.org). Please note that anything contributed will not be re-sold but will remain in this collection for all to enjoy!

Last, 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 your things to me!

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

Evenings [REDACTED]

Toll Free Worldwide (888) 870-5408

E-Mail: [REDACTED]



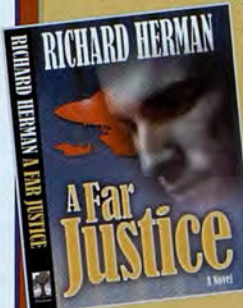
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A Memorial Day 2010 Remembrance

I write this in memory of SSG William B. Hunt, U.S. Army Special Forces, MIA November 4, 1966. It is an account of the sacrifice he made to his country, to his comrades, and to the Vietnamese people.

In November 1966, SSG Hunt and I served together at Special Forces ODA Camps under Detachment B-32, 5th Special Forces Group, Tay Ninh Province, in the Republic of Vietnam. Hunt was with ODA-322 at Camp Suoi Da, and I was assigned to ODA-323 at Camp Trai Bi. Our camps were about 30 kilometers apart and we only had VHF voice radio communications between our camps through the radio relay site on top of Nui Ba Den Mountain, but we spoke frequently, as our operational areas bordered each other.

I became involved in the incident that resulted in Hunt's possible death only because I was returning from R&R and was passing through B-32 Tay Ninh on my way back to Trai Bi when 3rd Company, III Corps Mobil Special Forces Strike Force (Mike Force), operating near Suoi Da, made contact with a Viet Cong Main Force Regiment and suffered heavy casualties. Hunt, in Suoi Da, was in radio contact with SSG George Heaps (call sign China Boy 3), the Mike Force Company Commander, and learned that both Heaps and his XO, SSG Jim Monaghan, were badly wounded, their company had taken heavy casualties, and they were low on ammunition. Hunt relayed Heaps' request for medevac and ammunition resupply to B-32.

A lone "slick" UH-1D with call sign "Blue Bird" that happened to be in the Tay Ninh area was asked for assistance. The pilot was advised that a company of Mike Force Chinese Nung mercenaries with two wounded Americans were surrounded by a Regiment of Main Force Viet Cong and needed medevac and resupply. He knew that his Huey had no fire support other than his two door guns, but he still agreed to fly into a fire-swept LZ at last light to bring out the two wounded Americans. If you are wondering how it came to pass that a Mike Force Company took on a Viet Cong Main Force Regiment, well here is the story as best I remember it:

Major General William E. DePuy, CG of the 1st Infantry Division, had scattered three Special Forces Mike Force Companies (Companies 1, 2, and 3) into the area of War Zone C north of Suoi Da in search of COSVN Headquarters (Central Office of South Vietnam). We all knew that if COSVN was indeed there, they would have at least a Main Force Regiment from the Viet Cong 9th Division as security, but MG DePuy promised

that as soon as the Mike Force located COSVN, he would respond with the full force of his Division and this turned out to be an empty promise.

Hunt had led previous combat operations in the area where the Mike Force was surrounded and knew the area well, so he volunteered to go with the helicopter and guide them into the LZ. It was rapidly becoming dark and there would be no time for a second attempt to bring out the two wounded Americans before nightfall. I rode the helicopter from Tay Ninh to Suoi Da, and upon our arrival, Hunt loaded the helicopter with ammunition, boarded the helicopter and departed for the Mike Force LZ. I remained at Suoi Da to replace Hunt in the command bunker until he could bring back the two-wounded USSF.

Hunt arrived at the LZ within minutes of departing Suoi Da, took heavy ground fire on approach, and one of the door gunners was wounded. The next few seconds on the ground were very intense. The helicopter was taking small arms hits from the tree line, the door gunner was bleeding profusely, the pilot wanted to lift off immediately, and SSG George Heaps, though badly wounded, was loyal to his Nungs to the very end and refused to leave them. Heaps knew that if there were no Americans with his company to direct artillery and air strikes, his company stood no chance of surviving. Hunt had to quickly make a decision on what he was going to do, and he unhesitatingly decided that he could not leave a lone American on the ground, so he got off the helicopter and stayed with Heaps. The Huey flew out with one badly wounded USSF and 10 of the most severely wounded Nungs, taking heavy ground fire again on the way out.

By that time, I was in the command bunker and in contact with Hunt on the LZ. He immediately saw the position was untenable and wanted to move the company off the LZ and withdraw toward Suoi Da, but MG DePuy would not allow it. His orders were to hold the LZ and he would have reinforcements there at first light the next morning.

Mike Force 2nd Company, call sign China Boy 2, and commanded by SFC Joe Lopez was operating 10 kilometers to the north of 3rd Company and they were in radio contact with one another. Joe Lopez attempted to move his company south and join up with 3rd Company on their LZ but immediately ran into a large Viet Cong unit and they too were soon fighting for their lives. Mike Force 1st Company, call sign China Boy 1, was much farther to the north

and out of PRC-25 radio range with either China Boy 2 or China Boy 3, but they too were in heavy contact with a numerically superior Viet Cong unit. Night fell with all three Mike Force

Companies fighting for their very lives and doing their best to survive until morning when MG DePuy would fulfill his promise.

Shortly after midnight we heard what sounded like a column of tanks approaching Suoi Da on the road from Tay Ninh. But it was not tanks; it was a battery of 1st Infantry Division M-109 155MM self-propelled howitzers that had moved from their firebase at Tay Ninh-West under the cover of darkness and observing radio silence. The artillery battery had caught the enemy unaware and had made a night march over twenty-five kilometers of enemy controlled roadway in order to bring their guns in range to support China Boy 3. They positioned their guns adjacent to our perimeter and immediately established radio contact with China Boy 3. Hunt was on the radio the remainder of the night registering defensive fire concentrations with the 155MM howitzers and incorporating the concentrations into his final protective fire plan for the attack he was sure would come at first light. When the attack came, Hunt and the 155MM Battery FDC (Fire Direction Control) were prepared to throw up a wall of steel around China Boy 3's perimeter that would have destroyed any Viet Cong unit that tried to assault through it.

At first light the next morning, MG DePuy was over China Boy 3's LZ in his C&C ship and watched as their positions were over run by a battalion sized unit of Main Force Viet Cong. No quarter was asked and none was given. After a brief but vicious fight, the Viet Cong battalion assaulted through the Mike Force Company, repeatedly shooting everyone, even the wounded, and then left them all for dead. In fear of air/artillery strikes and reinforcements, the Viet Cong did not remain long on the LZ and quickly departed.

Hunt was on the radio with the 155MM battery FDC when he was shot, and his last words were to shout, "Shoot! Shoot! Shoot!" Then everyone on that radio frequency in III Corps heard the burst of AK fire that hit him. He had called on the 155MM battery FDC to fire his final protective fires, and the guns were not permitted to fire; they were under a "Check Fire" because MG DePuy's helicopter was in the line of fire and they were forbidden to shoot until the General had cleared the area.

Continued on Pg 23



Vietnam Vet to Return from Iraq Duty

**CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE ADDER, IRAQ,
April 16, 2010**

It's a heady Resume: war hero, veteran pilot, commercial pilot, safety officer, father, grandfather, husband – and most recently - projects officer. With such an extensive list of credentials to his name, one would expect this soldier to be incredibly busy.

However, while Army Chief Warrant Officer 5 William R. Halevy stays busy with his job, he never fails to have time for a smile and a friendly greeting to anyone who crosses his path, seemingly the nicest guy you could meet.

Halevy, who calls Jeffersononton, Va., home, is the Headquarters Company, 12th Combat Aviation Brigade, project manager, and he's preparing to redeploy from his tour in Iraq. "My primary role is the management of the ongoing construction projects and facilities management for the continued morale and welfare of the troops," he said.

For such an accomplished career brimming with accolades and achievements, it is remarkable that the headwaters of Halevy's military

career are rooted in chance. "I had a full scholarship to play baseball," Halevy said. "I was in the post office one day and saw the [recruiting] poster for Army Aviation. ... It said you just need a high school education and a desire to fly. I went from basic training to flight school as a warrant officer candidate."

He since has established himself as a beacon of knowledge and respect within the Army. Throughout his 36 years of military service, he has been a member of Army Reserve and National

Guard units in New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Florida, holding positions ranging from a civilian emergency medical services pilot and aviation safety officer to his current position as a U.S. Army Forces Command aviation resource management survey inspector.

Halevy came to Iraq several months before the brigade arrived, but was asked to stay onboard to assist and offer his experience to the staff. "I was in the process of redeploying with the 28th CAB, as their [transition of authority] to the 12th came a few months early - and my conversations with the safety and standards staff of the 12th made me feel I could stay and lend assistance to a [smaller] staffed organization," he explained.

"I had only joined the 28th five months prior to assist with several safety issues," he added, "having been requested by the mostly Guard unit, and I was expecting to stay much longer."

Halevy continues his custom of offering quality workmanship and an unending cheerful attitude in his current position, planning and supervising various construction projects intended to improve quality of life and facilitate greater capability for all aspects of the task force's mission. These projects include simple things such as modifying or improving the tactical operations center's office space, initiating repairs on the aircraft maintenance shells, building a new chapel, and more.

He is about to finish his time in Iraq but, true to his work ethic, he has a

few things he would like to be able to stick around for if he can. "I would like to see the chapel through completion and throw the first pitch on the ball field," he said. "A day off would be nice, but I don't think I will be able to work it in."

Previously, as the Army airfield safety manager for the 28th CAB, Halevy brought a wealth of experience to his role as an advisor to the brigade commander.

A veteran of the Vietnam War, Halevy also is a distinguished helicopter pilot, both militarily and commercially, flying more than 6,270 accident-free hours. Still, despite his vast experience and notable success as an aviator, Halevy's focus has centered on safety. "I did it. I don't miss it," Halevy said of his days as a pilot. "I've moved on, and I [have focused] on safety. I came here to help."

Despite differences between the two aviation brigades, Halevy said, he admires what each brought to the mission. "I knew many of the 28th CAB personnel, having worked at [the National Guard Bureau] for four and a half years, and then with the [aviation resource management] team doing their evaluations for six years," Halevy said. "I thought the

28th did a commendable job of bringing together units from eleven states and then building their infrastructure, of which I'm still overseeing the developing," he said. "However, the 12th CAB's command and HHC present a greater synergy, having been working together much longer prior to their deployment. "With my career spanning many years," he continued, "I have been part of many units, and I have learned an organization is only as good as its performers and the leaders they support. The 12th has the



best I've seen, and now I am one of you."

Halevy recalled where his career started and how things could have been back when he was flying over and through jungle canopies in Vietnam.

"I dedicate my continued service to Sgt. Gary Lee Westphal, who died 13 June 1971, while serving as my scout crew chief/gunner when he was hit by an enemy machine gun at close range while we were searching for a reported [North Vietnamese army] position north of Quang Tri, Vietnam," Halevy said. "He kept me alive through months of hostile fire with D Troop, 3rd Squadron, 5th Cavalry, 5th Infantry Division." Halevy has focused all of that potential into his drive to do the best work he can at any task, and he does it all with one of the best attitudes a person can have who has done so much, soldiers here say.

Halevy, who will turn 61 this year, has no plans on slowing down after retirement. While he is looking forward to spending additional time with his wife, children, and grandchildren in the rolling hills of Virginia's Piedmont region, he also plans to devote time to his own hobbies.

"I just don't want to get sedentary after I retire," he said with a chuckle.

(This article includes portions of a previous unpublished article by Army Sgt. Brandon T. Metroka of the 28th Combat Aviation Brigade.)

**By Army Sgt. 1st Class Christopher DeHart
12th Combat Aviation Brigade**



Selling on Ebay....

by VHPA Member Rock Lyons

Having read the article "Buying on Ebay" in the last issue of The VHPA Aviator, no doubt you have been waiting with barely restrained enthusiasm for the sequel "Selling on Ebay." In this article you will learn the secrets to untold wealth, better health and how an unattractive 65 year old man can attract the hottest young babes with just a flick of the check book. OK, it won't do any of that, but this does introduce you to what not to promise in your Ebay ads.

I am assuming that you are now a registered user of Ebay with an Ebay name and password and are basically familiar with the Ebay layout. If not, refer to the previous issue to find out how to register. The first step is for you to sign on to Ebay with your user name and password. Once again, on the top right of EBay's homepage there is the word "SELL". Click on it and read through the topics to familiarize yourself with the rules and procedures.

Here are a few of my own "rules" for posting an ad on Ebay.

1. Make sure your item is ready to sell. (In hand and good condition.)
2. Take pictures (generally more is better)
3. Describe your item honestly (Flaws as well as good points)
4. Clearly state any conditions of the sale. (I.E. also for sale locally)
5. Check your email and answer all questions promptly and fully.
6. Package your item securely.
7. Ship promptly after payment is received. (I recommend insuring the item).

Depending on what it is you wish to sell there are somewhat different procedures. I will start with the general categories, which covers everything except automotive, vehicles, boats and aircraft.

Ebay will walk you through the creation of your ad. From the home page select SELL, and then click on START SELLING. Let's assume you want to sell your tactical map of I corps. You would select the category "collectibles". This will bring up sub-categories and you would select "militaria" then "Vietnam (1961-1975)" then "Original period items" and finally "maps".

Next you will continue by creating a title. An example would be "Original Vietnam tactical map of I Corps. EC No reserve." A subtitle is optional such as "actually used by one of the greatest heroes of that conflict" and then condition would be "used". Now you add pictures of your item. NEVER list anything without pictures, even if you have to use a "stock photo" of someone else's item. (If you do this be sure to identify the picture as not being of the actual item being sold.) In most cases you will use a point and shoot digital camera to take several pictures of your item at a low resolution. Choose the best pictures to upload using the add pictures button ebay provides. Generally more is better. Depending on what you are selling you will want to show it from several angles. The original packaging, any accessories etc.

