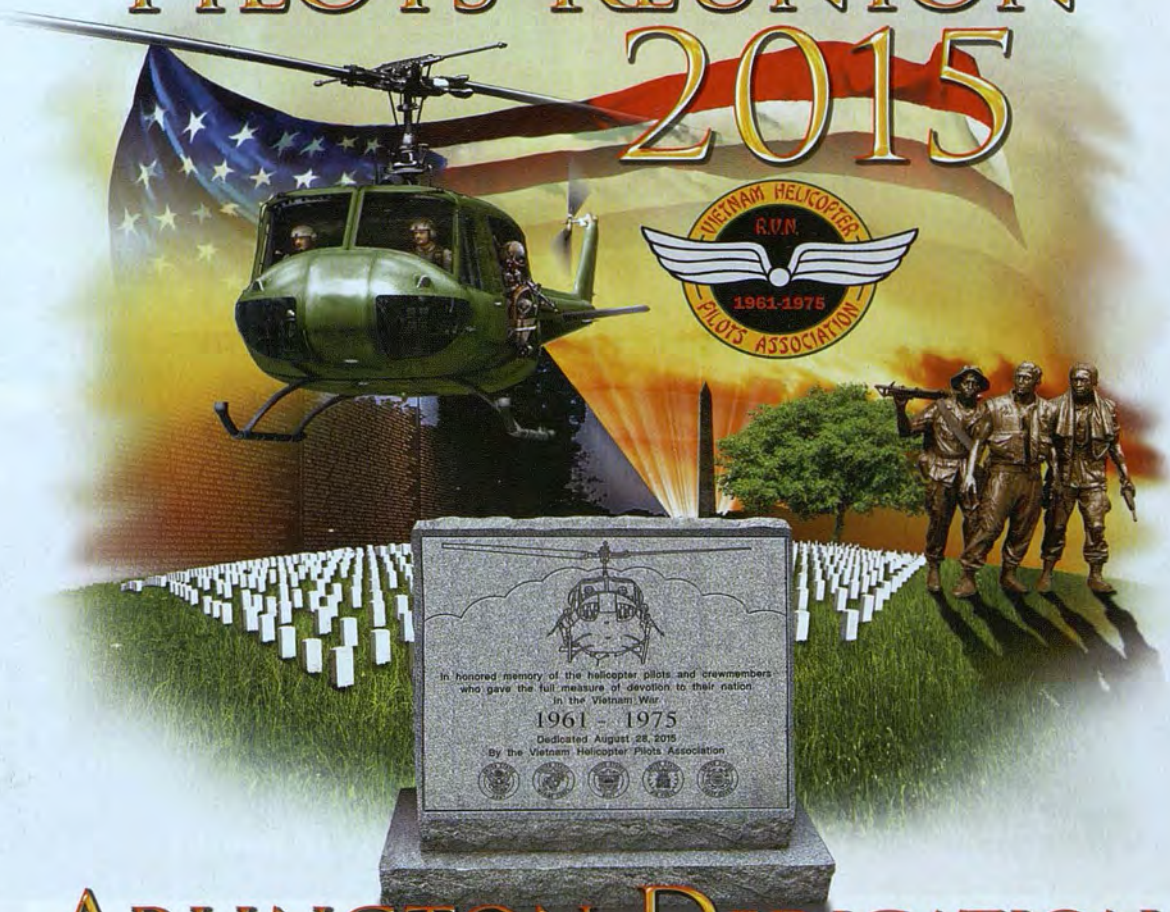




# The VHPA AVIATOR

The Newsletter of The Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association

## VIETNAM HELICOPTER PILOTS REUNION 2015



## ARLINGTON DEDICATION

WASHINGTON D C  
AUGUST 28, 2015

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Vice President	Clyde Romero
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Senior Member	John Shafer
Midterm Member	Mike Sheuerman
Junior Member	John Sorensen
Secretary/Treasurer	John Powell
Founder	Larry Clark

President@VHPA.org

*The Angel Fire New Mexico Vietnam Veterans  
Memorial State Park ~ Story on page 10 & 11*



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

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Want to get your "We Got'ta Get Out Of This Place" fix on? Then go to:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aFU9\\_dICQtK](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aFU9_dICQtK)

Quick update on the last issue's story about a special web page dedicated to assist veterans seeking to upgrade punitive discharges related to behavior problems caused by post-traumatic stress. The new page can be found at <http://arba.army.pentagon.mil/adrb-ptsd.cfm>.

## Bring your Existing Lanyard to the DC Reunion

Lanyards cost the VHPA approximately \$2.50 to \$3.00 each. Reusing them saves our Association money. It costs Membership about \$3.00 every time we send out a Membership Packet in an attempt to add a potential member to our organization. The Reunion Chairman, Mike Law, expects over two thousand attendees at the DC Reunion. If half of those reuse their lanyards we can devote over \$2500 in savings for recruiting efforts. In addition, it's a great way to keep up with your Reunion pins.

*PLEASE, bring your lanyards and reuse them.*

**Correction** — in last issues' story about Life member Gary Klopfenstein finally being recognized for his actions in Vietnam, we inadvertently published the wrong phone number to reach him, Gary's correct phone number is: 530-677-0800 and his cell phone number is: 530-391-6746. Gary may also be reached through Facebook.

*Sorry about that Gary,*

David Adams  
Editor of the VHPA Aviator

## Is It In You?

As we look forward to the Annual Reunion, let's remember that one of the important happenings is the election of officers. Each year a Vice President and a Junior Member at Large are elected from our membership attending the reunion, each to serve a three (3) year term on the Executive Council (EC). To be eligible for election, one has to be an active (dues current) member of the VHPA for a minimum of one (1) year prior to the first day of the VHPA National Reunion in which he is seeking office.

If you, or someone you know is willing to seek office and serve your fellow brothers, the EC must be notified in writing not later than midnight on June 15, 2015. You must also be in attendance at the Annual Business Meeting when it is scheduled during the Reunion.

Last year, we had multiple candidates for each office, giving our members options, which I feel is always a good thing! Serving our brother aviators is both rewarding and gratifying, so I encourage you to consider running for office. If you have questions, please feel free to contact me via email or phone call.

John Sorensen,  
Junior Member at Large, Election Coordinator

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*From the President of the VHPA -*  
**BOB HESSELBEIN**

## *An Important Mission...*

Are you ready for another important mission to support your brothers-in-arms, those who never returned? This particular mission requires nothing more than a few telephone calls, a letter and maybe a postage stamp or two, but the mission is worthwhile and important. Here is the background information behind the mission request.

For two years the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association Executive Council has explored the creation of a legacy memorial recognizing and honoring the valor of our fellow helicopter pilots and crewmembers that died in the Vietnam War. We researched suitable public locations providing the appropriate setting and dignity, a place with frequent visitors from all over the world, a place of honor.

We found the very best location: Arlington National Cemetery. Our research determined the cemetery holds 205 Killed in Action (KIA) pilots, provides the final resting place for many MIA crews recovered after the war, and is the final resting place for two pilots awarded the Medal of Honor.

Helicopter casualties constitute a very high representation, percentage-wise, of ANC Vietnam War burials. According to the Coffelt Group database there are 2,590 Vietnam War KIAs buried in this sacred cemetery, and of those KIA, pilot casualties make up over 9 percent. If one assumes non-pilot crewmember internments possess the same ratio, some 20 percent of Vietnam KIAs buried in Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) died while serving in rotary-wing aircraft.

Within ANC rests the remains of pilots and crewmembers from all branches, including the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG). The last USCG Missing in Action (MIA) from the Vietnam Era, Lieutenant Jack C. Rittichier, was buried in ANC October 6, 2003. While serving an exchange tour with the U.S. Air Force, Lieutenant Rittichier died June 9, 1968 during a courageous rescue mission while commanding a USAF "Jolly Green Giant" HH-3 helicopter. Rittichier was killed alongside fellow pilot Captain Richard C. Yeend Jr., and crewmembers Staff Sergeant Elmer L. Holden and Sergeant James D. Locker.

In addition to being the resting place of those killed in action, ANC holds complete helicopter crews whose remains were recovered and interred in shared graves many years after the end of the Vietnam Era. As well, the cemetery continues to be the ultimate destination for many who survived helicopter combat in Southeast Asia and qualify

for burial in this unique, national cemetery.

