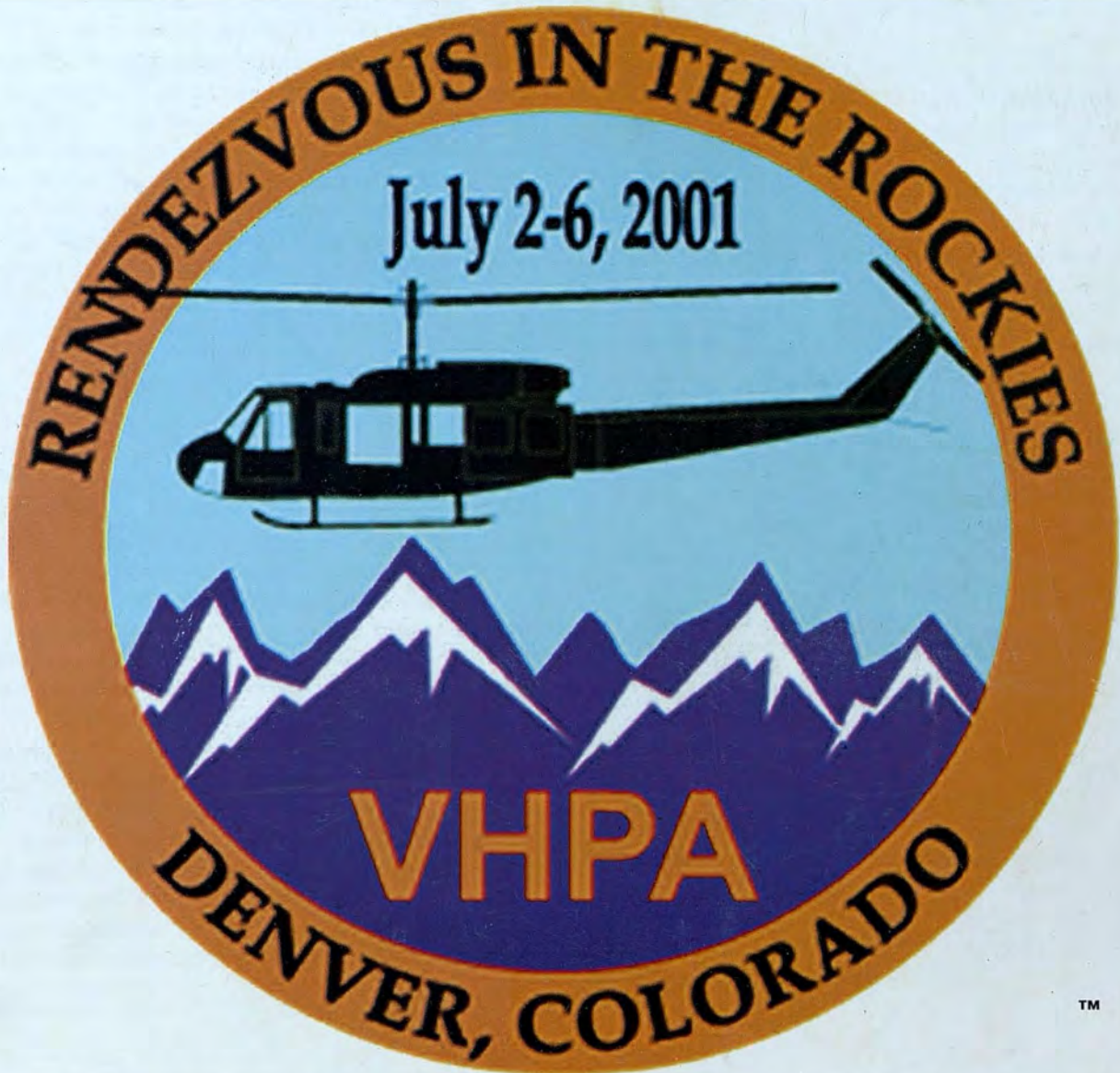




The VHPA Newsletter

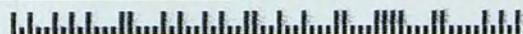
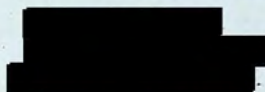
Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association ®

May/June 2001 Vol. 19, No. 3



This is the official logo for VHPA Reunion 2001, which will be held in Denver from July 2-6. Headquarters hotel will be the Adam's Mark in downtown Denver.

*****3-DIGIT 453



From the President

Well, it certainly seems true that time does fly, particularly as you get older. It seems just yesterday I was struggling with my first "From the President" column, and now it's time for my last one.

I view it with both a sense of sadness and relief.

For those of you who haven't had the privilege of occupying this position, the closest analogy I can make is flying scouts in Vietnam. The "bullets" are of a different nature, of course.

During the process you're not too sure this is much fun (and it's certainly a lot of work), but there will always be the sweet memories of the "good times" to look back on.

Of course, it's not the president that makes the VHPA run; he's just one of many that perform a particular role to ensure that the organization keeps on track and is managed in a manner that is in the best interests of ALL members.

Individuals make VHPA great

It's a team of dedicated individuals who insist on making the VHPA a great organization, and often go "above and beyond the call of duty" to ensure that happens.

I would certainly like to thank Marcia Fritz of our management contractor, Fritzco, and all of her supporting staff, for their tireless efforts on our behalf.

They certainly give the "extra mile," frequently going beyond their contractual requirements, and never a complaint.

Then there's Gary Roush who keeps our website going, is always immediately responsive to changes, and contributes a significant annual amount from his own pocket to do so.

Mike Law who not only gets our Membership Directory published but, this year, is our Reunion Committee chairman for Denver; Mike's efforts on behalf of VHPA are tireless, and have certainly made my overall responsibility for the reunion a much easier task.

John Gaines, member of the Rocky Mountain Chapter, who contributed from his own pocket to get a reunion/membership mailing sent out in February; and the

Rocky Mountain Chapter/Reunion Committee volunteers who put together and published that mailing plus a second one a few weeks later, a total of about 5,000 mailers.

Mike Hurley who volunteered to fill the vacated junior-member-at-large position until the next election and has done such an excellent job.

Don and Helen Joyce who jumped in to represent VHPA at the AAAA Convention in Charlotte, made all the local arrangements, and personally "manned" the booth themselves for the entire convention.

Dana Young who supervised the representation of VHPA at the HAI Convention in Anaheim and, when Robert Wiggins had to resign as chairman of the Membership Committee, volunteered to fill that position and has already demonstrated excellence in that role; coming up with several new ideas for increasing membership.

Charles Rayl, legal counsel emeritus, who gave much from his crowded schedule to ensure a smooth transition to Jim Gunderson, our new legal counsel and chairman of the Legal Committee, who "hit the ground running" and made several significant contributions the past year.

Mike Sloniker who, despite serious health problems this past winter and spring, continued to chair the Historical Committee and produce his typically outstanding product.

Kenny Bunn (chairman) and Joe Bilitzke, Site Selection Committee, who continue to invest significant time and effort in locating hotels for our reunions and negotiating contracts that are in the best interests of the organization; I visited the hotel for R2001 last August and can personally testify that the property is truly outstanding for our purposes; some EC members visited the hotel for R2002 recently and it served to reinforce our previous opinion that they had done an equally excellent job for that reunion; R2003 won't be announced for awhile but it may be the best site/contract they've ever negotiated, certainly if the primary criterion is the price of beer!

Then there's Jack Swickard. Words cannot adequately describe what he contributes to this organization. Not only does he repeatedly produce an outstanding Newsletter, but he usually does so in the face of what becomes an impossible schedule caused by late input. So, if you get upset because your Newsletter is late in arriving, don't blame it on Jack; it's nearly always because his publication schedule is delayed by late arriving articles that have been

Continued on Page 5

Classified ads

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

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

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This information, including but not limited to the VHPA Chapter list, shall not be used for commercial solicitation purposes or any correspondence related thereto without prior written authorization from the VHPA president.

Correspondence relating to commercial purposes or solicitations shall only be sent to those officers, committee chairmen, and staff listed above.

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(fax)

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(work)
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VHPA Products

You may order a past calendar with incredible color photos through VHPA Headquarters or online at <http://www.vhpa.org> The 2001 Calendar may only be ordered by calling Turner Publishing at (800) 788-3350.

Product	Each	P&H	No.	Total
Bumper sticker	\$1	Free		\$
Window decal	\$1	Free		\$
Newsletters — back issues	\$2	Free		\$
1999 Directory — 1972 Easter Offensive	\$15	\$5 ea		\$
1998 Directory — Cambodia, Thailand, Laos, N. Vietnam	\$15	\$5 ea		\$
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1994 Directory — Lam Son 719 and tactical map	\$10	\$5 ea		\$
2000 Calendar	\$8	\$5 ea		\$
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Historical Reference Directory — Vol. I. (Highlights 1961-65)	\$10	\$5 ea		\$
Historical Reference Directory — Vol. II. (Highlights 1966-67)	\$15	\$5 ea		\$
Vietnam Helicopter History CD-ROM (\$15 for VHPA members)	\$25	\$5 ea		\$
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Card number:	Expiration date:		
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From the President

Continued from Page 2

deemed necessary for the very next edition of the Newsletter. While this is usually in the best interest of our members, it does create headaches and frustrations for Jack. So, Jack, thank you for everything you do and for putting up with our late inputs and changes.

And, certainly, thanks are also extended to your assistant editors: Ken Fritz, Tom Payne and Mike Law.

EC members receive thanks

Of course, how can I not extend my thanks to the rest of the Executive Council:

Dave Rittman, who will be our president next year and whose leadership qualities have been well-demonstrated on many occasions, Bob Smith, Joe Bilitzke, Dan Ferguson, Mike Hurley and Tom Payne.

I can't recall having had the opportunity to work with such a talented group of dedicated individuals.

We didn't always agree during discussions (after all, we are Vietnam helicopter pilots!), but when votes were finally cast they were nearly always unanimous, either for or against the idea, and based on what was in the best interests of the organization.

Ken Fritz and Tom Payne deserve special thanks from me for frequently providing historical perspective on several issues, as well as providing sounding boards and offering advice on some difficult decisions.

Fortunately, more often than not I listened to my "elders" and avoided making a fool of myself (although I undoubtedly achieved that on other occasions).

Ken also jumped in last November to help us out on some reunion vendor issues, and did such a great job that he got "volunteered" to be chairman of the Vendor Coordination Committee.