Perhaps the most important step is writing a detailed

description of your item and include YOUR specific terms of sale. Here you can select the font, font size, color and other formatting. Then write a description that will be informative, thorough and truthful. My tactical map ad description might read:

This is an actual tactical map of the I corps area (1st Corps) in Northern South Vietnam issued by the Army to an Army pilot flying helicopters during the Vietnam War. It is laminated and contains many hand-written notes from the pilot often depicting the locations of firebases, refueling points, Tactical Operations Centers and other places of importance to the pilot. From the pictures you can tell that it was well used, folded often and stuffed into flight suit pockets. An authentic piece of aviation history.

Seller accepts PayPal ONLY and all payments must be made within 48 hours of the close of the auction. Shipping will be by USPS to U.S. addresses only and the item will ship within 48 hours of receipt of payment. No return accepted on this item so be sure it is what you want prior to bidding. I will be glad to answer any questions you may have about my item.

You now need to set your starting price. (Listing fees are usually based upon starting price so low starting prices cost less) In this example I might start the bidding at \$9.99. You can also set a "Buy it now" price. As the name implies if someone sees your ad and doesn't want to chance waiting for the auction to close and is willing to pay your asking price he can click on BUY IT NOW and close the auction that way. One final pricing choice the seller has is whether he wants to place a reserve price on his item. This protects the seller in the event that the bidding doesn't reach what he is willing to accept for his item. There is a small charge for both BUY IT NOW and RESERVE actions.

The remaining steps are self-explanatory. Preview your ad and be sure that you understand the pricing before you make the final selection to actually post your ad. If you have more than one identical items or even similar ones you are offered the opportunity to save the ad format and use it again without having to retype everything. For example if you wish to sell 50 different challenge coins you could simply change the pictures and modify the description rather than creating whole new ads for each coin.

Now let's assume that you are ready to finally sell that AH-1G that you successfully smuggled back to the world in a speaker cabinet. I am sure that anyone smart enough to do this was able to finesse the FAA and get it registered. From the Ebay home page select "MOTORS" on the top of the page. Now click on "SELL" at the upper right. Select and under categories select "Aircraft". Now you will choose "Helicopters" and save and continue. You will then select "Nationally" as the area to sell in and whether to sell at a fixed price or in an auction style sale.

You are now ready to describe your item. Here you want to be as complete and accurate as possible without writing a book on your item. Describe what it is, condition, hours on major components, accessories, avionics, and history including any damage history. Then include your conditions of sale. Include how and when payment is to be made, where the aircraft is located. Whether you can assist in delivery and any charges for delivery. Where the aircraft can be inspected and how to arrange for inspection. Clearly state that any inspection must be done prior to any bid-



Ebay Item Number:
170522331240

Description: Classic Original Vietnam Issue SPH-5 Helicopter Flight Helmet with Communication Gear. Single visor style Flight Systems Inc. helmet dated 1972 size regular...Typical loss of foam padding and loose earpieces otherwise helmet and liner are in very fine shape...Visor is cracked at the top of slot for adjustment screw.

Starting Bid: \$99.95



E-Bay Item Number:
300111443799

Item Description: From the Corgi Nose Art Collection. An UH-1D Huey painted to match the "Thunderbirds 101" - 2nd Airlift Plt., A/101st Aviation Bn., Soc Trang, South Vietnam, 1966 #C90480
Buy It Now Price: \$4.95



Ebay Item Number:
170519066196

Description: Complete partially disassembled 1966 Bell UH 1F Helicopter. Do some research on this model of Huey. It is a very rare Air Force model that was also used by the CIA. This helicopter was part of the collection of a museum and is being sold to raise funds. I am no helicopter expert so study the pictures carefully. As far as I know it is complete and was disassembled for transport 6 years ago. There are no log books or other paper work and no guarantee as to its air worthiness is being made. It is complete with the engine, transmission and all other major parts as it was a pickled aircraft when we received it. It is owned free and clear by the museum and a bill of sale will be provided. I can supply pictures of anything else that is requested. Questions? Feel free to call me.

We will assist in loading at no extra charge.

Buy It Now Price: \$50,000.00

-ding to purchase the item, (not to have 1st right of refusal.) Include any other information you feel will assist the bidder in determining whether to buy your item.

Pricing information and the addition of pictures is done the same as described under the previous information regarding general merchandise. Just remember for vehicles that you want MANY pictures from all angles, outside, inside, engine, etc.

For an Ebay auction the longest period you can have is 10 days. For expensive items I recommend the longer period to insure that the maximum numbers of potential bidders see your listing. I also recommend that you schedule your auctions to end on the weekend between the hours of noon and 10 PM. More people are off work and can sit by their computer to enter their last minute bid during those hours rather than on a Wednesday afternoon while still at work.

Ebay also offers various designs, logos, highlights, frames etc. to enhance the look of your ad, I have no opinion regarding whether these bring in more bidders but each one adds cost to your ad. Two additional offerings that do result in more bidders seeing your ad are the Featured Plus (\$24.95) and Motors Home Page Featured (\$99.95). I will leave it up to you to decide whether these additional services are worth the extra charges.

Now we come to Ebay charges. There currently is no charge just for listing the item under "MOTORS". However, if you list your item with no reserve a successful listing fee will be charged if even one bid is forthcoming. If the

final bid amount exceeds \$2000.00 the fee is currently \$125.00 if less than \$2000 it is \$60.00. For listings ending with Buy It Now, the final bid amount is the Buy It Now price. For listings ending with acceptance of a Best Offer, the final bid amount is the Best Offer price. However, for those listings with a "RESERVE" price the fee is only charged if the reserve price is met.

Ebay fees for items listed under "Parts and Accessories" have similar fees to those charged for general merchandise. For scooters under 50CC there is a flat fee of \$10.00. Ebay can change its fee structure at any time so you should confirm the fees before listing.

For those of you who got a chuckle over the example of selling of an AH-1G on Ebay, you should know that one actually sold on Ebay to an English buyer for about \$1,000,000.00 last year. There have been several prior service Hueys and OH-58s sold on Ebay as well.

An important issue for sellers is "getting paid". The seller may specify their own requirements for payment. Such as: PayPal only or "payment required within 5 days". Just remember that the more restrictive your policies, the fewer bidders will respond. There is a fee of a couple percent charged by PayPal but I have found the fee to be well worth it. By accepting PayPal you will greatly increase the numbers of bidders and therefore improve the final price. Additionally the buyer can "pay" immediately thereby speeding up the process. The down side of PayPal is that unless you are going to use your money from sales to buy other items using your PayPal balance you must instruct PayPal to transfer the funds to your bank account and this

usually takes about a week.

Cash or checks are also customary means for buyers to pay, however as a seller you will want to inform bidders that nothing will be shipped until the checks clear. Even cashiers checks and money orders should clear before releasing your items. Unfortunately computers have made it easy to print bogus cashier's checks and money orders. NEVER use wire transfers. Most bidders suggesting wire transfer are just trying to get your banking information so as to empty your account. This also goes for buyers. DON'T use wire transfers.

My final remarks regard jerks. Ebay has its share of people who cannot be satisfied. This individual will come up with every excuse in the world to void a sale. I recently sold a used Canon camera in very good condition on an Ebay auction. When the buyer received it he claimed that a scratch on a knob was a serious defect. I asked him to send me a picture of the scratch as I was unaware that there was such a scratch. He responded that the scratch did not show up in a photo but it was there. I got the camera back and relisted it (describing the tiny scratch and it actually sold for more the second time.) The point of this story is that if the buyer complains Ebay will almost always side with them so you may as well just accept the return and move on.

Listing and selling items on Ebay is a practical way to get rid of those items you no longer want or need and bring in some money to buy those new toys you want. Paraphrasing Mr. Spock "Live long and Ebay."



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this time around!



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Join the Twirlybirds by Steve Sullivan

Would you like to belong to an organization consisting of helicopter pilots who soloed more than twenty years ago? This group meets at least once per year, but has an unwritten rule that no business can be discussed at the meeting and an open bar serves adult beverages!

During the annual meeting in San Diego, it occurred to me that every VHPA member is eligible to be a member of the Twirly Birds.

The Twirly Birds was originally a group of helicopter pilots who had soloed prior to VJ day, (August 14, 1945). The first president was Igor Sikorsky. In the 1970's the Twirly Birds decided to accept any pilot who had soloed in a rotorcraft twenty years ago. That criterion should include all VHPA members.

The name "Twirly Birds" is a play on words that echos deep respect for the "Early Birds", and exclusive group of pioneer fixed wing pilots from well before WWI.

The Twirly Birds gather once a year during the Helicopter Association Annual Trade show usually held in February or March in various locations. The Twirly Birds gather for only a few hours to consume adult beverages and renew old acquaintances. Spouses/partners are welcome for this extended "happy hour" before everyone goes on their way to business dinners and meetings. Other "ad hoc" meetings have been held at various aviation forums throughout the world over the past forty five years.

The best aspect of the gathering is that there are real helicopter pioneers in attendance. Former and current presidents and CEO's of helicopter companies, test pilots, helicopter pilots from every continent use this occasion to socialize and enjoy each others company. This group includes a number of VHPA members.

VHPA founder Roger Gould is the Twirly Bird

Web Master. VHPA member Barry Desfor is the secretary treasurer, and former Army Aviator Jim Kettles, (born too late to be a member of VHPA) is the Vice President. This past January I accepted the position of President replacing Jim Hamilton a well known rotary wing aviator and Bell Helicopter marketing executive.

Membership is \$20.00; annual dues thereafter are \$10.00 per year.

You can visit the website at www.twirlybirds.org or contact me directly at:



NEW HQ CONTRACTOR SELECTED

by Gary Roush

We are in great shape financially as an organization; however, we have been overspending our income by about \$40,000 per year over the last several years. This Executive Council (EC) had to make a choice of either raising your dues or lowering operating costs. We decided to lower operating costs.

First we changed the membership directory making the online membership directory primary and charging \$10 each for the paper and CD directories. About 350 have elected to buy the paper directory and about 75 have elected to buy the CD directory. This will save the VHPA over \$40,000 this year. If you want to receive a paper or CD directory for 2010, please notify HQ by 1 September to be included in the bulk rate of \$10 each. After 1 September, the price for the 2010 paper or CD directories will be \$20 each.

Second - since the HQ contract expires the end of September this year and is a significant expense, we put it out for bid. More than a third of your dues is used to pay the management fee. We wanted to see if we could do better.

Ten companies requested bid packages and five of those companies worked on bids. These companies were Marcia Fritz & Company, Citrus Heights, CA (current contractor); Association Actions LLC, Jenkintown, PA; Military Reunion Planners LLC, Grapevine, TX; Staffing & Payroll Solutions, Canes-

teo, NY and Quad A, Monroe, CT. We received completed bids from the first three plus we did an in house analysis.

All four options offered savings over the current contract. Military Reunion Planners was selected because of a very substantial cost savings over the current contract. Military Reunion Planners have been working with military organizations for over 20 years. Organizations like ours are their specialty. They have planned over 250 reunions all over the United States. They did the reunion planning for our reunion in San Diego. By consolidating all of our contracts with one contractor, we get economies of scale not possible with individual contractors. The most important factor is that they offered a substantial cost savings over the current contract.

It was my pleasure on behalf of the VHPA to present to Marcia Fritz & Company a plaque at the reunion annual business meeting to show our appreciation for providing us dedicated service for the past 13 years. Thanks Marcia.

We are now in the process of moving our HQ operation from Citrus Heights, CA to Grapevine, TX. The 800 number will remain the same at 800-505-VHPA (8472), but the mailing address will change. To get the latest information on that address, effective date and other HQ information, please check on our web site at www.vhpa.org.

Gary Roush, Past President
webmaster@vhpa.org



GOOD VIBRATIONS

FULL COLOR. 22" X 28" , LIMITED EDITION PRINT OF THE UH-1H HUEY. STANDARD H MODEL AS SHOWN, \$80.00 EA.

CUSTOMIZED VERSION WITH MARKINGS OF YOUR CHOICE, OPTIONAL D MODEL \$125.00 INCLUDING POSTAGE. SATISFACTION GUARANTEED.

Joe Kline Aviation Art



Hey Guys — Someone has posted a copy of an official US Army film on U-Tube entitled "Chopper Pilot" It is an almost 30-minute "Big Picture" type production detailing the pilot training of (mostly) Warrant Officer Flight Class 66-11. It's a great look back at life at both Fort Wolters and Fort Rucker and ideal for viewing by members of your family that might still have questions about all those "Flight School War Stories" you have been telling over the years. Type this address string into your web browser and enjoy!

www.youtube.com/watch?v=g7IX0IRRGCC&feature=player_embedded

As an aside, if you like "Chopper Pilot", then you will probably also enjoy the CD of the film "Wings Over Wolters" that's available from the Fort Wolters Chapter of the VHPA. Full ordering details are available at their website: www.fwcvhpa.org

VHPA SCHOLARSHIPS NOW STANDS AT FOUR

As of the annual Reunion in San Diego VHPA has four, YES FOUR, \$1000 scholarships to award. As of June 1st we had over \$92,000 in our account with AAAA. This amount paid an interest dividend of around \$3300. Tom Payne contacted the AAAA SCHOLARSHIP GURU and asked if we could send in the difference to make it an even \$4000. He, the SCHOLARSHIP GURU, blessed the idea and we now have the fourth one. We have forty-one strong candidates applying this year. I expect over 60% of our applicants to receive a scholarship or loan from VHPA and AAAA combined.

At the Annual business meeting the CAV HATS were passed and we raised a little over \$4000, I picked up another \$775 in the hallway, the Poker Tourney raised over \$1000, the EC kicked in a \$500 donation from a member wishing to remain anonymous, a very nice couple pledged

\$1000, members attending the Reunion pledged \$1320 on their registration form and Jim Fulbrook sold an extra Banquet ticket he had and kicked in the \$60 he received. That totals over \$8655 to the VHPA Scholarship fund. We sent a little over \$700 to AAAA to fund the fourth VHPA scholarship. So, as of the end of the San Diego Reunion, VHPA now has over \$100,000 in our account with AAAA. As stated last year, our goal is 5 \$1000 by 2012. We will make it.