Famous, decorated helicopter pilots are found in ANC. Medal of Honor recipients Michael J. Novosel and John Swanson lie interred within the cemetery's perimeter. Novosel continued to serve his nation after receiving his award for many years, while Swanson received the award for his noble actions that led to his death.

The paramount justification for establishing a lasting tribute memorial within ANC is that no other exists that recognizes the shared, common valor of the pilots and crewmembers who gave the last full measure of devotion to their nation. Individual military branches have tributes to those in their particular branch who gave their lives for their country, but no one memorial exists that recognizes all, regardless of branch of service or rank. No national monument specifically honors the pilots and crewmembers that died in rotary-wing aircraft, despite their contribution to what is commonly described as "The Helicopter War."

Famed author/historian Neil Sheehan, in his book, "A Bright Shining Lie (page 762)," explains why the legacy of the men who flew, fought and died flying helicopters should be remembered and honored:

"The aviation units were the sole combat element of the U.S. Army that did not come apart under the stress of the war in Vietnam. Nearly 6,000 helicopter pilots and crew members perished, but the Army airmen never cracked. Whether it was the oneness of man and the acrobatic flying machine, whether it was the equally shared risk of officer pilot and enlisted crew member, whatever the reason, the men of the helicopters kept their discipline and their spirit."

The comments expressed by Sheehan hold true for all who flew helicopters, whatever their particular branch of service. Arlington National Cemetery is justifiably the most logical, rightful place to establish a lasting memorial to the exceptional courage and unfaltering commitment of those helicopter pilots and crewmembers who gave the last full measure of devotion during the Vietnam War. As Abraham Lincoln said at the 1863 dedication of the Soldiers National Cemetery in Gettysburg, "...It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this."

We met with Arlington National Cemetery employees in early 2014 and discussed dedicating a suitable memorial as part of the August 2015 Annual Reunion. We were advised this was completely feasible if we completed all steps of the application approximately one year in advance. We submitted the comprehensive application with all required documents on schedule. Now we are confronting unnecessary bureaucratic delays, and we need your help.

Your mission is to join the common effort to make the Washington bureaucracy act on our proposal and get this monument approval and installation completed in time for our August, 2015 reunion. We have earned the right through our service to honor our dead, and we must act, now, by communicating with our congressmen and senators. Clearly it will likely take congressional intervention to "light a fire under their tails" to get our monument application processed by the ANC staff and moved through the Washington, DC bureaucracy.

*To honor our lost comrades,*

**Bob Hesselbein**  
President,  
Vietnam Helicopter Pilot Association



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*To honor our lost comrades,*

**Bob Hesselbein**  
**President,**  
**Vietnam Helicopter Pilot Association**

*For complete information on how to contact  
your representatives, go to:*

[www.house.gov/representatives/find/](http://www.house.gov/representatives/find/)  
[www.senate.gov/general/contact\\_information/senators\\_cfm.cfm](http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm)



*Dear Congressman/Senator \_\_\_\_\_:*

I am a Vietnam veteran writing to ask your support in helping us place a memorial honoring the thousands of helicopter pilots and crewmen who died serving their country in the Vietnam War, the war commonly described as "The Helicopter War." The Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association (VHPA) submitted a complete application proposal to Arlington National Cemetery on September 3, 2014 that fully complied with all requirements. We were assured the full process would be completed in time to allow us to install the modest monument and dedicate the memorial on August 28, 2015.

The VHPA discovered almost 20 percent of Vietnam War casualties buried in Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) are helicopter crewmembers; in addition, inside ANC rest complete helicopter crews whose remains were recovered and interred into shared graves many years after the end of the Vietnam War. The cemetery continues to be the ultimate destination for many who survived helicopter combat in Southeast Asia and qualify for burial in this unique, national cemetery.

I ask for your help in ensuring this memorial is approved and not delayed by bureaucratic laxity within the Arlington National Cemetery staff. ANC Senior staff members assured us that the process is moving forward but we have not been impressed due to their lack of communication and willingness to keep us updated.

Please assist us by expressing your concerns to Mr. Jack E Lechner, Jr, Superintendent, Arlington National Cemetery.

*Regards,*

Member, Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association

## FROM THE VHPA STAFF AT HQ!

*We hope everyone had a great holiday!*

It is that time of year again – Reunion Registration! Be sure to register early! There are numerous events that have maximum capacities and you don't want to miss out on these special events! If you have any questions concerning tours or events, be sure to give us a call, we will be happy to help. We hope to see you there!

Don't Forget.....if you move, be sure to call HQ with an update to your contact information! This assures that you do not miss any issues of your newsletter. If you have not received an issue lately, give us a call to make sure we have your correct address on file.

Also, you can go on line to <https://directory.vhpa.org> and log in with your member number, then set up a password or use your social security number. Then on the left side will be a box with red lettering that says "Other Services". Under "Other Services" will be a box that says "Update My Information". Click on this button and you can make updates directly to your information.

2014 directories can no longer be pre-ordered at the reduced price. We do have a few of these paper and CD directories available at HQ and the price is now \$25. Give us a call if you would like one.

You can now pre-order the 2015 CD Directory for \$10 and the 2015 Paper Directory for \$15.

If you know of anyone that served as a helicopter pilot in Vietnam and they are not a member of VHPA, give us a call and we will check to see if they are in our database. We would love to send them membership information and a copy of the newsletter for their review. And of course, we would love for them to become a member!

As always, our goal is to make VHPA the best it can be for you, the members! If there is anything that we can do to make that happen, PLEASE LET US KNOW!

Sherry Rodgers  
VHPA Office Manager

# Thanks for the Ride

by Dany Pennington

**LZ English**  
**Bong Son, Viet Nam**  
**November 1968**

The typhoon was somewhere in the South China Sea moving closer. The rain started during the night and was coming in waves now that it was morning. Today's flying was cancelled due to the low ceiling and visibility.

LZ English was eerily quiet. The 61st Assault Helicopter Company, which normally created most of the noise and commotion here, was equally still. Nothing moved on the 'Crap Table' (the large helicopter parking area dotted with revetments). Most of the pilots were lounging around in their tents. Meanwhile, the crew chiefs and gunners were securing their helicopters for the expected high winds and torrential rains.

At the same time, some 20 miles to the north on the western slopes of the An Lo Valley, The North Vietnamese Regulars (NVA) were using tracker dogs to pursue Team F, 74th Infantry Detachment, a Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol (or LRRP), of the 173rd Airborne Brigade. The team had been out several days in search of three enemy base camps reported to be in that area. They had killed the NVA point man leading the platoon size unit and began a hasty retreat away from the area. Since their location was known, their security was compromised. They decided to call for a helicopter extraction.

After Team F, a six-man reconnaissance unit, made contact with the NVA they moved away from that area. Their many attempts to make radio contact with their TOC (Tactical Operations Center) were unsuccessful. Knowing the dogs would track them down and that they would be overrun and ultimately killed, they tried the radio frequencies of several adjoining units. Following several long minutes at a dead run through the dense jungle and steep terrain, they made radio contact with the Americal Division, located about 50 miles north of them. The LRRPs situation was relayed to the 61st Operations, the helicopter unit that supported the Brigade's special operations. It then became their mission to extract the team.

A typical LRRP Team extraction consists of a four-helicopter element; Two UH-1H Huey aircraft, known as slicks, and two



(L to R): Dany Pennington, Sam Kyle and Michael O'Connor. Taken on the day we all were promoted to CW2



The First Platoon of the 61st AHC waiting to insert ARVN troops

UH-1C armed helicopter gunships. One slick is used as the Command and Control (C&C) flying overhead directing the mission while the other slick is used to fly into the Landing Zone (LZ) to extract the LRRPs. The gunships are used to cover the extraction ship as it approaches, lands, and departs from the LZ.

Inside the 61st Operations bunker at LZ English the operations officer, Capt. Easterwood, assembled two crews from the first platoon and two crews from the gun platoon. The pilots from the first platoon were on standby for any immediate emergency missions including LRRP extractions that might arise. They were also the same pilots that had inserted this LRRP team several days ago. Their leader was Warrant Officer Sam Kyle.