If I've omitted anyone from the special thanks they deserve, please forgive my aging brain, which is under extreme pressure to make the Newsletter deadline.

From a management perspective, the last year can only

be described as one of accomplishment.

Several carry-over tasks and many new tasks were brought to fruition. These have all been discussed in previous newsletters and I won't bore you with repetition.

Awards, speeches to be streamlined

One that hasn't been mentioned is our streamlining of the awards process and "speeches" during the reunion banquet.

We all want to see folks recognized for contributions to the organization, but we also know that it has now become a somewhat lengthy process because of the number of individuals who make such contributions.

We're going to make every effort to recognize as many of these people as possible during events other than the banquet, and we'll also streamline those that necessarily must be presented during the banquet.

In addition, each speaker will be limited to a very short amount of time to make his or her point (after all, the Bible can be summarized in one sentence!), and many of you will be pleased to know that I will be held to the same rule.

It's also my understanding that a certain physical apparatus may be used to ensure compliance.

While I said thank you to many individuals above, I saved the most important for last.

I extend my personal thanks to each and every member of VHPA. The privilege of serving my colleagues in the role of president has been an honor that cannot be adequately described.

I have tried to perform that role to the utmost of my abilities and to make my varied decisions based on what was in the best interests of our truly unique organization, and in issues involving individual members to provide any necessary intervention to get the problem or misunderstanding straightened out.

I hope I have been mostly successful during my tenure. Thank you, one and all.

I hope each and every one of you can come to the reunion in Denver so that I may express my gratitude in person!

— Charles Holley,
2000-2001 President

Hotel room rates may go up after June 11

For those of you who will be attending the reunion but have not yet made hotel reservations, be advised rooms in the Adam's Mark Hotel could get more expensive for reservations made after June 11.

The VHPA room block is released on June 12 and the hotel can sell those rooms to the public.

After June 11, the VHPA rate is

subject to availability and granting the rate is at the discretion of the hotel. The hotel's normal rates are \$30-\$40 higher than the VHPA rate.

In addition, the VHPA has not at this time met its contractual occupancy quota and, if we fail to do so, we will face a penalty.

If you do not meet the June 11 deadline, you can still mail to the

hotel the VHPA HQ-provided hotel reservation form or you can call the Adam's Mark Central Reservations at (800) 444-2326; if you call Central Reservations, be sure to mention you're attending the VHPA Reunion.

PLEASE, don't procrastinate! If you're going to attend the reunion and will be making a hotel reservation, DO IT NOW!

Letters

Helicopter program airs on History Channel

The History Channel will present "The Personal Experience, Helicopter Warfare in Vietnam," a two-hour program on Saturday, June 9, during Vietnam Remembered Week, 8 p.m. Eastern and Pacific times, 6 p.m. Central, 7 p.m. Mountain.

Produced by StoryTeller Films' Richard Jellerson and Jamie Thompson and written by Jellerson, the documentary features candid and compelling interviews with pilots and crew members.

With previously unseen, 30-year-old Super8 mm footage filmed by the crews themselves, the film not only looks at the role of the helicopter in the Vietnam War, but also focuses on the firsthand personal experience of those who were there.

It is something filmmaker Richard Jellerson knows well, having served with two units as an Army helicopter pilot in Vietnam.

"I wanted to capture on film what it really felt like for those of us who were over there as teen-agers involved in the daily maelstrom of war."

Through their individual accounts, gripping testimony and film footage (50 percent of which is personal footage) "The Personal Experience" explores how they went from being ordinary teen-agers to commanding airborne fighting machines (many were not only new to the military, they had never been near an aircraft before).

The daily realities:

- "You'll go through this horrendous experience and you're going to do it the next day and the next day and the next day."

- What it felt like to kill someone: "I didn't like the fact that killing became like drinking water."

- Their expectations and losses, coming home, and the interviewees' lives today.

"The Personal Experience, Helicopter Warfare in Vietnam" was filmed with the cooperation of the Army, the National Guard and the offices of Chief of Public Affairs Los Angeles Kathleen Ross.

StoryTeller Films is dedicated to the production of high-quality educational films of historical, environmental and scientific interest.

Cinematographer Jamie Thompson has worked as a director of photography on several recent features, music videos, commercials and documentary films.

His accomplished editing skills and cinematography adds a symbiosis and seamlessness to the art of story telling through film.

David F. Clemmer

Pilot recalls close call in front seat of Cobra

I'm looking for CW3 William "Bill" Schulmerich, assistant maintenance officer, B/3/17 Cav in early 1968. He is not a member of VHPA.

We all had our share of near-fatal experiences flying the friendly skies of Vietnam, but the closest I ever came was in the front seat of a little bird looking for bad guys between Katum Special Forces Camp and Nui Ba Den (Black Virgin Mountain), III Corps.

We were bingo and en route back to Tay Ninh without having taken or fired a shot in anger, the air conditioner spitting small snowballs and all was hunky-dory until we did the Cav's unforgivable sin: We let the LOH get almost out of sight directly under us.

"Taking fire! Taking fire!" came the call.

"Where is he, Toe?" (my nickname, and another story) asked CW3 Bill Schulmerich, the aircraft commander.

"Left side, under us."



Systems hot, Bill hammerheaded left and came straight down on the edge of a clearing the LOH had just passed over. I put some minigun and Bill a few pair of rockets on the area, and then I noticed we were still coming down — fast — straight down.

I looked at Bill in the mirror and saw his face was a lot whiter than his normal Nordic white.

I noticed the cyclic was making little jerks aft, that there were cut tree sections on the ground in the clearing we were headed for and I could see individual branches, and things I had done in my life up to this point were running through my mind and thinking: "THIS IS IT!!"

We mushed out in the clearing, maybe 50 feet from the ground, with the triple canopy above us and to our left, low RPM warning blaring, and a pretty good 2-1 vertical vibration.

Bill was still as white as a sheet and I imagine I was too. After gaining some altitude, he said: "Toe, You've got it."

I stowed the sight, which was still in my lap — and bouncing flew us back to Tay Ninh.

The aircraft was down for about 3 weeks for new blades, transmission mounts and other items related to that little episode.

During the same timeframe, a 7/1 Cav Cobra crashed due to the same maneuver, both pilots killed.

Shortly after that came the warning from on high not to put the Cobra into vertical dives since the height of the vertical stabilizer tended to come over and invert the aircraft.

But I'm here to tell you — it can be successfully rolled!

However, I wouldn't be here to tell any of this if I had been in the back seat of that Cobra instead of CW3 Bill Schulmerich.

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Letters

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He is not a member of VHPA, and for all I know he may have already joined that higher echelon VHPA, but if he hasn't, and anyone knows his whereabouts, you can contact me [redacted] or call me in the p.m. at [redacted].

I owe him my life and want to thank him for it.

John Garrison
[redacted]

Author solicits photos from helicopter pilots

I ran recon (SOG) out of CCC (Kontum) from April through November 1969, after which I took over the operation of the photo lab there from December 1969 through April 1970, when I returned to the States.

I put in a lot of air hours flying photo missions (BDAs and VRs) from the back seat of mostly O-1s.

I have an extensive library of photographs from that period of time, some 30 of which appeared in John Plaster's recent book: "SOG: A Photo History of the Secret Wars."

John's book did a great job in covering the breadth of SOG and I am writing a book covering, in depth, my experiences at CCC. The book will be primarily a photo-journal. Although it started out as a personal reflection, so many others have offered to let me use their photos and stories, it has evolved to be more of a collective experience of all of us who participated there, both on the ground and in the air.

I am contacting you to see if any of the members of your group who provided support for us — especially the 57th, 170th, 119th and 189th Assault Helicopter Companies — would like to contribute photos or stories about their experiences in supporting the insertion and/or extraction of recon teams or hatchet forces across the fence in Laos/Cambodia, mainly during the period 1968 through 1970.

Since it is a photo book, I am mostly looking for unusual or exceptional photos involving the Hueys. I am trying to include photos of and reference to all of those who gave us at CCC (formerly FOB2) such excellent air support.

Any questions or responses can be e-mailed to me at [redacted] and my phone number is [redacted].

Thanks for any help or leads you can provide.

Frank Greco
[redacted]

Recent VHPA member enjoys work on Directory

I am a recent member of the VHPA and have really enjoyed the work you have done.

I served with B/3/17th Cav at Soui Da in late 1967 and early 1968.

I have enjoyed the 2000 Membership Directory and have studied and read every word. On one hand, such valor, and on the other, sickening waste of young lives. May they not be forgotten.

I have noticed several omissions that I hope my pointing out will lead to their listing.

First, B/3/17th Cav lost a doorgunner, an American Indian with a name similar to Aguaja and a crew chief (name unknown) in a UH-1C shot down.

Rumor was the Air Force dropped a CBU cluster bomb across the ship. The gunship was piloted by WO1 James F. Horan and WO1 Paul Fleming, both of whom survived and I believe are members.

Second, B Troop lost a young warrant officer on one of his first flights in country during the early days of Tet

AAHF second air show season now in full swing

I'd like the VHPA readers to know that the second air show season for the Army Aviation Heritage Foundation (AAHF) got in full swing starting with Maxwell Air Force Base several weeks ago.

I know we will be at air shows very close to where many of you live. So plan to come out and see us and show your family the Loach, Cobra and slick you lived with in 'Nam and let them see the aircraft in action.

We put on a typical air cav operation, complete with inserting the Blues and a Caribou resupply. Lots of shoot 'em up, bang bang stuff both impacting and from the gas guns on the aircraft.

I'm sure you will be proud of the way we are telling our story to the American public.

More information may be found on our website www.armyav.org and at our information booth at the Denver gathering of VHPA.

The schedule is:

- June 9 — PDK Airport, Atlanta, GA.
- June 30-July 1 — Wings of Eagles Air Show, Corning, NY.
- July 12-22 — U.S. Air and Trade Show, Dayton, OH.
- Sept. 1-3 — St. Louis Fair and Air Show, St. Louis, MO

We are scheduled to be at the Gathering of Eagles at Fort Campbell, KY, in June 2002

Glenn Carr
Embalmer 6, 1970-71
[redacted]



Letters

Continued from Page 7

1968. He had only been married a few days, I believe, and may not have been in country a week.

He was flying with the new Troop commander on a prisoner pickup just south of the Hoc Mon canal. KIA date would probably be around Feb. 1-10, 1968.