If you have a little extra cash lying around, if you feel generous, if the spirit moves you send me a check made out to the VHPA SCHOLARSHIP FUND. Every dollar helps. My personal thanks to all those who contributed. It will be a lasting legacy long after we are gone.

*Mike Sheuerman
Scholarship Committee Fundraising*

COMBAT HELICOPTER PILOTS ASSOCIATION



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**COMBAT HELICOPTER
PILOTS ASSOCIATION**

Editor's Note: In May of this year I received a packet in the mail from Colonel (Ret) William Giese. In it were several items of great interest including an exciting narrative of the rescue of two aircrews that had been shot down while on a recon mission following the Battle for LZ Crystal.

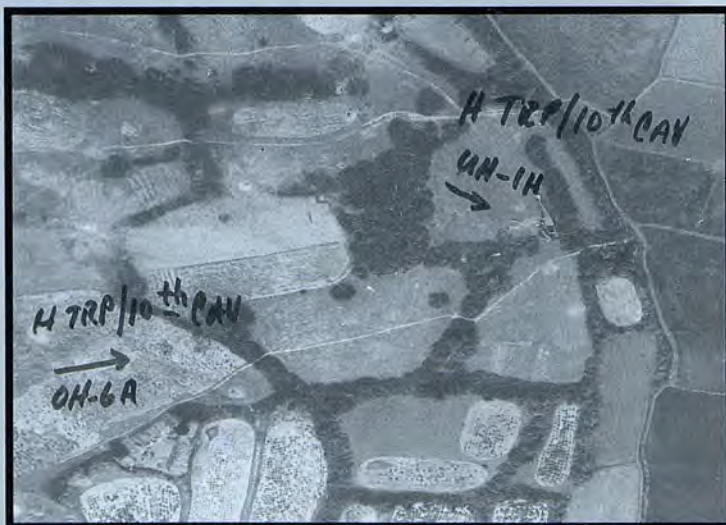
The story that formed the main part of the packet tells how first the OH-6 that was assigned to look for the withdrawing enemy after the battle was downed by a Strella heat seeking missile, then the UH-1 that was attempting to rescue that crew was also shot down and crashed less than 100 meters from the wreckage of the OH-6.

That actual story of the battle was written by VHPA Member Frank Beall, the pilot of that fateful OH-6 that "stirred up the hornets nest" so to speak. In his story Frank mentions two photographs, one an aerial shot taken by a naval fast mover of the crash/battle site, and another picture taken several days later at an award ceremony for the crew members who had taken part in the battle. Col. Giese had included both of those original photographs in his packet.

One of the things Col. Giese wants to make clear to the membership is how fast things were changing in Vietnam at the time of this battle. Remember, this all happened in April of 1972, the US Army was actively withdrawing from Vietnam and while we still had a lot of assets available in-country, the Chain of Command was changing quickly due to stand downs and the re-shuffling of the remaining forces. Col. Giese notes in an Order of Battle paper he sent to me that "On 27 April 1972 the 7th of the 17th Air Cav stood down and returned to CONUS. The assets of the 7/17th Cav were re-designated the Eagle Combat Aviation Battalion (Prov) under the Command of LTC. Jack Anderson. On 10 May 1972, I assumed Command of the Eagle CAB and I held that Command until 14 October 1972 when I turned it over to LTC. William McGee." Col. Giese goes on to say that during his Command, "the Eagle CAB (Prov) consisted of 5 distinct parts, a Headquarters Detachment, two Assault Helicopter Companies (the 60th and the 129th), H Troop of the 10th Cav (they themselves re-designated from C Troop, 7/17th Cav) and the 180th Assault Support Helicopter Company equipped with 22 CH-47's heavy lift helicopters".

Why do we include all this information? It's to help you better understand Frank Beall's account of the rescue of the aircrews that day, and how many different, and possible unfamiliar to our readers, units from all the services pitched in to bring our boys home safely.

Col. Giese still maintains active contact with several of the participants of that day and those times in Vietnam. For more details, or to help with this story, feel free to contact him at: [REDACTED]



Aerial photo of the battle site. The wreckage of the OH-6 is on the left side of the photo, the wreckage of the UH-1 is located on the right side of the photo.

Close Call: Airpower to the

By VHPA Member Frank Beall

LZ Crystal located in the Binh Dinh Province of Military Region II, South Vietnam had been under siege since June 1, 1972 when the 41st ARVN Regiment and its U.S. Advisory Team was surrounded by elements of the 3rd NVA Division reinforced by several VC battalions. Four days of artillery barrages, naval gunfire, and air strikes had finally broken the siege.

Daybreak, 5 June, a 'pink team' from H/10 Air Cavalry was dispatched to the Phu My-LZ Crystal area in an effort to locate retreating enemy forces and antiaircraft positions. The LOH, OH-6A, with Aero Scout Pilot, 1LT Frank Beall and Aerial Observer, SP4 Doug Hansen, descended to treetop level and began performing the VR mission. Overhead, C&C, UH-1H, with Aircraft Commander, CPT Zane Brown, and Pilot, WO1 Ted Clymer, directed the Scout toward Phu My. One AH-1G Cobra gunship, with Aircraft Commander, CPT Dean Priddy, and Pilot, 1LT Jerry Paul, provided cover.

Approaching the village, Beall and Hansen observed enemy forces and began receiving small arms fire. The Scout called, "Taking fire, 12 o'clock, breaking right." Hansen returned fire with an M-60 from his left front seat position. The Snake rolled-in firing rockets and spraying the tree lines with minigun, covering the evasively maneuvering LOH. C&C called: "Red one-five, backblast!" Smoke trailed a missile launched from the tree line.

During the spring of 1972, the Communist had introduced the shoulder fired SA-7 "Strella" heat seeking missile to South Vietnam. As a countermeasure, IR deflectors were being installed on most of the helicopter fleet; however, this OH-6 didn't have this modification. Tactically, pilots were briefed to turn back toward a heat seeking missile in order to trick the infrared sensor causing premature missile detonation before it could hit its target. Too late for a 180-degree turn, the LOH was hit by an SA-7 that severed the killer egg's tail boom aft of the exhaust outlet.

Beall radioed, "Shit! Going down!" Tail boom gone, the drastic CG change caused the LOH to tuck nose down, nearly inverted, and roll and spin to the right. Beall's only choice was to close the throttle and pull pitch before crashing inside the enemy infested area. Overhead, the Cobra and C&C were providing covering fire for the downed LOH crew. Hansen unbuckled and noticed Beall slumped over, hanging in his shoulder harness. Thinking Beall was a goner, Hansen grabbed about a hundred rounds of linked-ammo for his M-60 and took cover in the tree line. The LOH continued being riddled by small arms fire and fumes from the smoldering turbine began filling the cockpit. Beall groggily awakened, having only been knocked unconscious by a 'chicken plate' uppercut on impact. He unbuckled and fell through the broken plexiglass windshield. Hansen saw his movement and came to his aid. Both moved back into the tree line.

Beall's M-16 and sidearm were ejected in the crash, but his vest still contained a survival radio. He made contact with C&C on guard. An orange rescue marker was placed on the ground so air cover could verify their position. Bad guys were moving in and the sneaky Snake air cover salvo'd nails disintegrating three NVA soldiers on the verge of an ambush. C&C radioed for reinforcement aircraft and advised the downed airmen a rescue attempt would be made north of their position in another rice paddy. One of the gunships arriving on scene was flown by CPT Lynn Stephens and CPT Don Hanning (KIA 9/3/72), 60th AVN out of Ninh Hoa.

Cautiously making their way along a trail to the pick-up-point, the air-

e Rescue of six aircrew men from H Troop, 10 CaV.

men encountered a Viet Cong guerrilla, but a burst from the M-60 ruined his day. An AK-47 was souvenired for more firepower. C&C made an approach to the LZ. The door gunners were having jamming problems, so Zane made pedal turns always keeping a working M-60 firing toward the men on the ground.

With an exchange of friendly and hostile fire ricocheting off the water, the two newly initiated ground pounders sloshed through the rice paddy and jumped on board. The Cobra covered the rescue with rockets and miniguns blazing. As the UH-1 departed, the tree line lit up again. C&C took hits. Zane called Dean, "Taking hits. We're going down!" Impact! Another period of unconsciousness was interrupted by the thunderous noise of gunships and fast movers overhead.

The earlier radio call by YELLOWSCARF 16, along with the help of a FAC code name WOLFGAN, brought some eleven gunships and four fighters on the scene. The deafening sound of a complete inventory of air ordnance was raining down on the enemy positions. Looking to his right, Beall saw Hansen slumped over a rice paddy dike with a screwdriver in his back. Crew chiefs on Huey's sometimes place a screwdriver in the framework of the pilot's armored seats for quick fixes. This tool had apparently become airborne when the C&C crashed and lodged in Hansen's back. He was breathing, but ailing badly. Ted Clymer was to the left with his M-14 [believe this should be M-16] poised for action. Most of his usually exotic survival gear was lost in the crash, but he did manage to salvage two full magazines of 7.62mm ammo. Crew Chief, SP4 Mark Ely, had his right foot crushed on impact and blood was oozing out of his boot. Gunner, SP4 Denver Richards, looking dazed, held a pilot's .38 caliber revolver for protection.

Zane had ventured back to his broken aircraft to retrieve armament and shut-down the runaway engine averting a possible catastrophic explosion. After his return Zane was manning his survival radio when he eyeballed Beall and said, "Look at your chest." His 'chicken plate' had been splattered by two AK rounds. Without it, he'd been history. Beall's wounded right thigh rendered his leg useless, but luckily everyone was still alive. Amazing!

Gunships guarded the crew's hasty defensive position. Wounded enemy soldiers could be heard moaning in pain nearby. Fast movers continued striking targets in the distance and strafed our perimeter along with the helicopter gunships. High overhead, a 129th AHC UH-1H with A/C, MAJ Alan Jones, and Pilot, CPT Bruce Palmer, were flying "Air Boss" for operations in the area.

Jones witnessed the shoot downs and realized he was the only ship available to go in for the rescue. Two attempts were thwarted by an uprising of hostile fire with all the ordnance expended it was incredible how so many bad guys were still fighting and able to fend off the air rescue effort. Thinking they were doomed, the downed airman wondered if there would ever be anymore wine, women, and song; a humbling and frightening thought, yet everyone was relying on faith and the guys on top. With no U.S. ground combat troops available for insertion, this was strictly airpower to the rescue. Finally, on the third attempt, with his 20 minute low-fuel caution light illuminated, Jones landed his rescue ship about 25 meters from the downed crew's position.



Award Ceremony held around June 10th, 1972 at Lane Army He iport, HQ, Eagle CAB. Colonel Todd presenting a DFC to Major Al Jones, the award was later upgraded to a Silver Star. Col. Giese, the Commander of Eagle CAB is on the far left. (pictured left to right) Col John Todd, Deputy Commander 1st Aviation Brigade; Major Alan Jones, Commander, 129th Assault Helicopter Company, Captain Bruce Palmer, Headquarters, Eagle CAB

Gunships and fighters strafed the perimeter. Two snakes made slow, almost hovering gun runs above the slick firing rockets and miniguns into the tree line while the rescue was being accomplished. The downed airmen scrambled to the rescue helicopter while Jones made a quick count to make sure all six were on-board. Initially he counted only five, but one soldier had curled-up directly behind his seat. He wasn't about to leave somebody and have to go back, so once all six were confirmed, he departed under another hail of gunfire. In what seemed like hours was all over in about 30 minutes. After a quick fuel stop in Phu Cat, the wounded were flown to the Evac Hospital at Qui Nhon.

MAJ Jones received a Silver Star for his gallant actions, risking his life to save the lives of six Army crewmen. After-mission reconnaissance photos [taken by the USAF and obtained by Frank] clearly show the wreckage of the LOH and Huey within 100 meters of each other. A sweep by ARVN forces confirmed over 150 enemy KIA and numerous weapons captured, including an expended SA-7 launcher. Truly an example of coordinated airpower among Army, Navy, and Air Force pilots, remarkably precise close air support resulted in this successful rescue with no friendlies KIA. Many brave Americans were involved, some named, others still unknown.

Thanks to the heroic airmen who risked their lives to save fellow comrades in dire straits, this was just another Close Call! The notes on the photos of the awards ceremony state that COL Geise from the 1st Avn Bde and H Troop CO MAJ Brown presented CPT Zane Brown a Silver Star, 1LT Frank Beall a DFC and Purple Heart [he was using crutches to help him walk], WO1 Ted Clymer a DFC, and SP4 Mark Ely a Bronze Star. Since SP4 Denver Richards and SP4 Doug Hansen were not present at the ceremony, we can only assume they had been evacuated.

Frank Beall Scout Pilot H/10 CAV, 1972



ALEXANDER KELLEY

Alexander Kelley, one of the VHPA's Original 66 Founding Members killed in Helicopter crash... Excerpt from the Tucson Sun Times. Tucson, Arizona, July 29, 2010

Three members of a medical helicopter crew were killed in a crash of their AS350 B3 Eurocopter as they were returning the aircraft to its home base in Douglas, Arizona.

Alexander Kelley, 61, was flying the helicopter that had undergone routine maintenance in Marana, Arizona and was en route to Douglas when it crashed on Wednesday, 27 July, said Craig Yale, vice president of corporate development for Colorado-based Air Methods. The aircraft went into service last year and had about 350 hours on the air frame, he said Thursday. Kelley had 14,000 hours of flight experience.

Federal Aviation Administration spokesman Lynn Lunsford said conversations with air traffic controllers during the flight were routine and "there were no signs of trouble." "It will be up to the investigators to determine whether something else went on when it crashed," he said.