Minutes later the LRRP detachment commander,

a first lieutenant, accompanied by the unit's first sergeant carrying a PRC-25 FM radio, arrived in the helicopter company's operations bunker. The lieutenant said: "OK boys let's go get my team out".

"We've got a problem here, lieutenant. We are grounded because of this weather" was the response from the Ops officer, Capt. Easterwood. The lieutenant said: "That is not gon'na get it. We got men out there in Indian Country being tracked by god-damn dogs. There's an entire NVA platoon chasing my LRRP team -and we've gotta go out there and pull them out. Do you understand that, Captain?" Military decorum clearly ignored by the lieutenant due to his concern for the survival of his men.

"I understand your situation lieutenant but you have to realize that we have rules and we can't risk the lives of four helicopter crews to fly in this kind of weather" was his reply, almost apologetically.

Captain Easterwood, sensing the building tension, directed an ops specialist to: "Go get the C.O."

The LRRP lieutenant nodded his head slightly toward WO Sam Kyle in recognition from so many previous LRRP insertions and extractions. The unsettling calm and quiet of the tension-filled room was suddenly shattered as Major Wade came busting



Two-ship resupply mission near LZ Uplift, hopefully the target isn't below the low-lying clouds and fog.

into this damp, cramped space with a loud and overbearing presence.

"What seems to be the problem here?" Major Wade blurted to no one in particular. Captain Easterwood briefed the major on the LRRP situation and gave him an update on the weather. As soon as that was finished the major looked up and turned toward the group. Sam Kyle spoke. "Sir, I would like to go get them out." "Sam, you know I can't order you or anyone else to go out there in this kind of weather." "I know, sir, but I would really like to give it a try. I'm the one that put them out there." The major then turned toward the other slick platoon pilot and asked, "What do you think Dan?" He replied: "I'm with Sam, sir." The major then turned to the gun team lead. Before he even asked the question the team lead said: "If the slicks want to try it, we'll cover'em." "You know I can't order you to do this. This is strictly a volunteer mission." A smug little smile appeared on the major's face as he said: "if you idiots want to

go check the weather I'm not going to stop you". Before the sentence was completed, Sam grabbed his helmet and headed for the door. The rest of the group followed him out.

While walking toward the helicopters, the pilots discussed the details of the mission. They decide that Dan would fly the C&C ship, often referred to as the "high bird", and Sam would be the extraction ship. The LRRP lieutenant and first sergeant loaded their guns, ammo and radio on the C&C ship. Across the Crap Table, the rotor blades on the light fire team of gun ships slowly started to turn.

After cranking up and making a radio check, the two slicks hovered out followed a short distance back by the two gun ships. Easing forward the aircraft shuttered as an invisible windshield wiper of air from the rotor blades shook and vibrated the water droplets from the windshield. Four minutes after leaving operations, all four ships were airborne from LZ English.

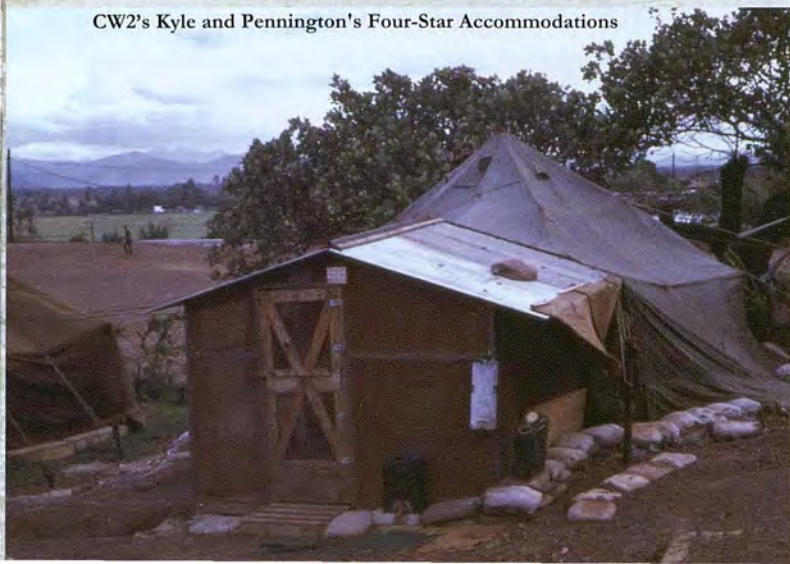
The rain had temporarily stopped and the flight visibility was about three miles. The clouds would only allow the departing helicopters to reach an altitude of 500 feet. The ground would disappear at any altitude above that.

Clouds obscured the ridges west of English, preventing a direct route to the LRRP's location. The flight of four would need to travel south to enter the mouth of the An Lo Valley before proceeding northward along the river. As the four helicopters followed the river, the weather continued to deteriorate. There was a light misty rain. As the terrain of the valley floor went higher, the clouds kept lowering.

Midway between the entrance to the valley and the LRRP team's location the lieutenant in the C&C ship finally heard from his team leader:

*Continued on page 50*

CW2's Kyle and Pennington's Four-Star Accommodations



# 21st Cavalry Brigade (Air Combat) Farewell Ball

Fort Hood, Texas

COL John White Commander of the 21st Cavalry Brigade (Air Combat) hosted a formal Farewell Ball on Friday, 14 November 2014. It was held at Club Hood (formerly the Fort Hood Officers' Club). The Army plan is for the 21st Cavalry Brigade (Air Combat) to close its doors on March 25th, 2015. All the old and current members and friends of the Brigade were invited to the ball, and many came. It was a resounding success from the receiving line, anchored by General (retired) James D. Thurman and his wife Dee, to the retiring of the colors. It was a true Cavalryman's bittersweet goodbye to a beloved friend.

General Thurman was the guest speaker. He is a former member of the Apache Training Brigade. He acknowledged all the original members of the ATB who were present: LTCs (ret) Bob Karney, Joe Owen, Greg Cook, and MAJ (ret) George Van Riper. All the brigade commanders he worked with: MG (ret) then COL Walt Yates, COLs (ret) Lynn Handy, Bob Hurley, Bill Reeder, Jerry Saltness, Craig Pearson, Greg Walker, Doug Eller, Greg Brockman, and the late COL (ret) Winn Noyes. All the Chief Warrant Officers Emeritus like Lance McElhiney, Jimmy Greene, Jim Carpenter, Lee Lemay, Ken Donahue, Denny Dvorchak, John Roden, Troy Degoyler, Tom Frierson, and Mike Champion who contributed so much to training. He also thanked all the various friends, landowners, and local dignitaries by name for supporting Apache training.

He honored the late General (ret) Max Thurman for keeping the training brigade in the forefront of planning and funding, General (ret) Carl Vuono, CSA "who brought us standardized training, and General (ret) Butch Saint, former III Corps Commander "who had a clear vision of how the introduction of the Apache Helicopter would change the dynamics of the battlefield and remains a true champion of Army Aviation and Attack Helicopters." He talked about Mr. Joe Cribbins "who was responsible for Aviation Logistics in the Army and the successful fielding of all the equipment for every Battalion." Thurman said, "These gentlemen had a vision and foresight to make sure the fielding of the AH-64 was the most successful Army program we have ever had. They must never be forgotten and their legacy will live on."

The 21st Cavalry Brigade is an outgrowth of the Apache Training

Brigade (ATB) formed at Fort Hood in the summer of 1984. Its mission was to receive, equip, train, evaluate, and deploy all AH-64 Apache Helicopter battalions in the Army. In

1992 the ATB was renamed the Combat Aviation Training Brigade (CATB) adding OH-58D Kiowa Warrior equipped units and sustainment training of currently fielded Apache Battalions. In 1996 the CATB was renamed the 21st Cavalry Brigade this time to field and train units upgrading to the Army's newest attack helicopter the AH-64D Apache Longbow.

The Brigade also supported our Allies with training and fielding expertise, including The Netherlands, Singapore, Taiwan, United Arab Emirates, Egypt, and Israel. In 2012 the Brigade was tasked to support collective training to the MQ-13 (Unmanned Air Vehicle) Gray Eagle Company assigned to 1st Air Combat Brigade at Fort Hood. General Thurman also mentioned that the foreign military sales training program is another success story. "21st Cavalry Brigade successfully trained over 120 classes from seven countries, including 1,100 aviators and 2,300 infantry soldiers, amassing over 21,000 flying hours and over 2,000 Longbow Crew Trainer hours." Locally, the 21st Cavalry Brigade is often referred to as "The Little Brigade That Could." I think this title is a fitting tribute to the tenacity of the 21st Cavalry and the contribution it has made to the U.S. Army and its Allies.