In the callousness of youth and war, I never really learned his name.

Third, another Warrant, Cary Beavers, was killed after his tour in Vietnam.

He died at Fort Rucker in the mid to late 1970s. Cary was from Newman, GA, and had served as a doorgunner or crew chief in Vietnam before going to flight school.

I believe he was flying a Cobra possibly in the early night vision training program.

I feel an obligation to see these men listed and I am embarrassed to have forgotten so much about them.

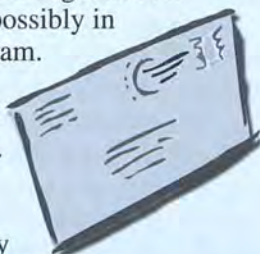
Fourth, two of my 66-23/67-1 flight classmates are not listed.

WO David Krishbaum and Jerry Kelly. I may not have the spelling right.

David and I served as Scouts at the time A/3/17th Cav deployed. David was from Colorado.

Jerry was held over due to sickness and graduated in 67-31, I guess. He was from Binghamton, NY, and served in the 1st Cav's ARA on one of his tours. The last I saw of him was in 1970 as a captain on the way to Germany.

I have Jerry's photograph to prove I didn't make this captain part up.



R. Sterling Holbrook
B/3/17th Cav 1967-68
Stogie 17
Class 66-23/67-1

EDITOR'S NOTE: With Sterling's excellent letter in hand, directory editor Mike Law went to work.

Concerning his second item: The young warrant officer killed in B Troop in early February 1968, a quick search of the VHPA databases didn't locate this person. Any newsletter reader who can provide some more details concerning this person is asked to contact Mike Law, VHPA Directory Editor, or Gary Roush, VHPA Database Committee Chairman.

Concerning his third item: Cary Beavers is not listed in the VHPA's Died After Tour database. Any reader who can provide date of death, details about his service in Vietnam, etc., is asked to contact the VHPA.

Concerning his fourth item: The VHPA flight class database has David A. Krichbaum (note spelling) graduating with class 66-23/67-1 and Jerrold M. Kelley (note spelling) graduating with 67-7 after being in 66-23. Since neither of the pilots is listed in the membership database, any reader who can provide more informa-

tion (especially a current address) is asked to contact the VHPA.

Now, concerning his first item: James Horan and Paul Fleming are life members of the VHPA. James is traveling connected with his job, but Paul was quick and helpful via e-mail and phone calls. Based on his input and Sterling pointed it out to us, the VHPA databases were updated. Thank you both very, very much.

Fleming recalls incident

Paul H. Fleming recalls: The date was Dec. 15, 1967. The two men who died were Spec. 4 Oscar Aguayo, the crew chief, and Pfc. James Reichelt, the gunner.

They are listed in the VHPA Directory, but need to have their unit, B/3/17th Cav, added. I remember the incident well!

At that time B/3/17th Cav's base camp was Soui Da on QL 13 west of Nui Ba Den. This was a last-minute, scratch mission. Most of B Troop was out working an AO some place.

Our operations came looking for crews to man two gunships to respond to a contact on Secondary Route 246 near Bo Tuc, east of Katum going toward An Loc.

Like the others on that mission, I had the day off. As I remember, when we had eight guys for the two UH-1Cs, we launched.

WO1 James F. Horan was the AC. I had joined B Troop from the 334th gun company as part of the infusion, DEROS shuffle.

Anyway, when we arrived over the battle, we learned the ARVN's were on one side of the road and the NVA on the other. The vegetation had been cleared about 75 yards on both sides of the road, which was cut through very heavy jungle.

A FAC had some artillery going in and directed us to make our runs east to west, breaking short of where the rounds were landing.

We had just about expended all our ordinance and I seem to recall the FAC had directed an air strike from some F-100s to come in after we were done. We were making about 400-yard gun runs.

I remember the lead ship had fired and made his break. We were well into our firing run when I saw this F-100 pass about 80 yards directly over us and on our same heading.

I could see all sorts of stuff coming off the F-100. I'd guess it was spent shell casings. I don't think it was CBU bomblets, but I don't know for sure.

Almost immediately after that there was one or two major explosions.

The one that sticks out most clearly in my mind was possibly on the nose of the Huey itself. This blast could have been caused by something from the F-100 or something the bad guys shot at us, I don't know for sure.

We lost intercom, so Jim and I started yelling at each other. I remember hearing our lead shouting over the radio

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Letters

Continued from Page 8

that he needed a medevac and to get the Air Force out of there! He was excited.

Jim was flying and it was obvious that we were going down. He turned left to put us down on the ARVN side of the road. As we crossed the road, an enemy machine gun really stitched us up good.

I remember working with Jim, but there was no lateral cyclic control.

We crashed into the trees on the edge of a small opening, but, as I recall, a stand of bamboo kept us from actually hitting the ground.

I remember the blades were gone and the cockpit was all messed up. The transmission had broken loose and was laying almost between us. The engine was still screaming and I remember finding the fuel shutoff valve, which was nowhere near its normal position. I pulled it and was surprised it worked because the engine shut down.

I don't know how I got out of the wreck, but I did. I remember working on Reichelt's injuries and could hear Jim wrestling to get out of the wreckage.

Then he and I started working on Aguayo, who had some serious injuries. We hadn't been on the ground more than about 20 minutes when an American infantry force arrived — it was our Blues!

I remember they were led by this staff sergeant who really had his stuff together. We were in his element and he took charge of a very messy situation.

A few minutes later, one of our LOHs came in and we loaded Aguayo in it.

A second LOH came in. We put Reichelt in it. I noticed there was no way to secure him, so I jumped in to hold him down. I remember holding his belt loops to a D-ring on the

Cousin trying to locate Vietnam helicopter pilot

I am attempting to locate a cousin of my World War II-era father, Lt. Col. or Col. Gerald Cooper (retired).

He flew (unknown what type of aircraft) in Vietnam during his service.

At last check, we thought he was living in the Madison, AL, area but am unsure now. He was from the Crossville, AL, area and the last time we had contact with him was the 1972-73 time frame when we were living at Jacksonville, AL, and he was working on his master's degree at Jacksonville State University.

Being a member of AAAA, I checked with them first, but they found no record of his membership. Can you help?

Glenn Painter
Madison, AL

floor with my hands.

I think the scout pilot's name was Gary, but I don't recall his last name. With his observer and the mini-gun, there were now four of us on that OH-6A.

Gary took off and I noticed he seemed to be doing clearing turns. I thought: No, we don't need to make any clearing turns now.

Then I realized what was going on: Gary had lost tail rotor control. I knew this wasn't good and we were going back into the bamboo.

Basically, we made about a 100-foot hovering autorotation and crashed very near the Huey. The LOH turned on its side. I don't think anyone received any new injuries in this crash.

When we collected ourselves on the ground, I remember Gary saying he knew they had loaded one man, but didn't realize I also was in the LOH.



I guess the decision was made not to send any more aircraft into that location because the grunts helped us walk out.

Soon the firefight was all but over. The Air Force was bombing the crud out of the bad guys. I remember the bombs landing so close we were lifted into the air with each explosion.

I got to view the battle field from these frequent airborne trips. Eventually we got to a place where a medevac slick took Reichelt and me to an aid station.

The place was a mad house — there were lots of wounded. I had two wounds in my left arm that I knew weren't too serious. I went to get these treated.

When I returned to the area where the seriously wounded were, I learned Aguayo and Reichelt had died. I don't know if they died from gunshot wounds, crash injuries, had bled to death or what.

After-action report: Our UH-1C was really messed up. I have a photo I think one of our scout pilots took of a Chinook lifting out the gunship and the LOH beneath it — piggy back style.

I am certain the Huey was written off as destroyed.

Jim wasn't seriously injured and was back flying in a few days. This was my fourth time being shot down and my wounds took a few days to heal.

I transferred to HHT and was soon flying UH-1Hs for them. If anyone wants to chat about this event or anything else about B Troop or HHT, I'm at [redacted]

Lengthy quest comes to end for Caribou pilot

Yesterday, while on a family visit in North Jersey, my wife Helen and I drove down the "Parkway" to the "Shore" (Jersey-speak) and went to NAS Lakehurst, ending a 38-year quest for me to see, photograph and touch U.S. Army Caribou No. 61-2392.

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Letters

Continued from Page 9

AC-1A, CV-2B, C-7A No. 392 was fresh from the DHC production line in Downsview, Toronto, Canada when I flew it to Fort Benning, GA, in May 1962.

After a week of installing long-range fuel bladders in the fuselage (22 hours fuel), and extra oil tanks, life rafts, Arctic survival flight suits and crew equipment, etc. . . . along with my CP, Lt. Jim Brown and crew, No. 61-2392 lifted off from Lawson Field, Fort Benning on June 1, 1962, for a three-week, 88-flying hour trip to Korat RTAFB, Thailand.

The trip is described in "The Aerie," as the 1st Aviation Company (FWTT) moved 18 new Caribou to Southeast Asia that month.

I last flew No. 392 in March 1963, when the unit was based at Vung Tau.

No. 392 had a varied career: Loaned to Air America, where it was damaged in Laos; stripped of wings and engines and flown by CH-54 to Udorn, Thailand, for rebuild. Photos at www.Air-America.org. No. 392 also is pictured in the new book "Wings of Air America."

No. 392 finally wound up in the Missouri Army National Guard and then to NAS Pensacola, and now has sat, with severe outside storage damage, at NAS Lakehurst, NJ, since 1995.

Part of the rudder was ripped off by high winds and pieces lay beside the fuselage. Yes, I have a "small piece" as a remembrance. Going inside, the cockpit and panel are missing many items, but it felt good to once again sit in the left seat.

Go to (www.oc-kahuna.com) and click on the "Bou" link, pull up Factory No. 50 for its history and there is also a winter photo showing the damage. In the background is No. 60-5430, Factory No. 20, also in a Missouri Army National Guard paint job, slightly less damaged, but I think both are unflyable, without a miracle.

I don't know why they cannot be taken "down the road" to Pen Turbo in Cape May, NJ. (www.PenTurbo.com) to provide parts, etc., for the turbine conversions, rather than rot at NAS Lakehurst.

All in all . . . a GREAT day, to see and touch an "Old Friend."

Don Joyce
Poinciana, FL

Skycrane Club finally has prints of painting

The Skycrane Club is a collection of CH-54 pilots and enthusiasts. VHPA member Max Torrence is the leader or the "stuckee" — depending on your point of view.