Also aboard were flight nurse Parker Summons, 41, and paramedic Brenda French, 28. All were employees of the Air Methods LifeNet program that has served southern and central Arizona for more than 20 years, Yale said. Kelley started in 2002, Summons in 2007 and French in March.

The company was planning a memorial next week. "We're deeply saddened by the tragic events," Yale said. The National Transportation Safety Board was investigating. Yale said company representatives were fully cooperating.

Records of the VHPA Show Alex to have graduated flight school with Flight Class 69-05, and to have flown in Vietnam with C Co, 159th Aviation Battalion, 101 Aviation Brigade under the callsign Playtex 27 in 1969 and 1970. No other details of his life or his obituary are available at press time.

Medical helicopters operated by Air Methods or one of its subsidiaries now have been involved in at least six crashes since 2005 with 15 fatalities, according to Air Methods and the NTSB. The company operates more than 300 such

helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft in 42 states, Yale said.

The NTSB has investigated 45 medical helicopter crashes nationwide in the past decade that killed 117 people. It also has looked into the crashes of 10 medical fixed-wing aircraft that killed 37 people since 2000.

BRIAN WESTON "MAC" MCCULLY, 1944 - 2010

Brian W. "Mac" McCully, passed away Monday, June 21, 2010 after a long and courageous battle with Parkinson's disease. He was a devoted husband, loving father, doting "Papa" and great friend. He left his mark on this world and will be truly missed by all who knew him.

He served in the U.S. Army in which he received Outstanding Instructor Award, served in Viet Nam where he received the Distinguished Flying Cross. He graduated flight school with Class 66-23 & 67-1, he flew in Vietnam with B/3/17 Cav in 1967-68 under the callsign Stogie 13.

After leaving the Army, he was a helicopter pilot for Air Logistics Corp for thirty years where he was chosen Employee of the Year and Pilot of the Year. His hobbies were camping in Colorado, golfing and fishing. He attended Hillcrest Baptist Church.

He was preceded in death by his parents, he is survived by his loving wife of 45 years, Carole Polk McCully, two daughters, six grandchildren, a chosen daughter, two sisters and numerous nieces, nephews and cousins.

Memorial contributions may be made to Covenant Hospice, 10075 Hillview Road, Pensacola, FL 32514

You may express your condolences online at www.fcfs.com

MAC was a LOH pilot for B/3/17 CAV 1967-68

HILLMAN ELDRIDGE BEARDEN

Hillman Eldridge Bearden, 64, was born on Dec. 26, 1945, and passed away on July 21, 2010, at his home in Bedford, Texas.

Hillman moved to West Texas at the age of three, grew up in Snyder, and graduated from Snyder High School in 1964. He married Tracy Diane Burton on Sept. 16, 1967. He entered the Army the next year and graduated flight school with Flight Class 69-17 and 69-19. He served in Vietnam with the 170th Assault Helicopter Company from 1969 to 1970, with B/229th AHB, 1st Cav Division in 1972 and also with H Troop, 17th Cav in 1973; earning a both a Bronze Star

and a Purple Heart. He continued his career as an Army Aviator becoming a master aviator in both helicopter and fixed-wing aircraft and was a highly accomplished flight instructor before retiring with 21 years of service to his country.

Transitioning to civilian life, he made his home in Bedford, Texas and worked for FlightSafety International in Hurst, Texas until retirement in 2000. He is survived by his wife, one son, one daughter, one son-in-law and 4 grandchildren

MICHAEL J. WHEELER

Regrettably I must inform the membership that Michael J. Wheeler was killed in the line of duty in a helicopter accident on May 26, 2010, in Boxborough, Massachusetts.

Michael was an FAA Aviation Safety Inspector administering a FAR Part 141 CFI check ride in a Hughes 300 (TH-55 civilian version). They had an engine failure after Michael gave a simulated force landing. Michael was killed instantly. The student instructor survived with serious injuries but she is expected to recover. NTSB is investigating.

Michael graduated from flight school with Class 71-25 as a Warrant Officer. He was a member of B Company, 101st Aviation Battalion (the Kingsmen) in late 1971 until the unit stood down in early 1972. He finished his Vietnam tour with A/229 Aviation, 1st Cavalry Division. He remained on active duty and retired from the Army in the 1990's.

I flew with him in the Kingsmen and then in the Connecticut Army National Guard when he was with the US Army Department of Evaluation and Standards (DES) and gave me a check ride. During his service, he as awarded the Legion of Merit, the Purple Heart, the Air Medal with "V" Device for Valor, among other awards. He retired as a CW4. Michael was a member of Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association and the 101st Airborne Division Association.

After retiring from the US Army, Michael was an EMS pilot for Air Methods, Inc., and most recently worked for the FAA as an Aviation Safety Inspector with the Boston Flight Standards District Office. Internment will be at Arlington National Cemetery in September 2010.

Ken Roach, Kingsman 18

MAJOR PAUL "SAM" WILLIS BASS

Major Paul "Sam" Willis Bass (Retired) very peacefully passed into the loving arms of his Savior on the morning of July 27, 2010. His family was by his side. He leaves his daughter and son-in-law, three grandchildren, many nieces and nephews and a wealth of friends.



Paul was born May 19, 1927, he entered the U.S. Navy in October of 1942, at the age of 15, to serve our country in WWII. Following his wartime service with the Navy, Paul enlisted in the U.S. Army. He served 23 years active-duty attaining the rank of Major. Paul, nicknamed "Sam" during flight school, graduated with Flight Class 52-A served in the Korean Conflict and the Viet Nam War with HHC, 45 TC Bn. While stationed at Ft. Sill in 1959, Paul met his bride, Carolyn Kay, the former "Miss Lawton" and they married in 1960. Carolyn and Sam had a marriage of great love and devotion lasting 45 years until her death in 2005.

Paul served as a flight instructor and test pilot flying both rotor-aircraft and fixed wings. During his flight career, Paul enjoyed acrobatic flying at international military air shows as well as being a test pilot and flight instructor. He retired from active duty and immediately began "flying from a desk". Paul enjoyed a 30-year career with the Department of Defense as project manager and foreign liaison on various helicopter programs but most notably, the Apache. During Paul's 53-year military career, he received numerous awards and decorations, foremost of which was his induction into the Honorable Order of St. Michael Silver Award presented upon retirement.

After retiring, Paul and Carolyn relocated to Plano, Texas. He was a member and supporter of various organizations, including the Army Otter-Caribou Association, Army Aviation Association of America and the Masonic Lodge Mt. Scott No. 540. Paul was a member of First Baptist Church of Richardson, Richardson, Texas, where he enjoyed fellowship with his Bible study class and Thursday morning breakfast group.

A memorial service was held on Friday, July 30th, 2010 at Becker Funeral Home in Lawton, Oklahoma, followed by internment at Sunset Memorial Gardens.

Submitted by VHPA Member Jerry P. Mellick, e-mail: [REDACTED]

ROY DANIEL KETTLE KILLED IN HELICOPTER CRASH...

Associated Press - June 17, 2010 4:14 PM ET
BOISE, Idaho (AP) - Valley County officials have released the name of the man killed when a logging helicopter crashed in the mountains west of Donnelly. Officials say 64-year-old Roy Daniel Kettle of Harvard died Wednesday afternoon when the 1994 Kaman K-1200 he was flying crashed while he was airlifting a log to a drop zone.

The Federal Aviation Administration is investigating the cause of the crash. The helicopter was registered to Woody Contracting Inc. in Summerville, Oregon.

This is all the info I have. He will be greatly missed by those of us lucky enough to have know him.

Gordon Eatley, 1st Cav. 1967-68

THOMAS JOSEPH GOULAS

Mr. Goulas, 72, passed away on Sunday, June 20, 2010 surrounded by his loving family and friends at Lafayette General Medical Center. He was born on Dec. 13, 1937 and was 1956 Graduate of Lafayette High School, he later received an Associates's Degree from Troy State University.



He married his high school sweet heart Irma Catherine Carter on April 21, 1957. He served in the LA Army National Guard, 256th Infantry Brigade for 4 years and the US Army for 20 years. He served 2 tours in Vietnam. He received an Army Broken Wing Award for safely landing a helicopter which was iced over while transporting then Col. Norman Schwarzkopf. Other medals he received were Vietnam Service Medal, Air Medal with 1st OLC, National Defense Service Medal, Senior Aircraft Crewman Badge, three Good Conduct Medal, Presidential Unit Citation, Air Medal with 2 OLC, Bronze Star Medal, RVM Campaign Medal w/60 Device, Senior Army Advisor Badge and Army Commendation Medal.

After retiring from the army, he began 20 years of service with Petroleum Helicopters Inc. While with PHI he worked as a corporate pilot in Detroit for 1 year and he then spent 5 years as an emergency service transport pilot for Cleveland Metro Life Flight in Ohio. Thomas always said that being an emergency service transport pilot was the most rewarding part of his career. He continued his career flying a Bell 222 Helicopter until his retirement in Lafayette. He moved to Bunkie shortly after and lived there with his wife until his death.

Mr. Goulas was an avid fisherman, he loved camping and he was especially fond of his dachshund, Missy. He enjoyed spending time

with his family and friends and will be deeply missed. Thomas was most proud of his four daughters, who are strong, independent, accomplished women, wives and mothers. He loved his grandchildren and four great grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents and a grandson; he is survived by his wife of 53 years, four daughters, eight grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren. He is also survived by his one sister, one brother, one brother-in-law, one sister-in-law and 14 nieces and nephews.

Internment with full military honors took place at White's Chapel in Gold Dust, Louisiana. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be sent to St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital - 262 Danny Thomas Place -Memphis, TN 38105 or www.stjude.org. Please share sympathies, memories and online condolences at www.melanconfunerals.com.

THOMAS PRECIOUS

Thomas Precious, 71, of Cle Elum, Washington, passed away on May 18, 2010 from complication of lung cancer.

Tom graduated from Cle Elum High School in 1956 and attended Stanford University. He completed his degree at Central Washington University where he had transferred to be near his future wife. He graduated from the Air Force ROTC program there and entered active duty in 1960. He was an Air-Sea rescue helicopter pilot and computer controller.

He served in Vietnam from 1967 to 1968 and received three DFCs and eight Air Medals. He retired after 22 years in the Air Force as a Lt. Col. and returned to his home town of Cle Elum, Washington.

Tom was Director of Computer Services for Kittitas County, Washington, for 20 years and a member of VFW Post #1373. He is survived by his wife of 51 years, Jeanne Mattioli Precious, three daughters and six grandchildren.

TIM HARRISTHAL

Tim Harristhal, manager of the St. Louis Flight Standards District Office for the FAA died July 18 at the age of 62.

Tim Harristhal's aviation career included four years in the U.S. Army serving as a warrant Officer/helicopter pilot in Vietnam, and an instructor pilot at Fort Rucker in Alabama. During his combat tour of duty in Vietnam, Tim was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.

His career at the FAA spanned 21 years and in various roles, including principal operations inspector for TWA. Tim enjoyed telling stories of his days flying a Dehavilland Beaver to supply fishing and camping outfitters in the Canadian boundary waters.

Tim is survived by his wife, Margaret, and children Joseph, Benjamin, Rebecca, Jessica and Elizabeth.

TUSKEGEE AIRMAN BILL HOLLOMAN DIES AT AGE 85.

By Keith Ervin, Seattle Times staff reporter

Bill Holloman, a Tuskegee Airman, didn't stop serving his country when his active duty as one of the United States' first African-American combat pilots ended after World War II.

By Keith Ervin, Seattle Times staff reporter

Lt. Col. William H. Holloman III, a Kent (Washington) resident, died at a hospital Friday after a heart attack. He was 85. Bill Holloman was called back to service in the Korean War and became the Air Force's first black helicopter pilot. He went to war again in Vietnam.

During the nearly four decades after he retired from the Army, he served his country in a different way: by teaching younger generations how war and aviation intersected in a way that helped end centuries of racial separation.

A St. Louis native who as a teenager was so crazy about flying he would walk two miles to an airport to watch the planes, he volunteered for an all-black aviation-training program at Tuskegee Army Air Field in Alabama. Because some Army generals were dubious about the ability of African Americans to maintain and fly aircraft, the Tuskegee Airmen were required to undergo twice as much training as their white counterparts.

One of 450 trainees sent to North Africa and Italy, Lt. Col. Holloman flew a single-seat P-51 Mustang fighter-bomber from a base in Italy to targets in Germany, Austria and Eastern European countries. He flew 19 combat missions, including



escorting bombers and hitting enemy targets. Stationed at bases segregated by race, the black fighter pilots and the white bomber crews mingled in towns where whites insisted on buying drinks for their fighter escorts. When Lt. Col. Holloman sailed back to the States, he walked down a gangplank in New York and saw signs that read, "Whites to the right, coloreds to the left."

The war at home

"I always say we were fighting two wars: the war against Hitler and the race war at home. Both were to preserve democracy," Lt. Col. Holloman told Seattle Times columnist Danny Westneat in 2008. Although racial segregation continued in much of the country for another two decades, the Tuskegee Airmen showed white aviators and their commanders that they, too, were first-class warriors.

President Truman issued an executive order in 1948 integrating all branches of the armed forces. President Obama invited the Tuskegee Airmen to his inauguration last year.

After World War II, Lt. Col. Holloman did stints dusting crops in South America and flying small commercial planes in Canada. An Air Force reservist, he was called back to active duty during the Korean War and in Vietnam, where he switched to the Army. He retired in 1972.

A founding member and first president of the Sam Bruce Chapter of Tuskegee Airmen Inc., Lt.

Col. Holloman took the Tuskegee story to virtually anyone who would listen. "Just by talking to him you were touching a primary point of history," said Greg Anders, commander of Cascade Warbirds, a vintage-aircraft organization Lt. Col. Holloman was active in.