Under its several designations since 1985 the 21st Cavalry Brigade fielded, trained, and certified 74 combat-ready AH-64A/D or OH-58D units, most of which deployed to either or both Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom. In late 2013 the Department of the Army made the decision to end the Unit Fielding and Training Plan and discontinue the Brigade. COL John White, the fifteenth commander of the Brigade is tasked with transitioning personnel, equipment, and the current mission of the Brigade to other units. The final closing ceremonies will bring an end to arguably the Army's most dynamic aviation brigade and the only attack helicopter collective training unit in the world. It is difficult for many of us to understand why.

George Van Riper

MAJ, USA (Retired), E-Mail: [REDACTED]



Old friends CSM Todd, the current 21st Cavalry Command Sergeant Major y share some time with COL (ret.) Malvin Handy and his wife Mies Handy. COL (Ret.) Handy was the second Commander of the Apache Training Brigade, the origin of today's 21st Cavalry Brigade. Photo taken by Brian K. Burt.



Mixing the Punch - A time honored tradition at every Cavalry Dining Out played a big part this gathering. Please note the gallon can of gasoline, I wonder which conflict this applies to? (Editor) Photo taken by Brian K. Burt.



General (retired) James D. Thurman and his wife Dee taken at their home in Salado, Texas.

# Beaucoup Memories

by Jack Johnstone

Being a helicopter pilot can often mean you'll be rubbing shoulders with the famous and socially elite. So it was with John Barnicle a Vietnam Veteran Warrant Officer, with both Irish and American citizenship, living in Dublin, Ireland. John had been assigned to the 129th Assault Helicopter Company in Vietnam and after discharge went to Ireland, becoming an owner/partner in Celtic Helicopters. Indeed, his partner was the son of Charlie Haughey the former Prime Minister of Ireland.

The world wide requirements for helicopter pilots in offshore, medevac, corporate, law enforcement and bush wars means an ever increasing potential for an ambitious adventurer. Being a maintenance technician can also broaden ones potential. Yet on the hunt, late at night, and in a pub, there's nothing as swashbuckling as a pilot. That is, unless you rent a helicopter and are riding shotgun. I wasn't winging my way – I was 'rotoring' my way to a dairy farm in Wexford (southeast of Dublin on the Irish Sea).

As we cruised at about 1000 feet, in a JetRanger helicopter, John Barnicle was the picture of competence. We watched as the countryside flashed by, through our clear plastic chopper windows. This was the Ireland that I had always dreamed of, as the view unfolded. I looked down at the rolling green hills, rock walls and white houses through the wrap-around clear windows as we cut across the countryside. It's hard to top the beauty of Ireland on a bright sunny day.

Two days before, I was standing at the bar of Davey Byrnes pub on Duke Street, in the Grafton area of Dublin. I had read about this historic, literary watering hole. The likes of James Joyce and Brendan Behan had been regular patrons. I had my own secret affinity with James Joyce and it wasn't just that our initials were the same, or our middle class origins. Nor was it that both our mothers were piano playing prodigies. Like him I am a wanderer. As I stood the bar, looking at the famous murals, I realized that I had been born not long after his death. At that moment, I was the reincarnated James Joyce. The drinks may have helped a wee bit.

Some of the greatest conversationalist on the planet can be found in the Pubs of Ireland. I was engaged in some casual chit-chat with a fellow patron standing next to me. I later discovered that he was a celebrated personality in Dublin, named David Marshall. He looked as if he had just stepped out of an 18th century painting, owing to his long hair, quarter length coat and knee high boots. At the time he was dating Michelle Rocca, a stunning, former Miss Ireland, now married to Van Morrison. While David, Michelle and I chatted, I decided to reveal my plans of helicoptering to see my girlfriend on the dairy farm in Wexford. I confided to David that I was having misgivings about the idea. He insisted that I go through with my plans and that he and Michelle would show me Dublin. At this point I think (with our chit-chat) that Michelle was paying no attention to us. The following day I went to the airport and rented a JetRanger helicopter, which John Barnicle would pilot.

My helicopter hung in the air above the dairy farm adjacent to the farm house. With their eyes skyward I watched as my lady friend's family exited the house. After landing and a warm reception I was given a drink of whiskey in their kitchen. John offered a ride to her Dad and Brother, which they accepted. I was invited to stay night and said

goodbye to my pilot. My girlfriend's father and I became fast friends as we sat late into the night in front of his hearth. With the smell of wood smoke in the air, He regaled me with stories of courting her mother. It's true that few can out drink the Irish or match their generous hospitality. At 1:30AM he excused himself and said he needed to catch a few winks, because he

was getting up at 3:30AM to hook up the milk cows.

Leaving the dairy farm was like the closing of a great travel film on Ireland. When I arrived back at my hotel there was a message waiting in my room. The largest circulated newspaper in Ireland, The Irish Independent wanted to do an article on me and take my picture at the bar. After assuring the reporter that my chopper ride was not some publicity stunt, they took my picture and interviewed me.

I was at the hotel's private bar "guests only" at about midnight killing some time when the fellow I was drinking with asked me what I was up to in Dublin. I enjoyed telling him that I was waiting for the current edition of The Irish Independent. I said that I was the subject of an article relating to my helicopter ride. I could tell that I was immediately more important to him. Rather excitedly he said, "After you pick up the paper, please bring it back to the bar, so we can check it out" Then he formerly introduced himself as the lead guitarist with The Pretenders.

When I returned and showed the front page story to The Pretenders, one of them ran around the bar, holding the paper in the air, shouting "look at this, look at this". I'm sure that if I hadn't been in a helicopter, a story such as "Man Visits Girlfriend" would not have drawn much attention.

The following evening I was picked up from my hotel by David Marshall and his main squeeze Michelle Rocca (Miss Ireland 1981). They took me to a number of private clubs. We did not stand in lines. I was taken to the front and it was announced that "This is the gentleman who was on the front page today - Helicopter Jack". At that point we heard: "Please go right in Sir"

When I look back at my fifteen minutes of fame, I realize that I have never met anyone who returned from Ireland without good stories about the people there. Their abundance of good will and hospitality is rarely equaled. Of course the sound and pitch of our overhead, revolving rotor blades, as we landed, gave more than a passing interest to these great people,



Jack Johnstone in Dublin, Ireland, 1984. This is the photo that ran on the front page of The Irish Independent.



Jack's ride for this story is still in service today (Agusta-Bell 206B JetRanger Registration: EI BIJ). Photo courtesy of Celtic helicopters

Jack J. Johnstone

Page 9 The VHPA Aviator

# A Tribute to their veteran husbands...By Vicky Kendig

This article originally ran in the November 2014 issue of Waco Today.

The day couldn't have been more perfect July 18 when my husband, Loren, and I, along with eight Waco area friends stood on a hilltop in Angel Fire, New Mexico, at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. The cloudless, azure sky stretched above us, and the peaceful Moreno Valley lay below.

The five men in the group—Phil Little, Ken Groce, David Stovall, Marvin Moore and Loren Kendig—are all U.S. military veterans who served during the Vietnam war era, though they didn't know each other while in the service. They thought we were at the memorial that day just to take in the sights. However, their wives, who had arranged the trip—Nancy Little, Faye Groce, Rosemary Stovall, Martha Moore and I—had another plan that we had secretly held in our hearts for several months.

Each of us had purchased a memorial walkway brick in honor of her husband, listing his name, branch of military and dates served. The David Westphall Veterans Foundation had installed all five bricks together in one area of the sidewalk that snakes through the gardens.

"I thought it was a great idea," Rosemary said. "I was excited. I wanted to honor these guys for serving our country and putting their lives on the line."

Faye spoke of it as "a feeling of thankfulness that we could do it and that everyone is still alive to see it."

The two women had seen the bricks in April while visiting a friend in Angel Fire. They wanted to check out the location before taking the summer trip with the entire group. Faye said seeing the memorial walkway for the first time was breathtaking; it contains approximately 2,700 veterans' names on engraved bricks.