There were only three CH-54-equipped aviation companies in Vietnam (the 273rd, 355th, and 478th), plus a few

aircraft in the corps aviation companies late in the war.

However, the club is open to anyone who flew the CH-54 in Southeast Asia, in the States, in Alaska, in Germany, in wherever. It has had mini-reunions during VHPA reunions for several years.

About half a year ago, the club decided it needed a Joe Kline painting of a Skycrane. Joe's painting of other Army helicopters in Vietnam settings are indeed impressive.

Because of the small number of potential Skycrane painting customers, the club decided to hold a raffle where the winning prize would be Joe's original.

This is the way they raised the seed money to run prints of the original painting.

In late April, Max sent a "success" e-mail to the club because all the raffle tickets had been sold.

In early May, he passed on an announcement from Joe that the CH-54 print named "Heavy Metal" is now available in the standard version for \$80, and \$100 for the customized version.

As is Joe's tradition, the customized version contains unit markings, aircraft tail number, etc. painted on by hand. Each is signed and numbered.

Only 500 copies have been printed and none will be made after that.



He can even remove the particle separators, and put the star and bar insignia on for you REALLY old guys.

If you are interested, contact: Joe

Kline,

or

or visit www.joekline.com

Good news, indeed, for the Skycrane enthusiasts.

This year's Skycrane mini-reunion will be held in the afternoon of July 4. One of the agenda items is to hold the raffle for the original Skycrane painting.

Mike Law

VHPA Newsletter readers invited to dedication

On behalf of everyone associated with the Veterans Memorial Park in Soddy-Daisy, TN, I'd like to cordially invite *The VHPA Newsletter* readers to attend the dedication of Blue Star 786 on the 30th of June.

The information provided by Gary Roush of the VHPA Database Committee was a big, big help.

This aircraft was U.S. Army UH-1D (tail number 64-13786) and was purchased in September 1965.

I've enclosed a copy of the inscription that will be engraved and mounted on a pedestal next to Blue Star 786's final resting place, plus a copy of an article that appeared in *The Times Free Press* on Saturday, Jan. 13.

Anyone with questions or desiring more details can contact me at [redacted]

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Letters

Continued from Page 10

37421 or rolls@sprintmail.com

Henry "Rick" Roll
Chattanooga, TN

The inscription reads:

Blue Star 786

This UH-1 "Huey" helicopter was built by the Bell Helicopter Company in 1965 and was flown in combat by the 48th Assault Helicopter Company in the Republic of Vietnam for all of 1966 and 1967. She was damaged by enemy fire multiple times, but she was never shot down.

After her service in Vietnam, she was returned to the United States, where she was used to train new pilots until the cessation of hostilities in Vietnam. Afterwards she was flown by various National Guard units until she was retired from flying status in 1995.

Blue Star 786 was acquired from the US. Army, restored to her original configuration, and mounted for display here in Soddy-Daisy by the members of Chapter 203 of the Vietnam Veterans of America. It is hoped that she will serve as a permanent memorial to the ultimate sacrifices of our more than 57,000 brothers and sisters in combat who did not return alive from Vietnam.

The "Huey" helicopter is a powerful symbol of the war in Vietnam and saved thousands of lives through heroic medical evacuation. Blue Star 786 is a combat tested member of this historic family of helicopters.

Here is the newspaper article:

Vietnam vets get chopper to display

BY CLINT COOPER
STAFF WRITER

It was a drab olive green with dull orange doors, and it was battered and worn, but Chattanooga Charlie Hobbs looked at it like an old friend.

"There's nothing more Vietnam than a Huey helicopter," he said.

With the arrival on Friday afternoon of a decommissioned UH-1D Huey helicopter, the Chattanooga Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 203 now has its own symbol of the Vietnam War.

The helicopter, which came via flatbed truck from Fort Rucker, Ala., will be restored, then put on a 12-foot pedestal for display in the Soddy-Daisy Veterans Park.

The local chapter has sought a Huey — known as a "Slick," according to former Vietnam pilot Rick Roll — since 1996, when Mr. Hobbs and fellow veteran Dennis Dent heard the Army was dumping the old ones in the

ocean.

"I don't know if they were really doing that," said Mr. Dent, "but that's what we heard. We figured we needed one for display."

Five years and mounds of paperwork later, they've got one.

The one they got was officially known as U.S. Army helicopter UH-1D, tail number 64-13786. Purchased by the Army in September 1965 from Bell Helicopter of Fort Worth, Texas, it was used in Vietnam in 1966 and 1967.

Hit by enemy fire in April 1966 and July 1967, it continued flight in both cases. It was used in Vietnam through the rest of 1967, then employed for training at various military bases until 1972 and eventually by the Army National Guard until 1994.

Mr. Roll said Hueys were used in Vietnam for medical evacuation, troop transport and the flight of high-ranking officials.

"The infantry looked forward to seeing them come," Lawrence Shull said. "It meant we wouldn't have to walk through more rice paddies."

"When you saw them," said Mr. Dent, "you knew you had help."

Both Mr. Shull and Mr. Dent remember being evacuated by Hueys following combat injuries.

"They represented everything good in the life of a combat soldier," said Mr. Roll. "They were a symbol of the war, just as the DC-3s were a symbol of World War II."

Mr. Hobbs said Fast Line Hauling provided the flatbed truck for the transportation of the Huey to Chattanooga, and Moss Motors supplied a van to take veterans to Fort Rucker for the handover. He said S&H Erectors has agreed to do the work of putting the helicopter on its final resting place.

"Everyone has been so generous," he said.

Mr. Hobbs said the Chattanooga Vietnam Veterans chapter has 186 members and is the largest in Tennessee.

New VHPA member thanks reunion committee for notice

I just joined the VHPA and I want to thank Ed Fickes of the Denver Reunion Committee for placing a little notice in the VFW magazine. I responded to Ed via e-mail.

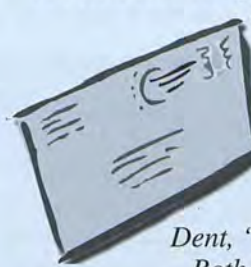
Since Ed was leaving town, he had Mike Law mail me a copy of some VHPA membership and reunion material.

In that material, I learned about the VHPA website and from there I learned about a whole world of websites. I never knew any of this was out there.

Recently I've made contact with men I served with in Vietnam and have helped provide some details for the 57th Assault Helicopter Company historians. Here is my story:

I was an Artillery officer who went to flight school in the 1950s. I served in Germany and Korea. I came from Korea with orders to report to the 11th Air Assault Division at Fort Benning.

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Letters

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For the first time in my short military career, I was asked what I wanted to do in the new division (as long as it involved flying).

The Vietnam thing was growing by the day, and I figured that would be where the new "Test Division" eventually would wind up. So, since my parents hadn't raised any idiots so far, I rationalized Caribous would most likely retire to the rear each night to clean sheets and cocktails at the club.

I chose the Caribou and was sent to Fort Rucker, again, to learn all about the CV-2, and how it would be employed tactically within the new division. That was the summer of 1964.

I really enjoyed flying that ol' Caribou!

Skip ahead to the next year: Summer of 1965. A message came down, about the last of July, to all pilots, requesting volunteers (or crazies), to ask for a transfer to a brand new unit that had just been formed, and that would leave in August for South Vietnam — the 12th Combat Aviation Group.

I volunteered and was given the job of assistant S-4. Once in country, my task was to see that all combat aviation units were supplied and resupplied with all categories of ammunitions.

That, on the surface, seemed like an easy task . . . until I found out the success of my accomplishing this was dependent entirely upon the U.S. Air Force providing me with sufficient transport capability, on a daily basis, to get the job done.

So, if you flew and fought against tyranny in RVN, under the umbrella of the 12th CAG in 1965-66, then it fell to me to assure adequate supplies of rockets and anything else we had available that you "Air Beater" types had found a way to chuck out of a chopper.

The 12th CAG was stationed on Tan Son Nhut at Saigon. I have never seen in my lifetime, in one place, more of a variety of things that could transition from an object sitting still on Mother Earth to an object that moved through the air above Mother Earth, than was scattered around Tan Son Nhut, just during 1966.

I would give a small fortune to have one week's worth

Green Hornet pilots sought

I am trying to find pilots or crewmembers who flew with the 20th SOS (Green Hornets) in Vietnam. Is there any way to post an alert for them to contact me?

We meet at the Howard County Vietnam Veterans reunion on Sept. 14-16 at Kokomo, IN.

Any help you could provide would be greatly appreciated. Thanks.

Robert Hall
[REDACTED]

of color movie film of the takeoffs and landings of that airfield during 1966.

Anyway, the 12th CAG moved to a few miles northwest of Saigon in the spring of 1966. That's where I received my oak leaves and received my Round Robin orders back to Vietnam.

My orders stated I was to proceed to Fort Rucker, become proficient in helicopters, and then on to Fort Bragg, where I was to join, assemble, train, and return with a helicopter company to RVN. Oh, Happy Day!

In days and years past, I had submitted numerous applications for chopper school, but was always told: "Not now, you're too critical in your present assignment." Balderdash!

After completing Rotary Wing Qualification Course 67-3 in October 1966, I proceeded to Fort Bragg and was assigned initially to the 69th Aviation Company, but in November 1966, I was assigned to the 57th Aviation Company (AML).

I believe I was the first officer assigned to the company. I have looked through my records and cannot find orders assigning me to the company.

I had made major in June 1966 and did not outrank many other majors. So, it was not a surprise, but was a big letdown, that a ranking major appeared on the scene, in the Spring of 1967: Maj. Bernard Allman, who was on the lieutenant colonel list.

So I served the company as executive officer and remained in that capacity until I was wounded during Tet 1968.

We equipped, staffed and trained the 57th and deployed to Vietnam. We moved to Kontum as part of the 52nd Combat Aviation Battalion.

Two events stick out in my mind that I'd like to share.

• **Jan. 10, 1968:** Our plan of action in the event of an attack against the company at night was to launch a flare ship ASAP.

Pilots were designated on a rotating roster for this duty, and were to launch at the first sound of attack.

Their mission, of course, was to climb out over the compound, taking wind drift into account, and, at sufficient altitude, drop flares to assist in the defense of the home base.