Lt. Col. Holloman annually hosted panels at the Museum of Flight, spoke to young people about history and aviation, and traveled the country sharing his story. His calendar was booked for the next two years with speeches, aircraft fly-ins and other events, daughter Lesley Holloman said. "He never slowed down. ... He loved that people wanted to hear what he had to say about history," she said.

Lt. Col. Holloman's World War II flight jacket is on display at the Northwest African American Museum in Seattle. He attended the museum's opening in 2008, standing by the jacket and telling the Tuskegee Airmen story to the 3,000 visitors, said the museum's executive director, Barbara Earl Thomas. His presence left Thomas and others in tears, she said. "When people realized that he was actually the person that belonged to the jacket, they were like, 'Oh, my god, you're kidding!' ... That was the moment when people made the connection. That made us feel like we were a living museum."

He is survived by his wife, Artie Adele Holloman, of Kent; sons William IV and Michael Holloman, both of Seattle, and Christopher, of Bellevue; daughters Lesley Holloman, of St. Louis, Robyn Holloman, of Seattle and Maria Holloman-Toye, of Rochester, Thurston County; and five grandchildren.

THOMAS STEPHEN CASAGRANDE

Tom Casagrande, 66, died in a tragic airplane accident in Portland Maine while conducting a check flight in a YAK-52 on Saturday, July 17th 2010.

He was born on Dec. 28, 1943, in Hazelton, Pennsylvania, graduated from High School in Hazelton, Pa., and attended Penn State University prior to attending United States Army Flight School in Fort Rucker, Ala. Tom graduated from Class 65-21. In 1966-67, in Vietnam he was assigned to C Co. / 227th, 1st Cav. Division flying UH-1s. Tom later returned to Vietnam flying highly classified Fixed Wing Intelligence/Reconnaissance missions. Tom completed 10 years of Army active duty and continued flying as a Dept. of the Army Civilian Instructor Pilot supporting Research and Development test flights for an additional 20 years.

Tom logged more than 13,000 hours of flight time and was checked out in over 190 various aircraft including his favorite, THE P-51 Mustang. Other notable aircraft he was qualified in included OV-1s, B-17s, U-21s, C-12s, B-25s and numerous jets. Tom remained active in local, regional, national and international flight training and education.

He is survived by his wife, Kathleen Stackhouse Casagrande; five children, five grandchildren and one brother and numerous other family members and close friends.



EXCERPTED FROM THE PORTLAND NEWS HERALD, WEDNESDAY, JULY 21, 2010, BY BILL NEMITZ

PORTLAND - Tucked into a corner of Tom Casagrande's basement, surrounded by models and photographs of the scores of airplanes he adored, the helmets he wore, the technical manuals he memorized, even the ejection seat from an OV-1 Mohawk in which he once sat, is a simple sign. "I Love Airplane Noise," it says. Talk about an understatement. From the moment he first got into a cockpit as a middle schooler in Pennsylvania until his tragic death in the crash of an Aerostar Yak-52 two-seater just outside the Portland International Jetport, Tom Casagrande, 66, didn't just love airplane noise - He lived for it.

Chances are, you never heard of Tom Casagrande before this weekend. He was, after all, a guy who managed to climb to the highest levels of aviation while keeping his many accomplishments, while flying "below the radar." But make no mistake about it. In aviation circles, Tom Casagrande was an icon. All told, he spent 13,000 hours in the air.

He was proficient at the controls of an ear-popping 190 different aircraft. And in his two tours flying everything from rescue helicopters to fixed-wing reconnaissance planes in the Vietnam War he earned no fewer than 66 medals - something not even his children knew before they began compiling material for his obituary Monday morning.

Tom, never stopped loving his country and its military, both of which he proudly called "the best in the world." Even after leaving the Army in 1970, he worked for 20 years as a civilian test pilot for the Department of Defense. One day, he'd be at the controls of an Apache helicopter, devising air-combat tactics; the next, he'd be flying a captured Soviet MIG fighter, looking for the flaws in his own strategies.

LINDA IRVINE 19 July 1961 - 5 July 2010

She was like the hard core First Sergeant behind every successful military unit. She was the individual who lined up the busses, counted every hotel meal being served, and made sure there were enough bars during every event. She was the person "in the field" for eight reunions of VHPA. Linda Irvine, the REUNION BRAT, passed away 5 July 2010. She was five days from her 49th birthday.

In 2000, as the first appointed National Reunion Chairman, I submitted an RFQ (Request for Quote) for the approval of the Executive Council. In it, I was looking for someone who would take the position of the newly established (and paid) reunion event coordinator. The EC agreed we should post the RFQ and fill the position.

Up to that point, the reunions were produced by a volunteer chairman and VHPA members (usually the chapter closest to the reunion site.) But the reunions were getting too big for and expensive to "re-invent the wheel" every reunion with volunteers. Despite good intentions, none of the volunteers had real experience in meeting production and execution. I felt it was time to put this job in the hands of someone who did it for a living.

Owning a company in the event production business, I used my contacts to send out a number of RFQs. After sifting through a myriad of returned applications and event companies big and small, Linda Irvine was the number one candidate. Her small company, the REUNION BRAT, met our needs perfectly. As president, owner, founder and on site representative, Linda kept the REUNION BRAT truly mission oriented.

The 2002 extravaganza in Las Vegas was the first reunion executed by the newly founded National Reunion Committee consisting of Dave Rittman and me. (Dave also took over as VHPA President during that reunion.) Linda joined us there for her first reunion. Although this reunion was only to be an unpaid, onsite observation for Linda, she declined to "observe" and instead, choose to work the entire reunion.

When the banquet sign up software failed to work and the technician unable to fix it, we turned to a manual system – pencil and paper. Linda sat at the banquet sign up table and helped every member get a seat at the table of their choice.

Our Welcome Reception entertainment, the long lived rock and roll band, Sha Na Na, had to be "fed and watered" before they took the stage. Linda made certain the old Woodstock entertainers had the proper sustenance from the Rivera Hotel kitchen (and bar.)

Indeed, the REUNION BRAT didn't attend her first VHPA reunion to "observe." She worked with us day and night. And since she agreed to attend and "observe" at no cost to VHPA, she refused any compensation for the week in which she observed, learned, and worked for the benefit of the members.

Succeeding reunions were all representative of the services provided by the REUNION BRAT. In 2006, the VHPA reunion site was the Marriott Wardman Park in Washington, D.C. A popular destination for VHPA, it is also a popular city for other visitors and groups. For our off site event at the Smithsonian National Air & Space Museum, we needed thirty three buses to accommodate all our ticket holders. This number simply wasn't available over the popular 4th of July holiday. Linda used her D.C. contacts from other reunions and rounded up the needed transportation. As with all her contracts with outside vendors, she passed through the cost directly to VHPA.



Still in Washington, Linda searched and found the National Building Museum to host our July 4th fireworks party. The building is usually reserved for political uses and never is obtainable the night of the 4th of July. Linda made certain it was contracted; our buses had parking and she negotiated the food contract. Again, all costs were passed directly to VHPA. This was the norm for Linda.

Every VHPA reunion, from Las Vegas in 2002, through Philadelphia in 2009 had the imprint of Linda Irvine, her REUNION BRAT company, and her staff. She was a hands-on event coordinator. During the year, she was always available for telecom EC meetings, National Reunion meetings, and reunion supplier meetings. Her many other military reunion clients gave her experience and knowledge of nationwide hotels, city sights and events, transportation companies and local Convention and Visitor Bureaus.

After every reunion she remained at the hotel to review our final bill with the hotel staff. There was nothing that got by Linda's review. VHPA paid for only what was consumed and agreed upon in advance by hotel and local vendors alike. Her only charge to VHPA was a contracted flat rate each year. And she never charged for her transportation or that of her staff. Her only concern was the well-being of "her pilots."

Linda Irvine was born 19 July 1961 in Stuttgart, Germany. She was the daughter of active duty, Air Force MSgt. Gary Yetter. As an Air Force "brat," she travelled and lived in Air Force bases in Europe and the U.S. She learned German and became comfortable with all things military. From this upbringing and experience, she founded her military reunion planning company, the REUNION BRAT. Like Linda, all her staff had to be "military brats."

Besides VHPA, the REUNION BRAT coordinated a host of other military reunions. From WWII units to the fraternal order of pilots, the Order of Daedalians; from the WWII GI to the Vietnam helicopter pilot, Linda could keep up with the best and give her best at their reunions. She smoked like a chimney, swore like a sailor, and could drink like a helicopter pilot. But nothing kept her from the mission at hand. (My observations.) She was tough with vendors and the hotel staffs, but they all liked her "directness."

She was a great partner to our administrative headquarters, FritzCo. Owner Marcia Fritz says, "Linda was a passionate bulldog when it came to insisting that hotels, caterers, bus services, and entertainers gave their all so our members could enjoy every moment of their reunions. She was also a fiscal watchdog and made sure we always got the best bang for our buck. She loved the VHPA and knew many of its members. We will miss her smiles and enthusiasm."

She attended Zwibruecken American High School in Germany and received her Bachelor's degree in business from Washington State University. Linda's long bout with cancer finally took her life on 5 July 2010. She is survived by her mother, four sisters, and brother. Her children are Kevin (19) and Lori (14).

We will all miss the Brat...

Joe Bilitzke
VHPA National Reunion Committee Chairman (Ret.)

With thanks to another REUNION BRAT, Ann Stiles, for providing much information. Ann worked many VHPA reunions with Linda and provided a great addition to Linda's service.

Gentlemen, John Brennan, the man that sent us the text and the art for our "Nose Art" Quiz that ran on page 39 of our May-June issue has just sent me the answers to his questions. Even though, as John politely told me "no one from the VHPA has e-mailed me any of their answers".

Wow, what an underwhelming response, I guess this will be the last time we try this – David Adams

VHPA Nose Art Quiz #2 – Questions & Answers...

1) What in-country Army Helo units were the most prolific copter namer's?

Answer - 1) 175 AHC (119), 114 AHC (110), 227 AHB (110), 1/9 (107), 187 AHC (80)

2) From 1968-71 the nose art featured on this unit's maintenance platoon copter carried the only authorized female nude painting in the entire 1st Aviation Brigade.

Answer - 68 AHC, TOP TIGER TAIL

3) What were the top five "names" painted on Army helo's during the VN War?

Answer - IRON BUTTERFLY (50), SNOOPY (27), SMOKEY (20), WIDOW MAKER (19), BLOOD, SWEAT & TEARS (18)

4) Helicopter maintenance platoons often adopted a "name" that imitated the parent unit's call sign. See if you can identify the outfit that these "named" maintenance ships worked for: BEE KEEPER, CAT DOCTOR, DEAN FIXER, DRY DOCK, FRIAR TUCK, HORSE THIEF, KENNEL KEEPER, LANCELOT, LITTLE BEAR REPAIR, SNAKE DOCTOR.

Answer - 116 AHC, 282 AHC, 120 AHC, 170 AHC, 173 AHC, 335 AHC, 240 AHC, 187 AHC, A CO 25 AVN BN, 71 AHC

5) This unit holds bragging rights to having the most slicks of any in-country Army unit to be painted with original & individual names utilizing the unit's official name or shorten version of it within the wording. Also, all 24 slicks had individualized nose art that helped define the inscribed name.

Answer - CHICKENMAN, A-227 AHB

6) Out of the 175 Dustoff/Medevac names so far recorded, what was the most popular name our air ambulance crews painted on their aircraft?

Answer - BLOOD, SWEAT & TEARS (8)

7) Between 1970 and 1971, the UH-1C gunships in this unit exhibited all their extensive personalized artwork on the rear access panels directly adjacent to the open cargo doors

Answer - 174 AHC

8) Convoy protection in 1967 became the mainstay of this specially designed Army motor-vehicle that took nose art to another level with billboard sized lettering and colorful names such as PSYCHOTIC REACTION, UNCLE MEAT, and BLOOD, SWEAT & TIRES. What were these vehicles commonly known as?

Answer - GUN TRUCKS

9) Of the ten authentic in-country copter names listed which three met with disapproval by higher command and were ordered removed on the threat of an Article 15?

BAD ASS	LOVE
CREEPIN JESUS	MURDER INC
FUR BURGER	SPECKLED PECKER
H.C.M IS A FAG	TANGELLARY SMOTH
KILL A KOMMIE FOR CHRIST	W.E.T.S.U.

Answer - FUR BURGER (173 AHC), LOVE (188 AHC), TANGELLARY SMOTH (114 AHC)

If any of our members would like more information on this subject, please feel free to contact John Brennan directly at [REDACTED] John was a SP5 Flight Operations coordinator for the 114th AHC at Vinh Long Army Airfield in the Mekong Delta from 1970-1971 and is doing extensive research for an upcoming book: Volume 1 of the US Army Helicopter Names & Nose Art in Vietnam.

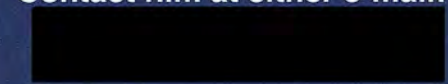
REUNION

C. Company, 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion is holding a Reunion on September 16 through 19, 2010 at the Radisson Hotel in Nashville, Tennessee

All former members of the unit are welcome to attend. Special events are planned for all attendees and their families.

Full details on both room reservations and Reunion registration is available from Don Doane in Spring Hill, Tennessee.

Contact him at either e-mail:



I WANT YOU –

to send me something to run in our Annual Christmas in Vietnam issue.

All contributions are welcome, the deadline for submission is October the 1st.

Contact me at: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] or by phone at: [REDACTED] with questions or comments.

David Adams, Editor of your VHPA Aviator

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Full advertising details and deadline information are available from our advertising director, Moon Mullins at: [REDACTED]

Continued from Pg 10

MG DePuy's words were, "The situation down there is hopeless, and I'm not putting anyone else into it," and then he just flew away. I have frequently thought about MG DePuy's words over the years, every time I heard DePuy's name mentioned.

The Viet Cong broke contact with China Boy 1 and China Boy 2 that morning and withdrew in the direction of the Cambodian Border. Both of these Mike Force Companies were then extracted by 1st ID helicopters and moved to Soui Da. Shortly after arriving in Soui Da and setting up positions around the airstrip, both companies received mortar fire from nearby Viet Cong 82MM mortars and both companies again sustained casualties.