"It was awesome, and it was almost like I held my breath for a second or two, not just at seeing our husbands' names, but all the others as well."

In July, immediately after our group entered the grounds of the memorial, the men spotted a Vietnam-era Huey helicopter on display



(L to R) Loren Kendig (VHPA member), Phil Little, Ken Groce, David Stovall and Marvin Moore pose in front of Viking Surprise.

and headed that way. The aircraft was from Loren's unit, the 121st Assault Helicopter Company in Soc Trang, and, as an Army pilot, he had flown that very chopper when he was in Vietnam in 1967-68.

At the memorial that day, the wives were eager for their husbands to see the walkway bricks, but at the same time had mixed feelings—unsure how the veterans would react. After 40-plus years, those combat memories are still painful, and the bricks would once again make the war personal.

There was no need to rush them.

"I watched the guys gathered at the helicopter, and I knew we girls needed to stay away," Nancy said. "It was neat to watch them sharing."

For me, that particular Huey represents the war, knowing Loren flew it there. It got him safely through dangerous missions, and for that I'm eternally grateful. After several minutes at the helicopter, the men made their way to the sidewalk. The wives were standing in front of the section that contained their husbands' names.

Phil, a former Army helicopter pilot, who served at the same airfield in Soc Trang as Loren, was the first to see his brick. He wondered if the name was really his until he spotted the names of his Waco friends on the nearby bricks.

"It was amazing," he said. "I couldn't believe it when I saw it. I was tickled that Nancy thought to do it."

That brought the rest of the men over, and it began to dawn on them what they were seeing.

"Wow! It was a surprise, and I thought it was very nice to commemorate us that way," Ken said about discovering his name. The Air Force veteran trained pilots in flight simulators.

David, a Marine who served with an experimental unit in Quang Nam, Vietnam, said, "I thought that was pretty cool. I was touched."

Loren, whose Army career spanned 28 years, was taken by surprise. "I was very pleased—grateful and thankful."



The five men and their wives gather for a picture in a shaded spot at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Angle Fire. They are (L to R): Loren and Vicky Kendig, Phil and Nancy Little, David and Rosemary Stovall, Ken and Faye Groce, and Marvin and Martha Moore

To Marvin, an Army vet, who worked in communications in Chu Lai, South Vietnam, it was “a total shock” but full of meaning for his entire family. The Moores, including their children, have visited the memorial eight times, starting in 1982. It’s a place Martha calls “sacred ground.”

They’ve watched it expand from just the original little chapel on the hill to include a museum, gift shop and an amphitheater as well as serene, landscaped grounds that contain the helicopter, walkway, gravesites of the founders, and the sculpture of a Vietnam-era GI writing a letter.

Victor and Jeanne Westphall established the memorial to honor their son, Marine 1st Lt. Victor David Westphall III, who was killed with 15 other men in battle near Con Thien, South Vietnam. The site, dedicated in 1971, is now part of the New Mexico state park system, and the David Westphall Veterans Foundation raises money, runs the gift shop and installs the bricks. All in the group appreciated the many elements of the site, but Loren especially liked the soaring design of the chapel.

“It looks like it’s reaching up to the heavens,” he said. “From an aviator’s perspective, it’s a fitting structure for a memorial.”

The story of the parents’ sacrifices in order to establish and main-

tain the site touches Rosemary’s heart. Additionally, she loves the surrounding area.

“The view just knocks my socks off. It’s beautiful, peaceful and serene,” she said.

For Martha, the memorial has provided a new understanding about the war that started approximately 50 years ago.

“There’s so much history in the museum—so much insight on what actually went on in Vietnam,” she said.

Phil agrees. “I was astounded they had so much information, and it’s very well organized and people friendly.”



## Viking Surprise – UH-1H 64-13670

The Bell Iroquois UH-1 is the most widely used helicopter in the world and its service in Vietnam makes it the most recognized. This aircraft was brought to Vietnam Veteran’s Memorial State park by the New Mexico National Guard in May, 1999. Current and retired Guardsmen maintain it to this day.

Remarkable advances in Aviation took place during the Vietnam Era. Pilots pushed the envelope and developed amazing flying skills. On March 9th, 1967, while our Huey was assigned to the 121st AHC, an experimental smoke apparatus was installed and the aircraft was given the name “Viking Surprise”. Smoke was produced from a ring of nozzles around the turbine exhaust using a reservoir of oil.



This was the first of many Hueys to be outfitted as a smokeship.

Smokeships were used to provide cover for ground operations. When troops were inserted, they went in first and lay down smoke around the landing zone. The smokeship was closely followed by a pair of gunships firing to clear the area. Finally Hueys carrying troops would drop in. If the wind was light, the smoke would stay close to the ground for as long as five minutes giving the troops time to unload and disperse.

Faye described the group’s visit to the site during the summer as “very emotional” for her. Indeed, it was difficult to find a dry eye among any of the five couples.

However, the gatherings of the friends are usually far from somber. Most of them have been meeting for dinner practically every Friday night for about 12 years, with the Moores joining the group in 2008. All had been friends at Highland Baptist Church in Waco. The group started when the Stovalls and Kendigs met by happenstance at a local restaurant and decided to eat dinner at the same table. They liked it so much, that they invited the others to form a dinner group. They’ve also traveled together on several cruises, ranging from Alaska to the Caribbean to New England.

*Continued on page 55*



The Angel Fire New Mexico Vietnam Veterans Memorial State Park is located at 34 Country Rd, Angel Fire, NM, 87710. The park is open 9am-5pm, 7 days a week, the Chapel is open 24 Hours a day, every day, there are no entrance Fees. Complete details can be found at their Web Site: [www.vietnamveteransmemorial.org](http://www.vietnamveteransmemorial.org)

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# Welcome to the 32nd Reunion of the VHPA!

*From the Chairman of the VHPA Reunion Committee, Mike Law*

Speaking for the VHPA Executive Council, the Headquarters Staff, and the entire Reunion Committee – I cordially invite you to attend the VHPA's 32nd Annual Reunion in Washington DC from Tuesday, August 25th through Saturday, August 30th 2015 at The Marriott Wardman Park Hotel. We have a wonderful Reunion planned for you, your family, and your friends!

For those who've read this Welcome Letter for prior Reunions, I'm certain I sound like a "broken record" but please hear me out.

All the ideas we'll read in this letter and the next several Reunion pages are "from the heart!" All we (the EC, HQ Staff, Reunion Committee) want is to put a smile on your face while trying our best not to lose money. We have no revenue goals to meet, no egos to stroke, no "personal bests" to beat! Our sincere desire is that you will come away from this Reunion saying, "I'm glad I made the effort to attend!" We know these Reunions are expensive and that they require a sacrifice on the part of all

attendees. Yet we also know there is a good group of folk that "want this product." By way of example, last year in Louisville the budget required about 1,450 adult attendees plus some generous sponsorships for some seriously expensive items (The Travel Wall and the Combat Assault Reenactment – both were the VHPA's gift to the metropolitan area) to breakeven financially. Well over 1,700 attended and we sold out the Galt House (the largest hotel in Louisville)! Thank you all for your sustaining vote for all the behind the scenes effort to pull that one off!!