On the night in question and after what seemed an eternity after the first sounds of an attack reached my ears, and no turbine windup sound was forthcoming, I rushed to the revetment where the flare ship was always at the ready and proceeded with the preparations for launch.

Almost immediately, Capt. Leon Jackson, if I remember correctly, arrived. Two enlisted crewmembers climbed into the back and we were off.

The four of us provided much-needed illumination, but did not prevent the sappers from wreaking havoc on the inhabitants and equipment below. It was a very sad lot, come daybreak.



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Letters

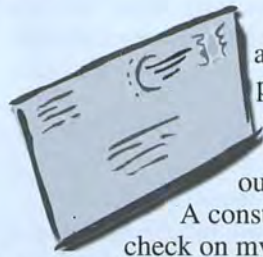
Continued from Page 12

• Jan. 30, 1968, 02:30 a.m. (approximately): Much talk about possible VC attacks during their New Year had gone on for days and we prepared as best we could for that eventuality.

It was almost anticipated. My efforts would be focused on monitoring the defensive positions around and a part of the perimeter — checking on and getting any wounded replaced, seeing to the resupply of ammo as needed, and concentrating the defensive efforts within the area of attack.

When the first sounds of the attack began on this fateful morning, I proceeded to start a sweep of the northern

perimeter starting in the northwest corner, making contact with each man along the fence, and continuing on to the east past the mess hall, arriving in the most northeastern corner bunker (such as it was), which was under heavy attack.



It seemed to me, in my progress along that north side of the compound, that one could almost walk on the solid line of tracers coming through the compound and exiting out the other side toward town.

A constant prayer to God to allow me to check on my men and not get killed while doing it; a request that He would protect all the men as they defended themselves, emitted from my lips as this old country boy witnessed the most awful sight of his life.

See LETTERS, Page 14

VHPA business directory

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Letters

Continued from Page 13

When I arrived at the defensive position, Spec. Jesus Jimenez was locked down on continuous uninterrupted firing of his M-60 and his rounds were leaving in a squirrely pattern.

I told him he needed to fire bursts so his gun would cool a little.

He replied: "But Sir, they're right there!"

For some reason known only to him, he started throwing grenades; so I manned the M-60, raking back and forth. With the explosion of each of Jimenez' grenades, we could see the attackers silhouetted in their efforts to reach us.

He was so right: They were "right there!"

It seemed like almost instantaneous, I was whacked on the shoulder to "let the gun cool," and it turned out to be Maj. Gess (I'm almost positive) bringing ammo to each firing position!

Quicker than it takes to tell it, the interruption caused me to halt firing momentarily, my knees were on fire as I was kneeling on spent ammo casings.

I had to have relief from that, so I leaned over and began to scrape away the hot shells. That was the interruption the VC RPG bearer needed to take aim on the point where he had last seen the muzzle blasts from our M-60 and fire his rocket grenade.

I was later told the VC was good, because his rocket grenade hit the 2 by 10-foot board dead under where the M-60 was firing from, releasing its shape charge through the board, and directly into the stomach area of Specialist Jimenez.

The blast was so close to my head, about a foot away, and to my left side, that I was knocked momentarily unconscious.

As I began to have thoughts, the first ones I remember was, "so this is the way it feels when you die!"

I quickly realized I was, in fact, alive and several bodies were pressing down on me. I begged for air and suddenly the pressure was gone. There was total silence and I was enveloped in the darkest night.

The sounds of battle were gone and it was as if I were in a cocoon. I realized, of course, I was deaf and blind and started calling for someone to help me. Everyone had left.

I had injuries to my left side, from my left hip up to my shoulder, that had started making themselves known.

Only days before, the engineers had brought in a huge ditch digger that could dig a ditch as deep as its huge wheel with teeth. The ditch began or ended just outside and to the south of this defensive position.

I knew I had to reach someone who could protect me, in the event the VC made inroads on our defense.

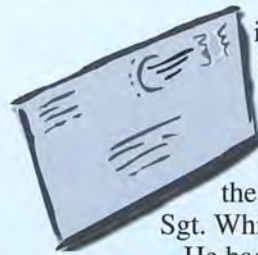
I knew the direction to the ditch, so I started crawling and fell into the ditch head-first. Still no sound nor sight. I called for someone, anyone, to respond. If they did, I could not hear them.

This wouldn't do! The VC could crawl or even walk up to me, and while they're cutting my throat, I wouldn't even see them.

I decided to try to get back towards the TOC, where there would be people. When the ditch digger dug the ditch, the loose dirt was deposited on the side next to the enemy. Using this knowledge, I knew which side of the ditch to crawl out on.

I also knew I would have to make it through the vehicles in the motor pool area. I crawled, I bumped into, I crouched and kept moving until I finally made contact with someone and was helped back to the TOC.

I remained in TOC, to the best of my memory, until things settled down after daybreak.



It was sometime early that morning that I was being helped by First Sgt. Whitney to the chopper to take me to the Pleiku Hospital.

I remember we had just exited the TOC and were turning south around the east end toward the chopper when Sgt. Whitney jumped violently.

He had just been hit in the shoulder, seems like the left, by a sniper from up in the west-northwest direction from the compound. Needless to say, Sgt. Whitney also went to the hospital.

I will never forget my experiences in the 73rd Medical Evacuation at Camp Holloway. The shrapnel in my left side, hip and shoulder, was dug out by a nurse without so much as a thought for a numbing shot.

There had been an issue of blood from both ears, which didn't seem to be a concern to the medical folks at Camp Holloway. My injuries were minor, I suppose, in the overall scheme of things.

Some vision had returned by now, if it was real close, but still no sound. My clothes were cut off me and I was handed some hospital PJs, I think.

That was the first step in the numerous efforts to "heal" the body that can take so much and keep on ticking — much more than the mind can take.

Scars to that area of the homosapien impair its function; while the old body can carry numerous scars and not be affected in its performance.

Five operations to my right ear later, and still no sound. The left regained some in the months that followed. My vision continued to improve in the ensuing days. I remember some of the fellows who came down to check on me and I appreciated that.

I was flown to another hospital at Cam Ranh Bay and a day or so later flown on to Camp Zama, Japan.

I recall seeing Specialist Jimenez in some of those hospitals and was both surprised and glad he was still alive.

From there I was sent to Walter Reed General Hospital and after, it seemed like several weeks, they placed me on convalescent leave with my family at Fort Bragg, NC.

I soon received orders to return to dear ol' Fort Rucker, where I joined Maj. Gen. Delk M. Odom's staff.

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Letters

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Anyway, that's my story. It has been 32 years since all this took place, so if anyone takes exception to anything that has been said, I would gladly discuss it with him.

I'm glad to have learned about the VHPA and hope to see others at the reunions.

Ken Sullivan

170th AHC will hold party during the Denver reunion

Lots of units have mini-reunions during the VHPA reunion. Some units even get hotel suites for a non-stop hospitality room.

My wife and I were just delighted that the VHPA scheduled this year's reunion virtually in our backyard. We have planned a unique variation on the mini-reunion theme. A special treat for all those who served with the 170th Assault Helicopter Company, plus their wives, children,

and significant others.

Pilots, crew chiefs, gunners, clerks, cooks, mechanics — you are all welcome.

A catered party at my house, which is just a couple of miles from the Adam's Mark. Lots of food and, of course, plenty of drink. You won't go home hungry or thirsty.

There is no charge for 170th AHC people or their family. This is George and Ellen's treat. Rain or shine, the party will start about 2 p.m. on Thursday, July 5 and may end at 5 p.m. Then again, it may carry on deep into the evening.

Please let me know by June 15 if you are coming. Bring your photos.

If it gets dark and you've had enough to drink, I'll call a cab to get you back to the hotel.

Please pass the word and make a special invitation to all the former enlisted men who served with the 170th AHC in Vietnam.

George Nielsen

(mobile)

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Taps

Robert A. Burbank

Retired Lt. Col. Robert A. Burbank, 67, of Ozark, AL, died May 5 in the Ozark Nursing Facility after a short illness.

After graduating from the University of Massachusetts in 1955, he entered the Army and served 22 years as an aviator in various assignments that included two tours in Korea, one in Germany and one in Vietnam.

While in the Army, he earned numerous awards and citations, and was a graduate of the Army Command and Staff College.

Upon retiring from the Army in 1975, he turned to a life of civilian aviation, becoming a flight instructor at Jacksonville (AL) Airport, and then moving on to be the Flight Department chairman and a student counselor for the Alabama Aviation and Technical College in Ozark from which he retired in September 2000.

Dennis Lloyd Cunningham

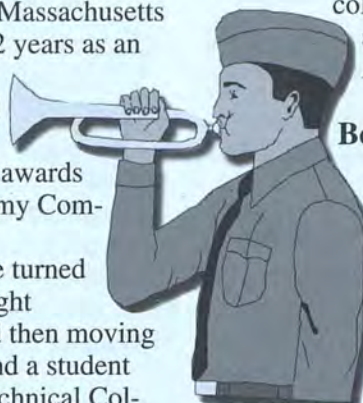
Dennis Lloyd Cunningham died April 27 of prostate cancer in Walter Reed Army Hospital in Washington, DC. He was 53.

During his service as a helicopter pilot in Vietnam, Cunningham was shot down twice.

He entered the Army upon graduating from Bowling Green State University of Ohio in 1971.

During his 28-year military career, Cunningham served in South Korea and the Pentagon, in addition to his tour in Vietnam.

He retired from the Army with the rank of lieutenant colonel in 1999 and took a job as a program analyst at IITR/AB Technology Group in Alexandria, VA.



Bob LePrairie

Bob LePrairie of Seattle died in a crash while giving a demonstration flight in a Robinson 44.

I knew him well as he was once a student of mine when I used to give flight lessons in 269s. We also worked together, flying 500s for the Forest Service on fire missions and other jobs.

I don't believe Bob was a member of VHPA and don't even know when he was in country or where he was assigned, I only know he was one of us. We used to swap stories as we practiced full autorotations to the ground in our 269s.

— Patrick Pavey

Placing bets not always so simple

KENNY BUNN
PAST PRESIDENT

As my flight school classmates know, I took two weeks leave between Fort Wolters and Fort Rucker to get married in 1969.

That means I have a WOC Wife, not just an Original Wife. For our 32nd anniversary this year, I asked Dammit Lane what gift she wanted to commemorate the event.