About noon that day, the 155MM Battery Commander walked into Soui Da camp to visit the command bunker. I could tell the Captain was emotionally drained and very much on edge. He had been up all night, and had pushed his guns and his men in the dark over twenty-five kilometers of enemy controlled roadway to bring his guns into range of those who desperately needed his assistance. But he had not been permitted to fire when his guns were most needed, and had listened to men shot while pleading with their last breath for him to fire his guns. His guns still had the rounds in their tubes that he had loaded that morning to fire Hunt's final protective fires, but he had never received clearance to fire them. By the time MG DePuy had cleared the area, no one was still alive on the LZ to direct the fire, so the guns never fired. The Captain had come in to request permission to empty his guns into the side of Nui Ba Den Mountain, as it was not only difficult but very unsafe to physically unload a 155MM shell after it had been inserted into the chamber and its rotating band had been firmly seated in the barrel's rifling. He was given clearance to empty his guns, and the rounds that could have saved China Boy 3 were fired harmlessly into the side of Nui Ba Den Mountain.

The Viet Cong and MG DePuy may have left everyone for dead on China Boy 3's LZ, but some were not. When George Heaps came to, Hunt, although badly wounded himself, was treating Heaps wounds. When the Viet Cong had assaulted through the Mike Force Company and had left them all for dead, they had stripped their bodies of weapons and their radio, so they were now unarmed. With their Nung Mike Force Company dead around them, Heaps and Hunt had no choice but to withdraw off the LZ and search for a place to hide until the 1st Infantry Division arrived as MG DePuy had promised. During their crawl off the LZ, they encountered three wounded Nungs who joined them.

The group crawled about 200 meters off the LZ and hid for the remainder of the day, waiting for the reinforcements MG DePuy had promised. Later that night they heard the Viet Cong return to the LZ to rob the bodies and to shoot any they suspected might still have life in them. The next morning, Heaps and Hunt determined that no reinforcements were com-

ing, and it was too dangerous to remain near the LZ, so they began to crawl in the direction of Soui Da.

All five of the group were badly wounded, had lost quite a bit of blood and were passing out at frequent intervals during their crawl toward Soui Da. Each time one of the group passed out, the group would pause and wait until the unconscious man regained consciousness. It was on the third day, after they had crawled about five kilometers, that they heard helicopters overhead. They crawled out into a clearing, set fire to the dry elephant grass to attract the helicopter crews' attention, and a helicopter landed to pick them up.

It was then that Heaps discovered that Hunt was no longer with the group and asked a Nung where he was. The Nung replied that Hunt had died and had been left behind. Heaps refused to get on the helicopter and started crawling back in the direction they had come until the helicopter crew, thinking he was delirious, physically restrained him, put him on the helicopter and evacuated him to the 3rd Field Hospital in Saigon.

It was only then that we, in Soui Da, realized there had been survivors of the battle four days before. For the next two days, wounded Nungs straggled into Soui Da until about twelve of the ninety man Mike Force Company had been accounted for.

The Mike Force's detection of COSVN HQ location kicked off Operation Attleboro and for the next seven days, MG DePuy was too busy chasing COSVN around War Zone C to honor his promise to the Mike Force. It was on the seventh day after the battle that MG DePuy finally sent a unit from the 1st Infantry Division to China Boy 3's LZ, and for some reason, they arrived unprepared to recover bodies.

The 1st Infantry Division troops did the best they could do without body bags and wrapped the bodies in their ponchos before putting them on the helicopter for transport to Tay Ninh. In Tay Ninh they were laid beside the runway, to await further transport to Bien Hoa. We wound up with no more than forty bodies recovered, that left over thirty men unaccounted for, including Hunt. Soon after this battle, Camp Suoi Da closed, ODA-322 moved nearer to the Cambodian border and built a camp at Prek Loc. I don't think ODA-322 ever conducted an operation that took them back to the LZ to look for Hunt's body.

The Third Mobil Strike Force could not replace the Chinese Nung mercenaries lost during that battle; the Nung companies were disbanded and replaced with Cambodian Khmer Serai (Free Cambodian Army). To my knowledge, the Mike Force never went back to that LZ to search for their dead, but simply accepted the word of the 1st Infantry Division that no bodies were left behind, much as they had previously accepted and believed MG DePuy's empty promise. Soon after this happened, I was transferred to ODA-334 under B-33 at An Loc to put in a new Special Forces A camp at Tong Le Chon. There were other battles and other casualties, and I didn't think

of this incident again for many years.

SSG William B. Hunt was carried as MIA for several years before he was declared KIA, but his death near that LZ and the absence of his body has been one of those things I have never been able to put right in my mind. Somehow, after all these years, I have the feeling that Hunt's remains might still be near that LZ, or even worse, he might still be held captive in some remote jungle prison patiently waiting for us to come and get him, for he knows Americans never leave anyone behind.

On this Memorial Day after more than 40 years passing, I remember that day in November 1966 when three brave men displayed a degree of valor seldom seen, the unknown Huey pilot who would not hesitate to fly into Hell its self to bring out a wounded American, the Company Commander who refused to leave his command when they needed him the most, even though he was badly wounded, and SSG William B. Hunt who would not leave another American behind, knowing that it would in all likelihood cost him his life.

George Heaps passed away in 2007 and he carried to his grave a feeling of guilt for his having left Hunt behind. No matter how many times he was told that he had done all he could have possibly done considering the severe wounds he had sustained, George Heaps was remorseful till the day he died. I don't think George ever recovered from the gunshot wounds he received that day, and I know he never recovered from the mental wounds.

In an effort for final closure of the death of his father who went to war when he was too young to remember him, William B. Hunt's son, LTC Kenneth Hunt, U.S. Army Special Forces, has made two trips to Vietnam to visit the place where his father was last seen and plans to organize an attempt to recover his father's remains when he retires from the army. If I still have my health and am also retired at the time, I intend to join him in the effort.

It has been said that a man does not really die as long as his memory is kept alive, so I thank you for reading this and keeping the memory of William B. Hunt and George Heaps alive for just a little while longer.

Donald J. Taylor
Sergeant Major (Retired), U.S.
Army Special Forces

Editor's Note: Don Taylor lives in Charlotte and at age 70, he still works with the government and is active in military affairs. SM Taylor spoke in November 2009 at the Airborne Special Operations Museum in Fayetteville when the 281st commemorative plaque was put in place. We would like anyone with knowledge of the above action to contact him at either [redacted] or by e-mail at: [redacted]

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We were CC'ed on a bunch of reply's to Gary Roush's outgoing President's Column, I'll print just a few of them here...

Gary,

I have just returned from our 4th of July Parade here in New Braunfels, and wanted you to know how much our Vietnam Vet's position has been elevated since we made the Parade a part of our 2997 Reunion. THANKS again to all our members who came to show the folks here "WHO WE ARE".

And also THANKS for your "swan song message" in the AVIATOR! It was a factual outline of the war of our generation. I regret to say many of my classmates at Texas A&M have taken the mass media and liberal, progressive, lefty line that we had lost the war. We still have a lot of educating to do. I had two brothers in WW II and remember clearly how it was not having a time line for coming home. Those brothers recognized our courage, dedication, valor and patriotism as measuring up just as great.

I regret not being able to attending this year's reunion and the parade on Coronado Island. Let's keep those parades in our schedules, they are great medicine for the participants as well as the observers.

Roy Knippa

Gary- Your "last column as your president" was outstanding as was your term as our 6.

You served in your position obviously as proud as you were of your military service. You wrote just exactly how we all should feel. Many thanks and a salute with heart-felt Thanks.

Bob Ford , Blackcat 21

Gary,

A great message told in a great way. A thoroughly enjoyable article that made me feel better about my service in RVN. Thanks,

George VanRiper

Gary, Thanks for a great column.

You made some great statements that are uplifting to us baby killing, suicidal drug addicts. I really enjoyed reading your letter.

John E. Barron

Condor 27

John Big Barking Bear

To Gary Roush and the Members of the VHPA,

A letter from Phil Marshall (Jul-Aug issue) mentions Cliff Poe who was killed in 1970. I was stationed at Robert Gray AAF in 1970 and Cliff Poe Sr. was the simulator chief. I saw him almost daily and he kept me updated as his son

went through flight school and then on his tour in VN. He was looking forward to his son's return and his reaction to his death was truly tragic.

I appreciate the folks who volunteer to serve as officers in any worthwhile organization and enjoyed the article by outgoing President Gary Roush. I have a little different view of the conflict in Vietnam, the blame for the "loss" and how we were treated when we returned.

I have no doubt many suffered ridicule and scorn when they returned and did not get adequate medical treatment or support. I personally did not suffer any ridicule nor scorn although I proudly wore my uniform and was invited to speak at churches and talk about Vietnam. I think we made a mistake in getting involved in Vietnam and especially aligning ourselves with the French. We made mistakes in not getting out when I was there for my first tour (64-65) and the government was changing so rapidly we joked about getting a "coup badge".

Our government made a lot of mistakes but we can't place all the blame on politicians. Our military leadership failed too in many areas. I did not volunteer to go to VN but I volunteered to go to flight school and to stay in the Army. When ordered to go to VN, I did not complain or try to avoid it and tried to do the best I could. Some, unfortunately, viewed VN as an opportunity to get medals and promotions, even if it meant jeopardizing their comrades. I don't think outright atrocities were widespread but one was too many. The My Lai Massacre was one of the biggest disasters of the war. First, of course, was because it happened. Secondly, the cover-up and lack of punishment of those involved was scandalous and the Army's initial vilifying of CWO Hugh Thompson, the aviator who risked his life to stop the massacre was disgusting. If the Army had quickly admitted fault and punished those involved, it would have greatly dampened the opposition to the war at home.

Although we hear a lot about the war being managed from Washington, I find it hard to believe a lot of foolish decisions came from Washington. For example, did Washington order us to initiate Operation Delaware (incursion into the A Shau Valley) in 1968 without Air Force support? Did Washington direct that an almost unlimited amount of alcohol flow into the country and create danger for the folks serving there? I can remember a number of good leaders, such as then CPT John Laughinghouse, MAJ George Derrick, and MAJ Ralph Jackson and I can recall several in the other category.

I think those of us who returned, and especially those of us who have lived a full and pain-free life after returning, have much to be thankful for. We should feel empathy for

those who are homeless, have lost their families and are enduring pain and other hardships.

Thank you for your time,

Carl Hess, E-mail: [REDACTED]

Letter to the Editor: - Old Slides Live Again:

A couple of months ago I "rediscovered" the old slides my late brother Donald had taken during his tour with the 118th Avn Co. in 65-66. After digging out my antique slide projector, I found most of the slides faded, dusty, and generally in pretty bad condition. I was about to pitch them, but talked to Dan Fox at a VHPA Washington Chapter meeting. Dan had made an excellent DVD of his tour with photos, music, and graphics. He told me about Ned, a retired Air Force intel guy living in Eastern Washington, who has state-of-the-art equipment and know-how to bring old faded slides and negatives back to life in digital form.

Ned did a fabulous and timely job for a modest fee. If you have old slides and negatives you would like brought back to life contact me and I will put you in touch with Ned.

John Penny

To The Editor of the VHPA Aviator

I just absolutely love that photo that ran on the cover of Issue 28-03 of The Aviator for May/June 2010. It was the one that showed "members of Co D, 503rd Inf, 173rd Abn laying down protective fire for an inbound Huey. Do you have any idea how I could purchase a copy of this picture?

Regards,

Larry Liss

The VHPA's Calendar Editor and Photo Historian Mike Law answered:

To Larry and any other Member of the VHPA that might want a copy of that photograph.

You are actually about the sixth person to ask for a copy of that photo. I have the high resolution digital image of that photo legally copied from the National Archives and will be glad to either e-mail or snail mail it to you.

So let me know how you plan to use it, do you just want just a small picture to hang on the wall or do you want something large enough to display? Your wants will drive how I send the picture.

Feel free to contact me either through e-mail [REDACTED] or by calling me at [REDACTED]

Regards, Mike Law

Dear Members of the VHPA,

I just wanted you to know that I have read all the "War Stories" in that section of your website and have been both fascinated and overwhelmed at the bravery and camaraderie described in those stories.

I have always felt that helicopter aviators have the toughest "row to hoe" in modern warfare. They fly low and slow and thus are an inviting target for enemy forces on the ground and in the air. Not only that, but I know that turbine engines are very sensitive to things like bullets and shrapnel that make their way through them. In WWII and Korea, piston-engine aircraft could get several cylinders destroyed and still carry the crew home to fight another day. But, most often, a turbine engine gets one bullet or sizable piece of shrapnel through it and it gives up the ghost. Knowing this, the courage and dedication of the helicopter crews in Vietnam was one of the most profound things I have read about in my life.

I wish I could have been there! When reading the stories on the site, I felt like I was there with them and could feel the emotions as described by the authors of these many stories. When reading the stories, I felt like there were many more of them that deserved the Medal of Honor than got it. They all certainly received far less recognition than they deserved. My favorite stories were "Water and Ammo In, Bodies Out", "Messing with the Forward Air Controllers", "First Night of the Tet Offensive, 31 Jan 68" and "My Flight, Into the Twilight Zone".

Right after reading "Water and Ammo In, Bodies Out", I had an experience as a physician where I had similar emotions to the ones Sergeant Ray Dussault had. Thus, I could easily identify with him. "My Flight, Into the Twilight Zone" was one of the most inspiring things I have ever read. After that, how could someone deny the existence and intervention of God in people's lives? "Messing with the Forward Air Controllers" made me laugh my *** off! "First Night of the Tet

Offensive" created in me the most profoundly broad range of emotions any story could ever create, from anticipation, to excitement to fear, to profound tragedy followed by joy. In that story, as I read the part with the hand rising up into the helicopter, it made me laugh also.