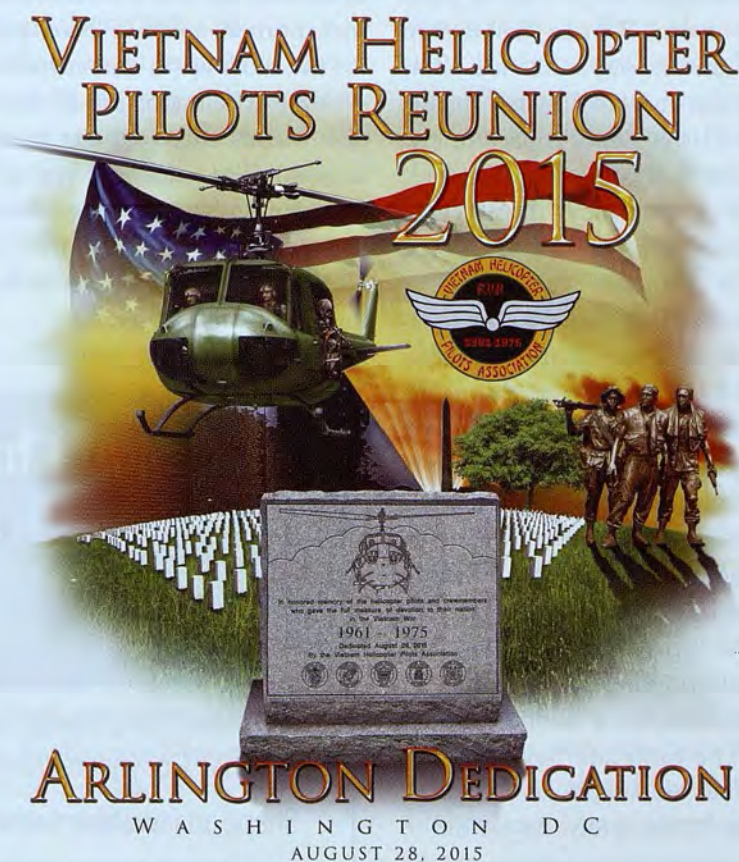
In the next few pages you can see lots of details, the event schedule, the registration form, some policies and procedures, plus some neat pictures. But before you delve into all

that let me mention SIX ideas.

First, PLEASE register early and THANK YOU! Now let me tell you why registering early is a good idea. You will notice there are 35 tours or activities scheduled outside the hotel (up from the 24 last year). At the bottom of 33 descriptions you should notice the word Maximum or Capacity and a number. Now some of the numbers are large like 1000 for the special evening at the Air & Space Museum near Dulles or 700 for the Marine Evening Parade, but many (indeed most) are small like 20 for the Memorial Collections Tours. Most of these events will sell out FOR SURE!! The Reunion Committee developed a waitlist procedure in 2012 to successfully accommodate many at the last minute. Please, my brothers, we are not in the last minutes now! Please review the exciting list of tours and events. Register early and book the events you want. Early is better!!! The same logic applies to The Marriott Wardman Park. While we have a large room block under contract, it does have limits!

Second, I trust we all recall the famous misquote "Play it again,

Sam" from the 1942 film Casablanca? Well, now join me in some conversations in 2013 in San Fran and 2014 in Louisville with several VHPAers about what we should do in Washington DC in 2015. Naturally we all remembered "the heady days" ~ the 2006 Reunion over July 4th based at the Marriott Wardman Park ~ the best attended Reunion in VHPA history at 2,531 attendees (only just beating out the next best of 2,498 also in Washington but in 2000). David Rittman and his "merry band" managed to accommodate over 1,800 at Udvar-Hazy (the Air & Space Museum near Dulles) and 850 for the Marine Tattoo (now Evening Parade) not to mention 26+ bus loads for the Joe Galloway lead tribute and wreath ceremony at The Wall and on and on!!



A couple of VHPAers I've known for years from VHPA Reunions, put their hands on my shoulder and said, "Play It Again, Mike." I said something to the effect – "Hey, we don't have the political muscle we once had and all our "well placed connections" have retired so we can't fly helicopters over The Wall ~ the ticket price for the Air & Space Museum will be in the \$125 to \$140 range if we chartered it for 1,000 souls ~ that Marine Evening Parade is the biggest ticket in town during the summer for ex-military people like us." This one friend stopped me right there and said something that has put me to work ever since. "Mike, do you know what I have to say about all those ideas? Simple – sign me up and put me down for 3 tickets even at \$150 per!" Now I don't know when and if the VHPA will ever return to Washington DC ~ we've been there at least five times by my count. We are "a last man standing outfit" and everyone knows our ranks are thinning at a scary rate. Quoting from the old English rhyme, R2015 will be "something old (Air & Space museum, etc. tours), something new (memorial dedication in Arlington), something borrowed (NCVHPA's two Hueys displayed in front of the hotel), something blue (the color of the reunion T-Shirt)." Ya'll come now! Ya hear?

Third, based on what we learned in Louisville, the leadership decided on a "midcourse correction" with respect to the HPFs (Historical Presentation Forum) and the newly introduced "breakfast with speakers." The history themes for the HPF have always been good but scheduling them at mid-morning or mid-afternoon times resulted in poor attendance. In Louisville we tested the "if you feed them, they will come" rule and learned that the "breakfast with speakers" concept was much better attended than the HPFs. In Washington we will leverage the hotel contract commission for the second year running. This is because the VHPA (versus an outside contractor) is the recipient of the commission. News flash! The food and beverage plus audio visual equipment rental fees are VERY HIGH at the Marriott as they are throughout Washington. As we did in 2014, we'll use some of the commission to make up the difference between the ticket price and what the hotel charges the VHPA for food and to cover the AV fees.

Fourth, perhaps you've notice that many of the Reunion tours are "better" than what an individual or family might be able to obtain? One of our Reunion planning goals is to leverage the size of the VHPA to get access to areas of museums or collections not normally open to the public. Perhaps a good example is the six Memorial Collection tours. This tour is not normally offered to the public but can be when requested in advance. Please note ~ only 20 people on each tour.

Fifth, Heads Up!! Please make certain you understand the VHPA's Reunion Registration, Cancellation, and

Refund Policy. Copies of this policy are posted on [www.vhpa.org](http://www.vhpa.org) and in the Online Reunion Registration Application (ORRA). You can also contact HQ and they will provide you with a copy. The Official Cancellation Date (OCD) is close of business (usually about 3pm Central Time Zone), Friday, 14 August 2015. A cancellation made prior to the OCD will be processed for a normal refund. Only those who purchased the Guaranty Refund Insurance (GRI) at the time of their initial Registration will be considered for a refund if they cancel after the OCD and meet one of the seven criteria. Again all the details are available on the websites or HQ can provide them to you.

Sixth, since this VHPA Reunion has literally a hundred "moving parts" even as GREAT as The Aviator is – there is no way we can communicate details and status to you with printed media. Please, please look to [www.vhpa.org](http://www.vhpa.org) for the most up-to-date information.

VHPA Reunions are all about renewing old and making new friends based on our common bonds forged when we were soldiers once and young. Please invite your friends and plan on having a good time.

Questions? Comments? As always get in touch with HQ at 800-505-8472 or Mike Law at [REDACTED]

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# GETTING THERE AND OTHER DETAILS

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## WHO CAN ATTEND THIS REUNION?

As a general rule anyone who is “dues current” in the VHPA can register, order tickets, etc. simply by paying the Reunion Registration Fee. All who served in the Vietnam War as helicopter pilots must not only be a member of the VHPA but also be current with respect to their annual membership dues as of the first day of the Reunion to register. Anyone who was not a pilot is also welcome to attend as long as they are a “dues current” subscriber to the VHPA Aviator magazine. Exceptions are vendors, specifically invited performers/speakers, Gold Star Family guests and Non-Registered Banquet Guests; these people do not have to be a subscriber to attend. Anyone wishing to purchase a ticket for any of our events must pay the Reunion Registration Fee.

As a general rule, since VHPA Membership and Subscriber dues expire on the last day of the month, someone who is dues current when they register, could be non dues current on the 1st day of the Reunion (25 August 2015). Because of this, the VHPA Reunion Registration software is “forward looking” with respect to the dues status.

Please understand, all Reunion Attendees (anyone who pays the Registration Fee) are treated as equals. A VHPA Life Member, a former enlisted man, the widow of a deceased Vietnam Vet, a good friend – are treated equally once they pay the Registration Fee. The one exception is that only VHPA members can attend the Annual Business Meeting. The bottom line – Who Can Attend This VHPA Reunion? Answer – anyone who pays the Registration Fee and is “dues current” as outlined above. So, please consider inviting anyone and everyone to attend with you!

## CANCELLING A REUNION REGISTRATION

The VHPA Member or Subscriber who made the Reunion Registration is known as the Primary Registrant (PR). A PR may cancel all or portions of his or her registration any time prior to the reunion by contacting HQ via US Mail at 2100 North Highway 360, Suite 907, Grand Prairie, TX 75050, Email at [HQ@vhpa.org](mailto:HQ@vhpa.org), Phone at 800-505-8472 or Fax at 817-200-7309. It is important to note that reunion registration cancellations and hotel reservation cancellations are completely separate business processes. The PR is responsible for both processes. PRs cannot assume that when they cancel their hotel reservation that the hotel will notify HQ to cancel the reunion registration or vice versa.