I didn't know that she could make bird calls until she gave me the cry of the Double Breasted California Mat-tress Thrasher — "Take me to Las Vegas!"

"But Dear," I replied. "Las Vegas is just 100 billion lights in the desert, sucking the power out of California."

"I don't care," she emphatically stated. "I want to see it."

So we burned up some of her frequent flyer miles and winged our way across two time zones to find ourselves in a dimension with too much sight and sound . . . the sound of thou-

sands of slot machines, paying out 10 quarters after a \$10 deposit.

Nevertheless, it was an opportunity to celebrate, together with many of our VHPA friends, and do a little reunion planning in the mix.

Additionally, I had always wanted to learn to shoot craps. Ambling up to the crap table that was getting very little action, I asked a croupier if he might explain this game to me.

"Sure" he said. "You place a bet on the pass line for 7 or 11. If it comes up on the first roll, you win."

Simple enough, I thought.

He continued . . . "If 2 or 3 comes out, you lose. A 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, or 10 becomes the point and if you make a point on a subsequent roll, you win."

Obviously there were more numbers to win on than to lose on. Curse ye of logical thought.

He continued . . . "You may take the odds on any number to increase the amount you win."

I noticed he did not say "or lose," but from previous experience in other

games of chance I had learned that, like a bouncing football or a porn star, it could go either way.

His final instruction was also a bit unnerving: "If you don't run out of patience or money, this is a fun game."

I observed that nowhere in his statement did he say, "You will walk away a winner."

Nevertheless, I put down some chips and grabbed the bones. "4 . . . your point is 4" cried the croupier.

The chip master said, "Place \$5 on the come and take the odds for \$10."

"Huh?" I replied.

"Put a red chip there and two red chips back there."

Doing as instructed, I placed a red chip in lead and a light fire team in the rear. I flung the dice again.

"Six!" exclaimed the croupier.

The chip master said, "Put down \$10 for the 6."

"Why?" I asked.

"You want to take your odds." He replied.

See SMALL, Page 17

Membership continuing to grow

Dana M. Young
Membership chairman

We have seen several significant membership events during the past few months:

- The EC established a Membership Fund to assist in seeking out potential members.
- We acknowledged our 11,000th member.
- The Southern California Chapter, through its support of a booth at the HAI Convention, added 13 members to the VHPA.
- Don Joyce and his wife manned a booth at the AAAA Convention. They signed up 10 new VHPA members, 7 renewals (one a \$450 Life), and 2 new VHPA of Florida three-year members.

There are still potential members out there we have yet to "touch."

We have done two mailings — one 2,500 and the other 2,900 — to try and locate more of those who are eligible, but the best way to find members is for each of us to be a

VHPA "contact."

Anyone who has worn a VHPA logo knows it attracts attention and potential members. I encourage you to be as visible as possible as a VHPA member.

While we continue to be visible at major events such as HAI and AAAA conventions, there are many opportunities in local communities that could be a source for members.

In Southern California, for example, there are numerous smaller airfields that host various aviation events. If we are aware of local events, we can work with local members to support a table or booth with VHPA information.

During the next few months, I would like to develop a master calendar of events throughout the United States that might be a good opportunity for finding members.

If you know of one, please e-mail me at [REDACTED]

We have membership kits available to assist. All we need is to know where to be and when to be there.

Proposed Amendment to the VHPA CONSTITUTION and BYLAWS

General Information: During the 6/4/2000 Executive Council meeting, the following amendment to the VHPA Constitution and Bylaws was approved by the Executive Council.

For ratification, it must be approved by two-thirds majority of the members present and voting at the business session.

The purpose of this amendment is to state clearly the intentions of the VHPA concerning its operations. From time to time, the nonpolitical nature of the VHPA is challenged. The Executive Council intention was to put into the Constitution the actual wording to clarify our operations, leaving no doubt as to our nonpolitical nature.

Proposal:

**Under ARTICLE III — OPERATIONS,
VHPA CONSTITUTION, add Section IV, which shall read:**

Section IV. The VHPA shall not engage in partisan political politics or endorse political parties or candidates or public officials. Nothing herein shall restrict individual members from being individually engaged in political activities, political parties, or political office. Provided, however, members may not mention their membership in the VHPA when involved in such political activities, political parties, or political office in a manner so as to imply endorsement by the VHPA.

This proposed amendment will be presented to VHPA members during the General Membership Meeting in Denver for ratification. Be prepared to discuss and vote on the proposed amendment.

Because this proposed amendment was not offered at least 90 days prior to the annual reunion in Washington, DC, it was held for announcement in the first newsletter following the DC reunion for general membership vote in Denver.

Small fortune amasses on the table

Continued from Page 16

Following his instructions I soon had a small fortune on the table backing numbers that had come up at various times, including the 2 and 3 that each time took the red chip that was flying lead.

Through it all, two things happened.

I became more confident, and Dammit Lane walked up.

I had begun to win a little back, so I increased the amount on odds and pushed my numbers: "\$10 on the hard way. \$8 for me and \$2 for the boys!"

I felt like James Bond shooting dice with Plenty O'Toole by his side.

"Here . . . shoot the dice, Plenty!" I said, handing the dice to Dammit Lane.

Giving me a quizzical look, she took the dice and launched them toward the next room, catching the chip master on the far end of the table full in the face, then ricocheting off — one to land in the middle of a Chinese poker table, startling an old lady in a wheelchair into knocking over her double scotch, soaking the cards.

The other landed in the ample

cleavage of a full bosomed cocktail waitress, serving a Miller Lite to an elderly gentleman with a "clapping hands" baseball cap.

"You said to shoot them plenty so I did" she cried.

"Keep them on the table," I explained, trying to regain my composure.

She did . . . throwing a "7". Craps! As he gathered up \$168 of my hard-earned money, he repeated, "If you don't run out of money or patience, this is a fun game."

Yeah . . . for who?

Reunion hotel is Denver's largest

The Adam's Mark — Reunion Headquarters July 2-7 — is the largest hotel in downtown Denver, located at the top of the 16th Street pedestrian mall.

About 50 percent of the VHPA room block has been reserved. There are still handicapped-accessible rooms available for those who need them.

Please remember you must register for the reunion with VHPA HQ in order to get the hotel reservation form. It does you no good to call the hotel directly.

Vendors

Expect 30-plus booths for T-shirts, books, memorabilia, artists, Vietnam tours, models, plaques, and more in more than 10,000 square feet of exhibit area.

If you want to be a vendor, contact Ken Fritz at [REDACTED] or FAX [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

LZs

We have scheduled two large areas — one for smokers and one for non-smokers — with virtually non-stop cash bars.

You want to sit and drink and tell war stories? You got it on the Mezzanine Level at the Adam's Mark.

Photographer and Reunion Book

Two professional photographers will be on-site to take individual, family, group photos at mini-reunions, groups of any size and shape.

ABS Visuals will produce a Reunion Book and will take orders at the reunion for early November delivery.

Buffalo Run Golf Course (July 3)

We can only accommodate 144 golfers. The \$90 fee includes everything plus lunch. Buses will leave the

United Airlines is official airline of Reunion 2001

Here is how to take advantage of the special rates offered by United Airlines as the official airline of VHPA Reunion 2001:

- Call (800) 521-4041 to book your reservations.
- The meeting number is 592XE.
- Receive a 5 percent discount off the lowest applicable discount fare or a 10 percent discount off full fare unrestricted coach fares, purchased seven days in advance.
- Receive an extra 5 percent discount for tickets are purchased at least 60 days in advance of your travel date.
- Fly into Denver or Colorado Springs between June 29 and July 10.

hotel promptly at 6:15 a.m. for a 7:30 shotgun start.

The course is beautiful. Check it out on the www.rockiesgolf.com/buffrun website.

We play the course on July 3 and the Colorado Open uses it as one of its qualifying courses on July 17. Only the best for the VHPA!

If you or your company is interested in hole sponsorships, contact Rich Walker at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

Useful information

Reunion Website: Please visit www.vhpa2001.org for details about this Reunion.

Rocky Mountain Chapter of the VHPA: Members of the RMCVHPA are primarily responsible for this reunion. If you have any questions, contact Reunion Chairman Mike Law [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

Rumble in the Rockies (July 3)

We can only accommodate 250 bikes. Bring your helmet, gloves, and boots.

Be prepared to sign the VHPA release of liability form. Visit the Reunion website at www.vhpa2001.org for more details and a list of bike rental companies.

Remember, we will be traveling in the mountains, so we could likely encounter rain showers. Suggest sunscreen, rain gear and a jacket because it can be cool.

The elevation in Nederland is 8,236 feet, so expect summer high altitude conditions.

The roads in the canyons are very winding, fun and narrow, so we will be traveling slowly.

On the other roads, the scenery will make you want to proceed slowly as well.

Our main objectives are to be safe and have a great time. Contact Fred Lyssy at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

New to the VHPA Coffee

Each morning at least two members of the VHPA Executive Council plus one or more VHPA committee chairmen will host an informal coffee.

If you recently joined the VHPA or have questions about the VHPA, please come.

Artists Luncheon (July 3)

Our faithful friend Joe Kline, plus a couple more Vietnam helicopter artists, will share ideas about how a painting becomes reality.

For example, recently the CH-54 drivers united to have a Sky Crane painting done.

Capitol Building Tour (July 3)

John Witwer, a Colorado state representative and former flight surgeon in the Delta, has arranged a special tour of the famous state Capitol building for anyone interested.