All together, the war stories provide great reading and inspiration. I think these stories show the greatness of American youth thrust into horrific circumstances, overcoming insurmountable odds and achieving impossible tasks.

Sincerely,
Dr. Tracy M. Baker

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

Editor's note, if you want to read the same stories Dr. Taylor is talking about go to:
www.vhpa.org/stories/stories.html

VHPA 2011 CALENDAR

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The Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association and Acclaim Press are pleased to present the new VHPA 2011 Calendar — *now in stock and available for immediate delivery*. This is the 18th calendar produced by the VHPA. The goal of the VHPA calendar project is to refresh the memories of all those who flew and worked on helicopters in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War Era, and to record, preserve, and display the events and activities that were important to veterans of that era. This VHPA Calendar also commemorates the 2,190 helicopter pilots who died or whose bodies were not returned (BNR) from Southeast Asia during the Vietnam Era (1961-1975).

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We are actively looking for someone to start up Chapters in both Hawaii and in Alaska.
Contact Jack Salm for full details on potential members in your area tips on how to
get a new Chapter started! E-mail him at: [REDACTED]

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-----New Chapter-----

Louisiana Gulf Coast Chapter

Andrew Hover, Pres.

[REDACTED]

Arizona Chapter

Bill Sorenson

[REDACTED]

California Chapter North

Ken Fritz

[REDACTED]

Fort Rucker Chapter

Roscoe V. Souders

[REDACTED]

Fort Wolters Chapter

Pat Richardson, President

[REDACTED]

Georgia Chapter

Carl "Skip" Bell

[REDACTED]

Mid South Chapter

"Pete" Norman IV

[REDACTED]

Montana Chapter

Todd Brandoff, President

[REDACTED]

North Alabama Chapter

Jim White, President

[REDACTED]

New England Chapter

Bill Williams, President

[REDACTED]

North Carolina Chapter

J.D. Lawson

[REDACTED]

Ohio River LZ Chapter

Dave Garner

[REDACTED]

South Missouri Chapter

John Sorensen, President

[REDACTED]

Rocky Mountain Chapter

Gary Hurelle

[REDACTED]

The Alamo Chapter

San Antonio, Texas

Jim Bauer, Pres.

[REDACTED]

South Carolina Chapter

(Celebrate Freedom) Chapter

Larry Russell, Pres.

[REDACTED]

Southern California Chapter

Tom Crosby, Pres.

[REDACTED]

VHPA of Florida Chapter

Gary Harrell, President

[REDACTED]

Virginia Chapter

Ben Gay, President

[REDACTED]

Washington State Chapter

Bob Brown, President

[REDACTED]

www.vhpawa.org

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.

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

South Missouri Chapter

The South Missouri Chapter held its second quarterly meeting, June 12th, in Columbia, and it was very well attended. Our third quarterly meeting is scheduled for Patriots' Day, September 11, 2010, and will be held at the Rolla National Airport. Our host, Ed Schmidt, flew fixed winged aircraft in Vietnam and has a hangar full of vintage aircraft for us to see and learn about. We will have a BBQ lunch catered, so, to insure we have enough food, please let us know if you plan to attend. Contact John Sorensen at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

The Chapter Council attended the VHPA reunion in San Diego and enjoyed a very educational session with Jack Salm and representatives of other local chapters. We learned many positive things, as we look to continued growth and a future of fun and fellowship, while celebrating other veterans and remembering their service.

If you have not yet participated in one of our meetings, we hope you will join us in Rolla, share with us your experiences, your ideas, help us grow and plan for the future. Everyone enjoys the camaraderie of being with one another, so we encourage you to come see for yourself.

John Sorensen, President

LOUISIANA GULF COAST CHAPTER

The Gulf Coast Chapter will meet Thursday September 16 at Smilie's Rest in Harahan, LA, 6-9 PM. Anyone interested in the local or national VHPA should attend. This is a newly formed chapter and your presence is needed. We have a fun yet important agenda.

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Telephone Andrew Hover [REDACTED]

Andrew Hover, President.

SOUTH CAROLINA CHAPTER (Celebrate Freedom)

Should have known dealing with an artist you can't depend on any kind of schedule. By now the chapter was hoping to hear the tic tic tic of the turbine and the sweet smell of jet fuel, but no such luck. The process of painting tiger striped camouflage on a F Model Cobra is taking longer than anticipated. Hopefully tomorrow we'll be painting the final color. Then Drew Blair comes back and starts painting the Special Forces insignias.

Right now I'm at Airventure, 2010, in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Home of the world's largest air show and during the week of the show it becomes the world's busiest airport. This week they're honoring Veterans. Today they did a Warbird salute to the Vietnam War with a 'downed crew' scenario. They lost an O-2 then had other 'O' types fly around them. Then they had an OV-1 Mohawk fly in and fire rockets (right) then they had Spooky fly around firing its miniguns. Everyone enjoyed it, but the crew was never recovered! No Huey, or H53, no Cobra, no Loach-NADA!! Helicopters aren't represented well at Oshkosh, much better at Sun-Fun in Florida.

We continue to regularly get new members after they read "The Aviator" and if you read this and live near central South Carolina then you are invited to our summer BBQ on August 14th - location TBA. RSVP me via e-mail. (Larry@ESAD.Net) for full details
Larry Russell, President

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

The membership of the Southern California Chapter hope all of the VHPA members who attended the 2010 Reunion in San Diego had a good time and really enjoyed themselves! I would like to thank all of the Southern Cal members who helped with the reunion. With the reunion over we can get back to the month to month work of the chapter.

First of all keep October 16 open. It is our annual meeting where we will elect new officers (Vice President Carl Cortez will move up to President). Carl entered the chapter, organized and was head cook of a chili-cook-off July 17th at the American Legion Post 291 in Newport Beach, CA. Carl

and Tom Galyean are working on a deep-sea fishing trip in August.

Please see the chapter web page for up-dates.

Tom Crosby, President

VHPA OF FLORIDA CHAPTER

The Florida Chapter will host its annual reunion in Orlando on 9-11 September, 2010. Check our website for details. The OH-6 and all our displays will be there. On 12-14 November the OH-6 will be on display for the St. Petersburg RIB FEST.

We have also been invited to be at various veteran events and schools within the next few months, but these are the only events locked in as of now.

Jim Basta, for Gary Harrell, President

NEW ENGLAND CHAPTER

The New England Chapter will be holding its annual meeting celebrating the end of summer at Peter "Pinky" Adams lodge in Scituate, MA on Sunday, September 12th from 12 o'clock noon to 5PM (or when we run out of beer, whichever comes first). There will be a celebration to honor the crew members and pilots who served in Vietnam. We would like to make this a clam bake with lobster so it is imperative (big word to make you respond) that you call, e-mail or somehow let me know if you will attend and how many you are bringing. You may contact me at either:

[REDACTED] or e-mail to: [REDACTED]

"Pinky's Lodge is 1000 The Glades, Scituate, MA 02066-6606 if you would like to Mapquest the address. It is a spectacular location with an impressive view across the water of the Boston skyline.

Bill Williams, President

NORTH ALABAMA CHAPTER

A meeting was held on 17 June 2010, there were 23 members or prospective members present. A discussion was held on the objectives of the chapter and we settled on: Create fellowship, support soldiers in harms way, do good for the community, educate the young on the Vietnam era and meet the veterans as they come home.

Also, a discussion was held on completing the chapter's formation, several members offered their services in helping with the legal and service requirements of the chapter. We decided to break into committees to get the job done; we will do this at our next meeting on 22 July, 2010 at 7:30 PM at the American Legion on Drake Ave.

We are looking forward to this meeting and hope all who read this will try to attend. POC's are:

■ Jim White [REDACTED]

Ph [REDACTED]

■ Same Maki [REDACTED]

■ Lash Wisener [REDACTED]

Cell phone [REDACTED]

Jim White, President

FORT WOLTERS CHAPTER

As reported earlier, the next Fort Wolters Chapter meeting will be September 11 at Logan's Roadhouse in Hurst, TX. This is a second Saturday meeting instead of the normal first so as not to conflict with Labor Day weekend.

The VA North Texas Health Care System will provide a guest speaker to discuss the new Fort Worth Outpatient Clinic. This facility is scheduled to open for business on October 1; a formal grand opening is scheduled for Veterans Day, November 11.

In addition to hearing reports on the San Diego Reunion, chapter officers for 2011 will be elected. They will take office at the December 4 meeting.

Pat Richardson, President

NORTH CAROLINA CHAPTER

Activities have been slow over the summer. We had three of our helicopters at the 4th of July events around the state. J.D. Lawson, President

GEORGIA CHAPTER

The Georgia Chapter continues to hold its bi-monthly Saturday morning fellowship breakfast meetings.

We also continue to assist with efforts to educate local people and groups about the Vietnam War by furnishing speakers to high schools and colleges, Boy Scout troops, other youth organizations, and civic groups who want to learn from people who were there.

Several VHPA members residing in Georgia attended the San Diego Reunion to see one of our own, Woody Mc Farlin, assume the duties of the Association's President. In addition to all of his other accolades Woody is the past president and one of the founding members of the Georgia Chapter. Georgia aviators attending the reunion included Skip Davis, Skip Ragan, Skip Bell (yeah, lots of guys in GA are named Skip), Dave Sherrard, Ralph Foster and Rick Lester. I'm sure there were more,

but those are the folks I know for sure were there. From what I've been able to gather, a good time was had by all.

If there are former Vietnam helicopter pilots in the Atlanta area who would like to join our group please see our web site at www.ga-vhpa.org or contact me at: [REDACTED] or via telephone at [REDACTED]

Skip Bell, President

WASHINGTON STATE CHAPTER

Forty plus members attended our last meeting held in conjunction with the Olympia Air Show at the Olympia Airport in June. It wasn't the greatest day weather-wise, but the airshow was held albeit on a reduced scale.

Our next meeting will be held in Spokane, WA in September, date TBA. It will be a meeting co-hosted by our chapter and the local chapter of MOAA. Several members of the chapter went down to San Diego to the reunion (Chris Farwell, Jack Salm & John Penny). All commented that the reunion was well run and they all had a great time.

Bob Brown, President

CRAVIN PIZZA RECEIVES CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

John Sorensen is shown presenting Jim Ashford a Certificate of Appreciation for his support and financial donation to the South Missouri Chapter of VHPA. Jim is the owner of Cravin' Pizza, a restaurant in Springfield, MO, where the Chapter Council meets frequently. Jim is ex-Navy and has been a tremendous supporter of our Chapter and our efforts. Cravin' Pizza is located at 3641 E. Sunshine Street, Springfield, MO. Stop in and say hello to Jim and his staff, and enjoy some wonderful food, if you're ever in the Springfield/Branson area.



From Left to Right: Bill Thompson, Jim Ashford, John Sorensen, and Russ Emory.



MAN CAVE

**To David Adams,
Editor of the VHPA AVIATOR**

Hello Dave,

I have never had a "My Stuff is on the Wall" type arrangement. I didn't want it when I was on Active Duty and when I retired in '92 didn't have the room at home to make it happen. However, I've "Retired-Retired", and since the new house in Round Rock, Texas has the room, I'm in the process of putting one together.

When I saw the cover of the VHPA 2009 Calendar and the caption that read that the troops on the ground were part of D Company, 503rd Parachute Infantry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade it got my attention. Then seeing again on the May/June 2010 AVIATOR really got me. My first Tour in '67-'68, prior to Flight School, was with the D Company, 3rd Battal-

ion (Airborne) 503rd Parachute Infantry Regiment. This battalion was one of the four infantry battalions assigned to the "HERD". I don't know if it was "my" D Company, but I really wanted that picture to add to my "Man Cave".

Well, after a few e-mails and with the help of the VHPA Calendar Editor Mike Law, and promises of "I'll do ANYTHING you want me to do", uh, well almost ANYTHING, I received an electronic copy of the photo.

Back when I signed up with the VHPA I knew there was a reason...now I know what it was!!

THANK YOU!!

God Bless,

Peter Kacerguis

D Company 3/503, 173rd ABN BDE '67-'68

C Troop/HHT 7/17th Cav '69-'71

E-Mail: [REDACTED]



LOOKING FOR

Veteran Needs Assistance from Fellow Unit Members:

Gary N. Hinkle, CW2 and later CPT, needs assistance from any fellow unit members who were stationed with him in E Battery, 82d Field Artillery (Aerial Observation) from Feb 1967-Jun 1968 or from the 240th AVN Co (Assault Helicopter) from Jan – Dec 1971.

Mr. Hinkle is applying for VA Disability for back injuries resulting from crashes in or about June 18, 1967 and then again March 17, 1968. Gary's crash in June 67 was due to hostile fire in enemy held territory. The crash in March 1968 was as a test pilot for a bird coming out of maintenance.

Any unit member who may recall Mr. Hinkle – during either tour – and who has firsthand knowledge that Mr. Hinkle was involved in the crashes is requested to call COL (Ret) Howard McGillin, Mr. Hinkle's attorney – at [redacted] or by email at [redacted]

As with many claims, the records maintained in theatre in wartime do not always keep up with the VA's proof requirements. Any unit member who can corroborate Mr. Hinkle's memory would be of great assistance.

Last, COL McGillin would also like to make contact with his old IP from Fort Rucker in the summer 1969. If "Whiskey Jim" Dobbs is still out there, please Call Col. McGillin at the above number.

Members of the VHPA,

I am a former Special Forces A-Team Member of A-237 Loung Son in Binh Thuan province in South Vietnam.

In the late afternoon of July 29th, 1967, 33 of our Vietnamese CIDG were surrounded by a massively superior Viet Cong or NVA force in the Free Strike area north of Phan Tiet, between our Camp and the South China Sea. They would not have survived the night of combat and been wiped out, except that an Air Force FAC saw the smoke from the battle and flew overhead to provide Commo back to our Camp.