**REUNION HOTEL:** The Marriott Wardman Park, 2660 Woodley Road, N.W., Washington, DC 20008

Reunion hotel reservations: There are at least three ways to make you hotel reservations while insuring that you receive the VHPA Group Rate of \$119+ tax during the period of 21 August -1 September 2015. Please consider the following:

■ Via the Reunion's personalized website, go to: <https://resweb.passkey.com/go/167df34f>

■ Via [www.vhpa.org](http://www.vhpa.org), then Reunion Information and use the reserve your hotel room link.

■ By calling the hotel's reservation line at 877-212-5752. **You need to mention “Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Aug2015” and “passkey” so the agent can find the contract in the correct system.**

**Transportation from the Airport:** Because the hotel is an easy walk from the Woodley Park Zoo/Adams Morgan Metro Station on the Red Line, no airport shuttle is planned for this Reunion. A metro card can be purchased at the airport. There is an elevator at the corner of Woodley Road and Connecticut Ave for handicap access to/from the Metro. The estimated cab fare from Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport is \$30 one way and the estimated cab fare from Washington Dulles International Airport is \$60 one way.

**Parking:** Parking is \$20 per day self-parking (discounted from \$42 per day) for attendees. For non-hotel attendees, you will be able to purchase a \$20 parking voucher at a special booth the hotel will have set up. FYI there are not a lot of parking garage options in this area other than \$40+ hotel's.

**Internet Access:** The VHPA has negotiated free internet for attendees in their sleeping rooms. The hotel will give a special code to access the internet when you check in.

## SPECIAL GIFT FROM THE NORTH CAROLINA CHAPTER OF THE VHPA

The NCVHPA will have two aircraft, a UH-1H and a UH-

## REUNION REFUNDS and CANCELLATION FEES

The Executive Council establishes the official cancellation date (OCD) for the each reunion. The OCD for R2015 is Friday, August 14, 2015. Only cancellations received by HQ by close of business Central Daylight Time (normally 3pm) on the OCD (including those via US Mail) are considered for refunds, unless covered by Guarantee Refund Insurance (GRI) described below. For reunion registration cancellations under consideration for a refund, there is a \$15 cancellation fee for each PR and each registered guest. It is important to note that the following reunion registration items are non-refundable even with purchase of GRI: dues payments, directory orders, donations or voluntary contributions plus any event designated as non-refundable. Additionally if the PR enrolled in the GRI program cancels the entire registration prior to the OCD, then the GRI fee is refundable. For cancellations after the OCD, the GRI fee is non-refundable. As a general rule, HQ starts processing refunds about two weeks after the reunion ends. No refunds are processed until after the reunion is over. For PRs receiving a refund, there is a two step process. First, the PR receives a letter and/or a statement from HQ outlining the details of the refund including the amount. Normally this correspondence is sent from HQ by US mail but it can be via email. Second, the PR receives a check via US mail from the VHPA's bank. The goal is to complete the entire refund process not later than one calendar month after the reunion ends. Any clerical errors in the details of the refund should be brought to the attention of HQ.

## GUARANTEE REFUND INSURANCE (GRI) PROGRAM

As part of their initial registration transaction a PR may enroll in the Guarantee Refund Insurance (GRI) program by paying a fee calculated at 10% of their total registration fees and event ticket purchases. As mentioned above, dues payments, directory orders, donations or voluntary contributions are not included in this calculation. The GRI program allows the PR to receive a refund for himself/herself and/or their guests that have to cancel or have their reunion travel plans interrupted for any of the following reasons:

1. Sickness or injury of PR, a traveling companion or members of immediate families, which is diagnosed and treated by a physician or requires hospitalization during the time of the reunion.
2. Death of PR or immediate family member.
3. PR's involvement in a traffic accident, en route to the reunion that causes you to miss the reunion or a particular event.
4. PR's home is made uninhabitable by a natural disaster such as fire, flood, earthquake, hurricane, or volcano prior to or during the time of the reunion.
5. PR is recalled into active duty by the military that causes you to be unavailable to attend the reunion.
6. PR is served a subpoena or called to serve for jury duty

during dates of the reunion.

7. PR is quarantined during dates of the reunion.

The GRI program covers only specific VHPA events and fees, and does not cover cancellation costs that might be associated with hotel rooms, airfares, rental cars, and other non-VHPA generated expenses. PR's enrolled in the GRI program and needing to take advantage of the program's features are encouraged to contact VHPA HQ either by email or at the HQ desk at the host reunion hotel as soon as possible in the event of cancellation.

## DRESS CODE?

■ Casual is the dress code for this Reunion, with the following reminders and suggestions. It is also good to wear your Reunion lanyard.

■ At the Closing Banquet, many men wear a suit and tie with the ladies wearing a nice dress. You will even see Dress Blues.

■ For the monument dedication ceremony in Arlington Cemetery there are dress code requirements. Men must wear a collared shirt and casual slacks (or better) and appropriate shoes. Women must wear a dress or a blouse with casual slacks or a skirt plus appropriate shoes. The following are not permitted: blue jeans, patched jeans, shorts of any kind, tank tops, halter tops, tee shirts, shower type shoes, tube tops, shirts that expose the midriff.

## REUNION T-SHIRTS

Honor & Pride is the Reunion's "Official Reunion T-shirt" contractor for this year, as he has been for over a decade. This year's Reunion T-shirt will be a light blue color with VHPA logo on left front pocket and a large version of the Reunion Logo on the back. This year's prices are the same you have enjoyed for the last seven Reunions. You are welcome to order as many as you wish with a Reunion Registration until 10 August. All orders after 10 August are subject to inventory on hand at the end of the Reunion. If we have a supply of the shirts you requested, we will mail them to you; if not we will refund your T-shirt money. All cancellations made prior to 10 August come with the option to have the T-shirt mailed to you after the Reunion or having the amount paid for the T-shirt refunded. There is a \$5 shipping & handling fee per shirt when HQ mails the T-shirts. Please notice that the cutoff date for ordering the T-shirt is different from the official cancellation date (OCD) described above.

Please know it is possible to order Reunion T-shirts even if you do not plan to attend the Reunion. Simply contact VHPA HQ and tell them you only want a "Reunion T-shirt order". The shirts will be mailed to you after the Reunion.

## VENDOR AREA

The Vendor Area for R2014 was a huge success! If you are interested in becoming a Vendor for this year's reunion please go to [www.vhpa.org](http://www.vhpa.org) and download the Vendor/ Book Seller/

Exhibitor Contract, Waiver and Vendor/Book Seller/Exhibitor Policy Rules & Regulations. Complete the forms and mail, fax or email to VHPA HQ. If you know of anyone that you think would be an asset to the Reunion Vendor Area be sure to let them know or contact VHPA HQ to give us the info and we will be happy to give them a call.

### VOLUNTEERS

The VHPA needs your help! The Old Dominion Chapter is this reunion's Host Chapter and as such will organize the volunteers. Volunteer opportunities are organized around stations and then shifts with the number of volunteers needed for that shift. Sounds like a Duty Roster! Wonder where that idea came from? We've found that 3-hour shifts will not take up much of your time or make you too tired. Additionally we can guarantee everyone is trained on their duties. Needless to say but WE GREATLY APPRECIATE having volunteers! Not only do we avoid the cost of hiring local convention bureau temps but we get a chance to interact with each other while performing the tasks EXACTLY as a VHPAer would have it done! Until about early February, the only way you can volunteer is to work with Don Agren, President of the Old Dominion Chapter, at [REDACTED] or <[REDACTED]>. As is our tradition, the Host Chapter gets "first shot" at the Duty Roster. When they've had "their shot" the Duty Roster is loaded onto the Reunion Information page at VHPA.ORG for the rest of us to "join

in on the fun!" Instructions for how to volunteer at that point will be posted on the website. Last year the Ohio River LZ Chapter set the bar extremely high in terms of the number of tasks, number of volunteers, and overall OUTSTANDING JOB. The HQ Staff and the Reunion Committee met with the Old Dominion leadership at the hotel in September. So they know exactly what the terrain looks like. Because the Ohio River LZ folks "lead the way" and "set the standard," the Old Dominion guys know exactly where the LZ is and how to get there. BTW, husband and wife teams can volunteer. THANKS.