See SPECIAL, Page 21

VIETNAM HELICOPTER PILOTS ASSOCIATION

18th Annual Reunion • Denver, CO • July 2-7, 2001

NATIONAL REUNION REGISTRATION/HOTEL RESERVATION REQUEST FORM

Mail completed form to:

VHPA Headquarters, 5530 Birdcage St., Suite 200, Citrus Heights, CA 95610-7698

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

Member name:	Member No.:	Hotel room? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Flight class:	Chapter:	
1st combat unit:	Call sign:	Year(s):
2nd combat unit:	Call sign:	Year(s):
3rd combat unit:	Call sign:	Year(s):
Address:	Address change? ☐ Yes ☐ No	
City:	State:	Zip:
E-mail address:	Telephone: ()	Fax: ()
Wife/guest name:	Hometown:	Hotel room? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Guest name:	Hometown:	Hotel room? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Guest name:	Hometown:	Hotel room? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Guest name:	Hometown:	Hotel room? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Guest name:	Hometown:	Hotel room? ☐ Yes ☐ No

A hotel registration form will be sent to you with your registration receipt. The hotel registration form must be completed and mailed to the Adam's Mark Hotel. Telephone and fax requests will not be honored. If requesting a hotel room for a Unit TOC, specify unit. Total rooms needed? _____

NATIONAL REUNION REGISTRATION INFORMATION

EVENT	No. of people	Price	Total
Registration before 4/30/2001*		@ \$35.00	
Registration after 4/30/2001*		@ \$45.00	
Total from sidebars	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	
Golf tournament (July 3)		@ \$90.00	
Motorcycle ride (July 3)		@ \$15.00	
Artists Luncheon (July 3)		@ \$23.00	
Authors Luncheon (July 4)		@ \$23.00	
Welcome Reception (July 4)		@ \$ 6.00	
Colorado Springs Outing (July 5)		@ \$32.00	
Golden Outing (July 5)		@ \$32.00	
Talk and Enjoy Party (July 5)		@ \$ 5.00	
Ladies Function (July 6)		@ \$27.00	
Closing Banquet/Dance (July 6)		@ \$45.00	
VHPA dues (if not dues current)	1 year	@ \$30.00	
Life membership (installments)	1 of 3	@ \$150.00	
Life membership		@ \$450.00	
GRAND TOTAL			

REUNION T-SHIRTS		
QTY.	SIZE	AMT.
	S@\$15.00	
	M@\$15.00	
	L@\$15.00	
	XL@\$15.00	
	XXL@\$16.50	
	XXXL@\$17.50	
SIDEBAR TOTAL:		

QTY.	BANQUET MEAL
	Prime rib
	Pork loin
	Chicken Oscar
	Vegetarian

Membership Fund Contribution:
\$

*Each person 18 and older must pay registration fee.
--

CREDIT CARD PAYMENT

Credit card No: Expiration date: Signature:

CHECK or MONEY ORDER PAYMENT

In lieu of a credit card, you can mail a check or money order payable to "VHPA Reunion 2001" with form.

VIETNAM HELICOPTER PILOTS ASSOCIATION

18th Annual Reunion • Denver, CO • July 2-7, 2001

NATIONAL REUNION REGISTRATION/HOTEL RESERVATION REQUEST FORM

Part 2

REFUND INFORMATION

Reunion fees. No refund will be given for any reunion fees (dinner, event, registration fee, or other activity) unless the member cancels the registration by faxing, e-mailing or calling VHPA Headquarters no later than June 25, 2001. Requests by U.S. Mail must arrive at VHPA Headquarters no later than June 25, 2001. There will be a \$10 cancellation fee charged for each refund request, regardless of the number of items (dinners, events, registration fee, hotel reservations, etc.) included in the request. Each refund request will be assigned a refund request confirmation number on the day the request is received by VHPA Headquarters. Reasons for requests received after June 25, 2001, such as hospital admission, medical emergencies, death in the family, etc., will be considered on an individual basis. Please remember that some events (i.e. the banquet) require the VHPA to commit a firm count to the hotel in advance. If the VHPA is unable to resell the canceled ticket, the registrant might not receive a refund for that event.

Hotel fees. Notice of hotel reservation cancellations must be made by June 25 by faxing, e-mailing or calling VHPA Headquarters. Requests by U.S. Mail must arrive at VHPA Headquarters no later than June 25. Each refund request will be assigned a refund request confirmation number on the day the request is received by VHPA Headquarters. VHPA Headquarters will process the cancellation request as quickly as possible. No hotel fee refunds will be made if the hotel does not honor the cancellation due to insufficient time prior to date of arrival.

DENVER MINI-REUNION REGISTRATION

Send min-reunion registration information to Brian Foote () or mail completed form to: .

Unit or flight class designation:

Unit call sign:

Estimated number attending mini-reunion:

Point of contact name:

Telephone: ()

E-mail address:

SCHEDULING INFORMATION

FIRST CHOICE

- ☐ Tuesday, July 3 — a.m.
- ☐ Tuesday, July 3 — p.m.
- ☐ Wednesday, July 4 — a.m.
- ☐ Wednesday, July 4 — p.m.
- ☐ Thursday, July 5 — Evening
- ☐ Friday, July 6 — p.m.

SECOND CHOICE

- ☐ Tuesday, July 3 — a.m.
- ☐ Tuesday, July 3 — p.m.
- ☐ Wednesday, July 4 — a.m.
- ☐ Wednesday, July 4 — p.m.
- ☐ Thursday, July 5 — Evening
- ☐ Friday, July 6 — p.m.

SPECIAL REQUEST INFORMATION

AUDIO/VISUAL EQUIPMENT

- ☐ TV/VCR
- ☐ 35mm slide projector
- ☐ 35mm slide carousel
- ☐ Projection screen
- ☐ Photographer

ROOM FURNISHINGS

- ☐ Podium
- ☐ Microphone and sound system
- ☐ Private unit banquet
- ☐ Extra tables
- ☐ Internet access (limited availability)
- ☐ Hang a banner

We have more than a dozen rooms that can be scheduled for mini-reunions. Three are large enough for small banquets and/or gatherings of more than 200 people, hence they have sound system capability. Unit banners can be hung.

Each room will have one 8-foot table per 15 people attending the mini-reunion. This table can be used for displaying photographs, memorabilia, etc. You can have a 27-inch TV with VCRs. Slide projectors come with a portable projection screen.

Special events feature new CD-ROM

Continued from Page 18

Special Events

(July 3 and 4 at 5 p.m.)

These events are free to all registered reunion attendees. Each special event has its own room.

A demonstration of the new Vietnam Helicopter History Interactive Multimedia CD-ROM by Gary Roush.



Special showing of the Flight Line video that aired on most PBS TV stations. This video was produced by Robert Mason in coordination with the National Vietnam War Museum in Mineral Wells, TX.

Early Bird Party (July 3)

FREE to all registered VHPAers, their family and friends in the Grand Ballroom. Cash bars and a non-stop popcorn machine.

The Hot Tomatoes, a nine-piece ensemble specializing in swing, jazz and big band music, plays for three hours starting at 6:30 p.m. Their website is www.hottomatoes.com

Ladies Coffee (July 4):

Several ladies asked for a small function early in the reunion as a way to get to meet old friends and as a gathering point to see who all is in town.

Patience Mason will be the guest speaker of a short program. She is the author of "Recovering From The War" and "Why Is Daddy Like He Is?"

She devotes considerable time and energy to the subject of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Visit her website is at www.patiencepress.com

Mini-reunions

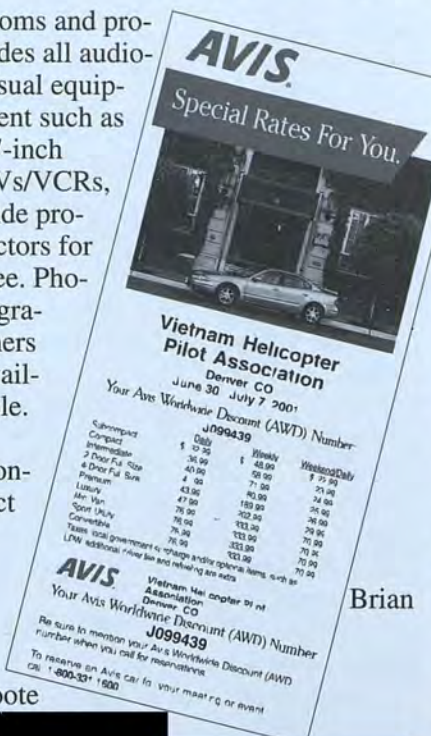
July 4 has been reserved for minis, but you can also have them on July 3, 5, and 6.

More than 35 units, flight classes, and chapters have made reservations. The VHPA has 15 large business

rooms and provides all audio-visual equipment such as 27-inch TVs/VCRs, slide projectors for free. Photographers available.

Con-
tact

Footnote
at [REDACTED]



former marine helicopter pilot), author of 1,500 feet over Vietnam, used the "self-publishing" route for his book.

- Ralph B. Young is authoring the Army Aviation in Vietnam series. Volume 2 was available at the last VHPA reunion. His research techniques and great attention to detail are impressive.

- VHPA member Dave Eastman is nearly ready to publish *Outlaws in Vietnam* with the help of many who flew in the 175th AHC, especially in 1966 and 1967.

This luncheon is a must if you have plans or dreams of publishing your own book.

Welcome Reception (.July 4)

A \$6 ticket to enjoy The Nacho Men, a rock 'n' roll 'street corner a cappella' dance band, will provide music and entertainment for three hours starting at 6:30 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom. Their website is www.nachomen.com

Colorado Spring Outing (July 5)

Buses (including one wheelchair-accessible) depart the hotel from 9-10:30 a.m. for the 90-minute drive to the Turkey Creek Recreation Area on the Fort Carson military reservation.

Colorado Springs resident VHPA members will ride on each bus and point out interesting places along the route at the Air Force Academy and in Colorado Springs.

Howard's Bar-B-Que has a sign over the door that reads "Meat so tender you don't need teeth to eat!" Coors beer on tap. A limited number of horseback rides will be available.

The 7th Infantry has promised a static helicopter and military vehicle display. There will be a horse-mounted "old west" Cavalry charge.

Everyone will be back at the hotel by 5 p.m. Contact Terry Sullivan at

Hotel to hang unit banners

The hotel has agreed to hang any number of unit and chapter banners from the ceiling on the Mezzanine Level.

Unless someone is 20 feet tall or has access to the hotel lift device, your banner is very secure.

The banner should have standard grommets at the top. The plan is to put all the new ones up and take down any once each morning. Contact Mike Law at [REDACTED]

Outing planned at sports complex

Continued from Page 21
Golden Outing (July 5)

Buses (including one wheelchair-accessible) depart the hotel from 9:15-10:30 a.m. for the 30- to 45-minute drive to the Tony Grampsas Memorial Sports Complex in Golden.

In addition to a complete "Texas Style" Bar-B-Que and Coors beer on tap, the park has horseshoes, volleyball, softball equipment.

Circulating shuttle buses will depart about every 30 minutes with dropoff/pickup stops for visits to Coors Brewing Co. (www.coors.com), downtown Golden (www.golden-cochamber.org), and Colorado Railroad Museum (www.crrm.org).

Those wearing their reunion lanyard do not have to pay the normal \$6 admission fee.