Bob Little and myself volunteered to chopper into the battle and help them fight their way out. Two choppers came (I think) from Phan Tiet to our Camp's helipad at Loung Son. I think they were called "Black Cats" on their call sign as I was calling in air strikes and the choppers circling with supportive fire.

I'm wondering if, through your association, if any of your member's were part of the event, and/or if the Unit can be identified and I can obtain their units report on the event from their after action reports of that day/night???

Bob Little received a Silver Star from the action so we have some documentation available, but we are interested in obtaining more. Bob and I are in contact with each other as he lives in Southern California and I in Northern California, but it would be great to thank those chopper crews, the Air Force FAC and the A1-E Skyraider pilots who were dropping in their close support bombs so that most of us could make it safely through the jungle and through to sunrise!

I am Pete Laurence at [redacted] Clayton, CA 94517, my home phone is [redacted] and my email is: [redacted]

My office email is: [redacted]

My best wishes go out to all your members and especially any of the old "Black Cats" out there!

Sincerely, PETE LAURENCE,
Former Weapons Sgt, A-237, Loung Son, Vietnam

VHPA Member Al Major answers last issue's RFI on Huey 13603:

The latest VHPA newsletter has a request from a Mr. Dale Jacobs saying that "A friend in South Africa is flying a Vietnam Huey, UH-1D serial no. 64-13603 for fire fighting. Records show it was in Vietnam with the 187th AHC from April 68 to August 68." Dale goes on to say that "his friend would obviously like to know more about the aircraft."

I see from our website records that we (the 187th AHC) did indeed own that aircraft, but there's not much else available to fill in the gaps as to what happened to it, who flew it, etc. Our unit history is not very detailed

for the period of time in question. I for, one, would be very interested to know how one of our UH-1D's made it from Tay Ninh to South Africa and where has it been it between! I suspect there are some very interesting stories to be told here...

From our unit history:

UH-1D 64-13603 Purchase date: 3/65 Assigned to unit: 68/04
Left unit: 68/08 Total hours flown with unit: 249

Al Major, Rat Pack 34, [redacted]

Information Sought about (Butch) Sears and (Jeffrey) Coffin...

My name is Joe Sepesy. I went through flight school, WORWAC class 69-49, with WOC Gordon "Butch" Sears, my roommate, and WOC Jeffrey Coffin. Both were killed in action just days apart in November 1970 and both were really great guys. Butch was outgoing and helped me get through instruments, Jeff was the quiet, but just as supportive a friend.

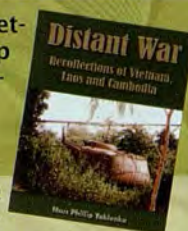
I am currently writing a book and would like factual information on their deaths as well as details of the tours of duty of my two friends. I know Butch flew with the 176th AHC, the Minutemen; and Jeff flew with the 57th AHC, either the Gladiators or Cougar guns. Can anyone out there help me?

If so, please telephone me at [redacted] or email me at [redacted] I'm asking for your help because I want the chapter about Butch and Jeff to be as accurate as possible. Thank you for your attention and assistance – it is appreciated.

Looking For a high-res version of photo of Plt. B-4 (3rd WOC) ~ Flight Class 69-19

If you have one available, please contact Dave Huff at: [redacted]

DISTANT WAR: Recollections of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia by Marc Phillip Yablonka. A collection of articles covering some 18 years of his freelance reporting on the aftermath of the U.S. involvement in Southeast Asia.



Marc is not a war correspondent but as he notes, he became a chronicler of war by telling the stories of those who had "been there." He has written for Reuters and been published in the Army Times, Stars and Stripes, and Vietnam Magazine to name a few. See what these reviewer's had to say about the novel....

To say there are many untold stories of the Vietnam War is an understatement. The war was a many faceted conflict that involved soldiers serving their country, and a wide variety of American and Vietnamese civilians. Yablonka's articulate and sensitive reporting brings the personal stories of these men and women alive on the page, providing a very interesting retrospective of that distant war.

~ John Penny – VHPA Aviator contributor
Kudos on your book. It's a very interesting read, well written and well researched. Glad you righted the wrong done to the Air America guys. Can't believe there was still a Huey lying in the weeds at Cu Chi as late as 1990 [cover photo], Cu Chi was my first duty station flying with the 116th Assault.

~ Richard Jellerson, Storyteller Films

Distant War: Recollections of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia (258 pages with photos, \$19.95) by Marc Phillip Yablonka, ISBN13: 978-0-557-08441-8 is available from merriam-press.com, Amazon, and other book suppliers.

VIETNAM HELICOPTER PILOTS ASSOCIATION

407 W. College Street, Grapevine, TX 76051

(800) 505-VHPA (voice) • (954) 301-0742 (fax) • HQ@vhpa.org (e-mail) • www.vhpa.org (website)

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Information about each Vietnam unit:

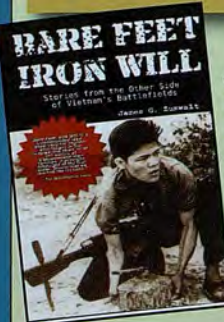
Dates in units		Unit	Location	Call sign
From:	To:			
1st				
2nd				
3rd				
4th				

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?

BOOK REVIEWS

By VHPA Life member
JOHN PENNY



Bare Feet, Iron Will by James G. Zumwalt, a Marine veteran of Vietnam and the son of the late Admiral Elmo Zumwalt, is a fascinating view of the Vietnam War from the other side. In over 50 visits to Vietnam between 1994 and 2004

Zumwalt made many contacts with those who fought against us those long years ago. Like many veterans of Vietnam, Zumwalt had his own conflicts and anger about the war to deal with, especially the death of his brother from cancer attributed to Agent Orange. While doing extensive interviews in both southern and northern Vietnam he found peace with those issues.

On his first trip back to Vietnam, he accompanied his father who was working on behalf of the Veteran's Administration in an effort to

engage the Vietnamese government in a joint study of the effects of Agent Orange. His return to Vietnam was an emotional one due to his father's responsibility for approving of the use of Agent Orange in Vietnam and his own brother's death. Surprisingly, James Zumwalt's first interviewee in Vietnam offered his condolences for the loss of his brother and noted the loss of his own brother. This sense of shared loss became a key element of the book which is based on his interviews.

Surprisingly, after some early difficulties, the government of Vietnam helped facilitate his interviews and was very open to his visits and requests. These interviews with hundreds of NVA and Viet Cong veterans provide a fascinating record of untold stories of sacrifice and loss by a technologically inferior enemy that persisted until US forces withdrew from Vietnam and the ARVN collapsed. Zumwalt's interviews provide a detailed look at one of the most decisive issues of the war, the operation of the Ho Chi Minh Trail with its inherent dan-

gers and hardships both of traveling it and maintaining it.

This book is not an apology for US policy during the Vietnam War or a glorification of the NVA and Viet Cong. Zumwalt shares with his readers how these interviews began to change his anger regarding the outcome of the Vietnam War into something far more positive. He came to recognize suffering and loss were issues faced by both sides in the struggle. Bringing these stories to light provided him with a positive purpose, replacing his anger. While many US Vietnam War veterans respected the fighting ability of the enemy, Zumwalt recognizes many do not share his feelings. He encourages Vietnam veterans to visit Vietnam as an approach to healing.

Bare Feet, Iron Will: Stories from the Other Side of Vietnam's Battlefields (336 pages, \$16.15) by James G. Zumwalt ISBN: 97809777788439 is available from Amazon.



The Price of Exit by VHPA member Tom Marshall is a riveting narrative of his personal experiences with C/158th AVN 101 ABN, 163rd GS 101 ABN, and those of his fellow aircrew members during the drawdown of American ground forces referred to as the "Vietnamization" period of the war. Although our nation had turned its attention away from Vietnam, there were many bitter battles yet to be waged. The burden of these fierce battles such as LZ Ripcord, and the ARVN campaign of Lam Son 719 fell upon the dwindling number of helicopter aircrews.

Marshall's personal journey to the skies of Vietnam in August, 1970 is a story we all know well. By the time Vietnamization kicked in, many helicopter crewmembers, like Marshall, would be shuffled around as units stood down. By November, 1970 Marshall found himself in C/158, call sign Phoenix. C/158 is the main focus of the book's combat narrative and includes some of C/158's engagements prior to his arrival, such as Firebase Ripcord. However, Marshall's chronicle of what C/158 ran into in the Lam Son 719 debacle is most compelling.

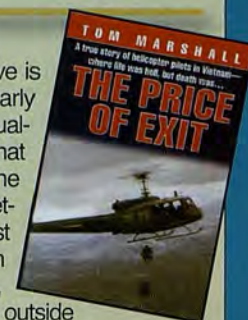
To say the ARVN incursion into Laos in February, 1971 was a rout is an understatement. As Marshall notes, US helicopter crews soon discovered at least 20 well dug in NVA heavy antiaircraft battalions were waiting for them. Insertions into LZs of unmotivated ARVN soldiers who seldom moved away from the LZ resulted in heavy losses and attempts to extract panicked ARVN troops turned into virtual suicide missions for US helicopter crews. The destructive power of the intense fire helicopter crews faced and their continuing courage and

skill facing it is the most gripping part of this book.

One of the key elements in Marshall's narrative is the record of losses aircrews suffered, particularly those of his own flight school class, 70-5. The casualties this class suffered are a continuous thread that winds through the entire book. We all knew the risks associated with flying combat missions in Vietnam but Marshall builds his list of classmates lost throughout the book and often reflects on his own feelings and emotions as the losses added up, affecting his desire for a somewhat safer flying job outside of C/158th. He was granted his wish for a transfer—but safer it wasn't.

Although this book was published over 10 years ago, I suspect many of you, like me, had not read the book. Until it came out, not much had been written about the experiences helicopter aircrews faced during this period of very intense antiaircraft warfare. Marshall's narrative of the service and sacrifice the Army helicopter aircrews gave in the closing days of the Vietnam War is outstanding and makes clear the "price of exit" referred to in the title was borne for by "the helicopter pilots, crew chiefs, and gunners who paid the price of withdrawal."

The Price of Exit, (362 pages, \$7.99) by Tom Marshall, ISBN: 0804117152 is available from Amazon, and other book suppliers. At San Diego, Tom showed excerpts from his DVD, The Price of Exit: Anthology which has the best helicopter combat footage I have seen. Contact William T. "Tom" Marshall via the members section of the VHPA website to get a copy.



US Helicopter Pilot in Vietnam answers the question: "Grandpa what did you do in the Army?" This simple question with its complex answer often causes your listener, especially the young and IT savvy ones, to get that glazed look in their eyes. It is a concise, detailed, and well illustrated volume that outlines what it took to become an Army helicopter pilot and includes accurate information about the Vietnam era aircraft we all flew. Mike Law loaned me this book. He will have a hard time getting it back.

US Helicopter Pilot in Vietnam, (64 pages, \$16.20) by Gordon L. Rottman and illustrated by Steve Noon, ISBN: 978-1846032295 is available from Amazon, and other book suppliers.

NOTED WITH INTEREST

ABOVE ALL, a newly published novel by VHPA member and author John Huffman about a gunship pilot set in the waning days of the Vietnam War is available at http://www.johnwhuffman.com/Home_Page.php or Amazon.

Inside the President's Helicopter by VHPA member Gene Boyer is in manuscript and due for publication in December. Look for my review in the next Aviator.



PRESS RELEASE

Wolters Industrial Park Main Gate Restoration Project Announced Main Gate to be restored to 1967-era appearance when the park was Fort Wolters, home to the Primary Helicopter Center.

Mineral Wells, Texas, August 2, 2010 -

A group of local officials, community leaders and interested individuals has recently formed a committee to oversee the restoration of the main gate into Wolters Industrial Park on Highway 180 E on the east side of Mineral Wells. The restoration will "capture the essence of the sign as it was when the Primary Helicopter School was active", said Beth Watson, one of the committee members.

The project was expanded at a previous committee meeting to include three phases: Restoration of the main gate, installation of a parking area adjacent to the east side of the gate that includes signage describing the gate and its history and installation of a second parking area on the triangle of land just north of the gate where the main road splits.

The gate renovation will include painting of the overhead sign and support structure, repair of the masonry walls, installation of landscaping and installation of the 1967-era name on the sign: U. S. Army Primary Helicopter Center, Fort Wolters, Texas.

The sign will also carry a set of wings and signs representing the insignia of 4th Army and The Primary Helicopter Center. In addition, helicopters of the same types originally mounted on each side of the sign will be provided by The National Vietnam War Museum; a Hiller OH-23 on the left and a Hughes TH-55 on the right. The OH-23 has been donated by Fort Wolters Helicopters to The National Vietnam War Museum for this purpose. Both helicopters will undergo significant restoration prior to placement at the gate.

The estimated cost of the project's three phases is \$50,000. Fundraising by the group has already begun. The National Vietnam War Museum, a 501c3 nonprofit corporation, has agreed to act as fiscal sponsor for the project so that contributions to fund the project may be tax deductible. Sponsorships are now available for many components of the project, but contributions of any size will be appreciated. All sponsors and other contributors will be recognized on special signage.

Contributions may be made by mail using a check or money order made to The National Vietnam War Museum and mailed to P. O. Box 146, Mineral Wells,



TX 76068-0146. Please add a notation on the check that the contribution is for the Wolters Main Gate Restoration Project. Online contributions may also be made using a credit card on the museum website at www.NationalVNWarMuseum.org; select Gift Shop and scroll to the order form where you can enter your information and indicate the contribution is for the Main Gate Restoration Project.

Leaders for the group, elected at the group's meeting on July 27, 2010, are Dr. Ronny Collins – Chair, Mary Creighton – Reporter and Jim Messinger – Treasurer. "This is an excellent example of how public and private partnerships can work together to accomplish a project that will be good for the community," said Dr. Collins.

For more information about the project, contact

*Dr. Collins at [redacted] or
Mary Creighton at [redacted]*