The Railroad Museum is also within walking distance.

You have three options to

return to the hotel.

• **Option 1:** Depart at 1:30 p.m., with visit to Buffalo Bill Grave Site (optional museum visit \$3 per person) on top of nearby Lookout Mountain (www.buffalobill.org), and stop at Red Rocks Amphitheater Park (www.red-rocks.com), returning to hotel by 5 p.m.

• **Option 2:** Depart at 1:30 p.m. with visit to nearby Heritage Square shopping village and amusement park, and stop at Red Rocks Amphitheater Park, returning to hotel by 5 p.m.

• **Option 3:** Return directly to hotel. Buses depart from 1:30-4 p.m. The capacity for Options 1 and 2 may be limited. Contact Bill Robie at [redacted] or [redacted].

Talk and Enjoy (July 5)

Cost is \$5 to enjoy Remember When, a DJ for our generation starting at 6:30 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom. Cash bars and snacks available.

Wolf Express official shuttle

Wolf Express Shuttle is the official shuttle company for the reunion to and from Denver's airport.

There are several shuttle companies at the airport. Wolf Express is offering \$15 one-way or \$27 roundtrip.

When you come up from the train, just turn right to get to the Wolf Express Shuttle ticket sales counter which is near the large Hertz counter. Call [redacted] or use www.wolf-transportation.com

You can make reservations and prepay with a credit card.

Since several hundred people will be departing the hotel Saturday morning, Wolf Express has promised to replace its normal, 15-passenger vans with large buses if we make reservations.

So, even if you buy your roundtrip ticket by walking up to Wolf Express' airport ticket counter, please make your return trip reservation as early as possible.

If you are arriving at Colorado Springs and need a shuttle, we recommend Ground Transportation Services at (719) 597-4682. The cost is \$100 for the car from the airport to the Adam's Mark or return.

Depending on the amount of luggage, the car can carry three or four passengers.

Ladies Function (July 6)

A \$27 ticket is required. Coaches take you to a local country club for a continental breakfast and the fashions from the trunk of a Colorado lady show put on by ladies of the Colorado Historical Society.

They wear vintage clothes like a 19th century ball gown and a flapper-era dress to merge style and history. Coaches return you to the hotel in the early afternoon.

Business Meeting (July 6)

We will review the financial report, receive reports from each committee chair, elect officers, learn about future reunion plans, vote on changes to the Constitution and Bylaws, etc.

Closing Banquet/Dance (July 6)

A \$45 ticket required for this coat-and-tie event.

The Plaza Ballroom can accommodate 2,880 for dinner. Retired Army Lt. Gen. Woodmansee is the guest speaker.

You can make advanced table reservations to sit with your unit or friends.

The Colorado Army National Guard Honor Guard will present the colors and support the Missing Man tribute. The outstanding 101st Army Band will play in the Grand Ballroom after the banquet.

Colorado Rockies/Anaheim Angels baseball game (July 7 at 6 p.m.)

While not officially part of the reunion, many attendees can enjoy a Saturday evening baseball game at beautiful Coors Field.

The RMCVHPA has \$5 tickets in upper right field, so we can all sit together. This includes four wheelchair positions.

The VHPA will be featured in the pregame ceremonies during which Dave Rittman, the 2001-2002 VHPA president, will throw out the first pitch.

This is not a fund-raiser; you can purchase the tickets at cost, \$5. Tickets can be reserved prior to the reunion by contacting Ed Fickes at [redacted] or [redacted].

Subject to availability, tickets also can be purchased at the reunion.

Please remember the VHPA's room block for Saturday night at the hotel is only 200 rooms. Please either make or extend your reservations ASAP if you want to go to the game with us.

It is easy to get from the hotel to Coors Field.

Book to generate scholarship funds

Nearly everyone has heard of the book series, "Chicken Soup for the Soul" over the past 10 years, or so, and how popular they have become.

Well, the authors and publishers of the series released on Memorial Day the latest in the series, "Chicken Soup for the Veteran's Soul."

The book is quite poignant and inspirational to almost all veterans

and, especially, to Vietnam veterans. The reason why is Vietnam vets and, particularly, helicopter pilots and crew members are extremely well represented in the book.

Subtitled "Stories to Stir the Pride and Honor the Courage of Veterans," the book is composed of 101 short stories by and about veterans and war.

The stories are grouped in chapters

titled: "The Warrior Spirit," "On the Front Lines," "Above and Beyond," "In the Combat Zone," "The Home Front," "Brothers in Arms," "Coming Home," "Vetcetera," "Honoring those that Served," "Healing and Remembrance."

All the stories portray the veteran in a very honorable and positive light. Interspersed throughout the book are numerous veteran and war cartoons to lighten the mood.

All of the short stories are great stories you will enjoy reading and passing along to your family and friends.

Helicopter pilots who contributed stories and should be mentioned are Bill Walker, "The Harbinger;" Bob Brooks, "The Rescue;" Jim Morgan, "Boom Boom;" Bill Walker, "The Watch;" Ray Robbins, "War is Hard;" Jerry Ewen, "Party Animal," "I Will Not Forget" and "Reunion."

Additionally, stories by folks familiar to Vietnam helicopter pilots and crew members were submitted by George Miller, "A Daughter's Letter," by his daughter, Rani Nicola; Julie Kink, about her brother, David, a pilot, "You're Never Alone on a Mission," and Joan Morgan, wife of Jim Morgan, a pilot, "The Broken Medal."

A part of the selected evaluation group, chosen by the authors to read and "grade" the short stories, were Jerry Ewen, VHPA member, and Tom Payne, VHPA secretary/treasurer.

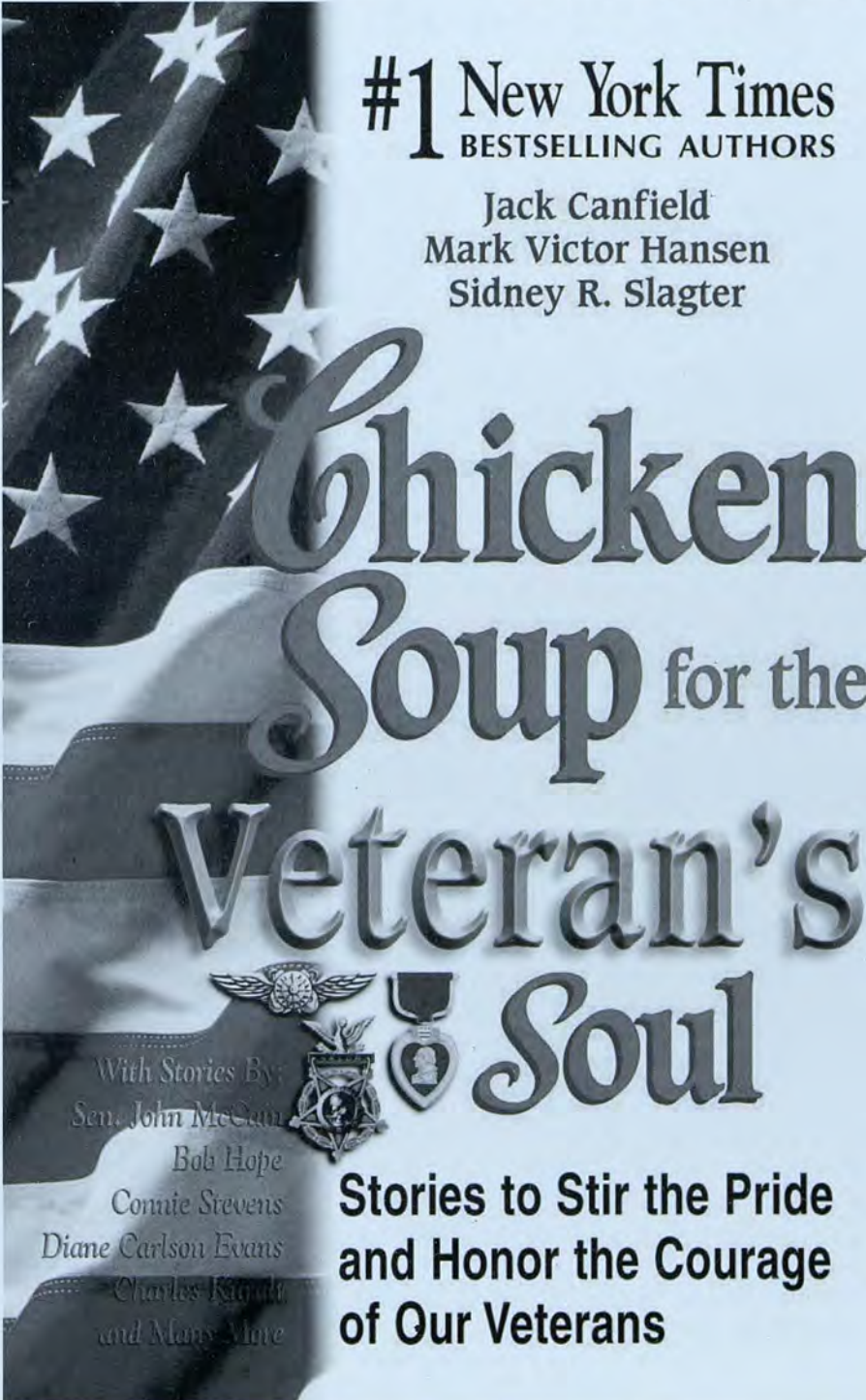
Now, for the exciting part of this project for the VHPA.

The publisher/authors have selected the VHPA as one of the veterans' organizations that will receive a small percentage of profits from book sales. No exact amount is promised; however, the more books sold, the more dollars placed in the VHPA Scholarship Program.

The VHPA Scholarship Program could realize the addition of several hundred to possibly a few thousand dollars. So, watch for it and tell your friends.

Tom Payne

VHPA Secretary/Treasurer



#1 New York Times
BESTSELLING AUTHORS

Jack Canfield
Mark Victor Hansen
Sidney R. Slagter

Chicken Soup for the Veteran's Soul

With Stories By:
Sen. John McCain

Bob Hope

Connie Stevens

Diane Carlson Evans

Charles Keating
and Many More

Stories to Stir the Pride
and Honor the Courage
of Our Veterans

VIETNAM HELICOPTER PILOTS ASSOCIATION

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Information about each Vietnam tour:

Date of tour			Unit	Location	Call sign
From:	To:				
1st					
2nd					
3rd					
4th					

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