### Places of Interest – Hotel Surrounding Area

For your information we have listed a few places in close proximity to the hotel. See the concierge desk in the lobby for a map to these and any other destinations you need:

#### ~Coffee~

Dunkin Donuts, about 2 minutes walking distance  
Open City, about 4 minutes walking distance  
Starbucks, about 8 minutes walking distance

#### ~Fast Food~

McDonalds, about 4 minutes walking distance  
Baskin Robbins Ice Cream, about 4 minutes walking distance

#### ~Neat Places~

Woodley Park Zoo, about 9 minutes walking distance  
CVS Pharmacy, about 5 minutes walking distance

## COMBAT HELICOPTER PILOTS ASSOCIATION



The CHPA is a non-profit military association of Active Duty, National Guard, Reserve, and former U.S. Military Combat Rotary-Wing pilots and crew members, from all wars.

**DUTY · HONOR · COURAGE · NEVER EVER FORGET**

## DUTY · HONOR · COURAGE · NEVER EVER FORGET

The CHPA is a non –profit military association of Active Duty, National Guard, Reserve, and former U.S. and commonwealth military combat rotary wing pilots and crewmembers, from all wars.

Our purpose is Unity, Legacy, and Remembrance of fallen comrades.

For Information on Preserving Our Legacy, visit the website or request a brochure from our HQ in Divide Colorado

[www.CHPA-US.org](http://www.CHPA-US.org)

Combat Helicopter Pilots Association  
PO Box 42  
Divide, CO 80814-0042

**COMBAT HELICOPTER  
PILOTS ASSOCIATION**

# Tour and Event Descriptions

VHPA's 32nd  
Annual Reunion  
in Washington D.C.  
August 25-30  
2015

*Last updated 27 November 2014*

**Primary Attendee (Member or Subscriber)**

**Registration** - The registration fee for the member is \$25 through 6/30/2015 and \$35 thereafter.

**Adult Guest Registration** - The registration fee for the member is \$25 through 6/30/2015 and \$35 thereafter.

Please remember that each person 21 years and older who wants/needs an event ticket and/or a Reunion name badge and lanyard must pay the registration fee.

**Guest Under 21 Registration** - The registration fee for someone under the age of 21 years is \$15.

Please remember that each person 21 years and older who wants/needs an event ticket and/or a Reunion name badge and lanyard must pay the registration fee.

**Mini-Reunions:** 25 August through 29 August - Keeping in mind that one of the primary reasons for our Reunion is to reconnect with past compatriots from your RVN unit and flight school. The best way to meet up with unit members is to schedule your own Mini-Reunion. If your unit does not have a Mini-Reunion, why not take the initiative to start one up, or you could combine with other sister units you are familiar with if you wish. In addition to specific units and flight classes, we've had Mini-Reunions for such subjects as tandem rotor, Dust-off, Operation Lam Son 719, anyone who was stationed at Soc Trang, VHPA chapters, anyone interested in radio controlled aircraft models. Really there are no rules! Mini-Reunions are typically scheduled in 4-hour blocks and are available for booking on most days during the Reunion. You can also request a second four-hour block. However, this second block will be granted on a space available basis with priority for the particular space given to units requesting only one block. Due to decreased usage and increased expenses, the Reunion no longer provides AV equipment for Mini-Reunions. Once your Mini-Reunion is scheduled the details will appear on the webpage. You still should make an effort to get the word out to your buds. Use your directory to contact members (encourage them to re-up with the VHPA if they are not dues current), write a short article for the VHPA Aviator, and schedule early so we can list your unit in articles such as this.

**Unit TOC (Tactical Operation Center):** If you have a big group that you know is coming (say approximately 20 registrants), then we invite you to schedule a TOC. A TOC is a specific Mini-Reunion room given to your group for all day or for several days. This is like a super Mini-Reunion. Since the group is going to "hang out" in the same room for several days, they can bring almost anything into the room (AV stuff, displays, etc.).

It is easy to schedule a Mini-Reunion or TOC. Complete the Mini-Reunion Request form available at VHPA.ORG and email it to Melissa Allen at reunioninfo@vhpa.org or call 800-505-8472 or mail the completed form to HQ in Grand Prairie, TX.

## GOLD STAR FAMILY BREAKFAST

For Veterans and KIA/MIA Families



### KIA/MIA Gold Star Breakfast Sponsorship

Use this item to make a contribution to the Gold Star Family Breakfast organized by Julie Kink. Effectively you are paying the price of the meal for a Gold Star Family member. This item was added to the VHPA Reunion Registration form at the request of VHPA Members attending the Annual Business Meeting during the 2010 Reunion in San Diego. Thank you for your generosity.

**O'Club: 25 August – 28 August -11:00am – 11:00pm  
29 August - 12:30pm – 11:00pm**

It is only fitting that the "official opening" of the Reunion happens at the O' Club at 11 am on Tuesday, August 25th! In the tradition of a Vietnam unit's Officer's Club you can get a beer and shoot the breeze with your buddies. The O' Club will again be part of 'ground zero' – meaning the Vendor Area, Ballrooms, Mini-Reunion rooms, Registration and Pre-registration, and the O' Club are all within hand grenade range. The only other watering holes in the hotel are Harry's Pub and the Lobby Lounge. The O' Club prices are generally \$0.50 to \$1.00 below the Hotel Bar prices. For the record, the O' Club inclusive prices are: Domestic Beer \$5.00, Imported Beer \$6.00, House Wine \$9.00, Cocktails \$6.00, and Soft Drinks/Bottled Water - \$4.00.

**Mall & Monuments Shuttle: 25 August thru 28 August – 10:00am – 5:00pm** (one ticket is good for all four (4) days)



There is so much to see and do in Washington, and most of the attractions are free of charge. We are going to make seeing the memorials and museums of your choosing as simple as possible. The private VHPA Shuttle will run on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday & Friday from the hotel to designated stops in the Mall area. As a special bonus there will be a licensed DC Tour Guide on board to relate interesting anecdotes as you make your way to your

chosen destination. Time permitting; there may be photo ops along the way. Shuttle pick-up and drop off locations are at the same place each day. The shuttle stops include Air & Space Museum, Museum of American History, WWII Memorial, and the Vietnam Memorial. Many of the other Memorials and Museums are easily accessible from these 4 stops. Detailed shuttle schedule will be posted at the reunion, maps will be provided on the shuttle.

*\*\*For those who would like to stay at the Mall area later than the last shuttle, you will be on your own to take the Metro or a Taxi back to the hotel.*

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**Memorial Collections Tour #1: 25 August – 8:00am – 11:00am**

**Memorial Collections Tour #2: 25 August – 11:15am – 2:15pm**

**Memorial Collections Tour #3: 25 August – 2:30pm – 5:30pm**



Did you ever wonder what happens to all of those mementos that are left at the memorials and historic sites in Washington DC? The Museum Resource Center

(MRCE) is a 55,000 sq ft curatorial facility that houses all of the collections from the National Parks in the National Capital Region that are not currently on display. The parks include the National Mall, all Memorial Parks, Frederick Douglass National Historic Site and Ford's Theatre. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Collection (VIVE) is one of the more than 40 collections currently housed at MRCE. All of the objects in VIVE are left at the Wall by members of the public and then collected on a daily basis by the National Park Service Rangers who work at the National Mall. To date, more than 400,000 objects have been collected ranging from notes to stuffed animals to art projects and even a 1960's style motorcycle. All of the objects collected by the rangers are brought to MRCE where they are cataloged, housed in archival materials, and prepared for long-term museum storage. Objects are occasionally loaned to other museums and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund is currently fundraising to build an Education Center at the Mall telling the story of the Wall and the collection itself.

*Capacity: Each tour is limited to 20 participants*

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**Pentagon Tour #1: – 25 August – 9:00am – 12:00pm**

**Pentagon Tour #2: – 25 August – 1:00pm – 4:00pm**



Don't miss this special tour arranged just for the VHPA. Your tour includes the Korean

War Exhibit, which was dedicated in 2013, as well as the partially completed Vietnam War Exhibit. The Vietnam War Exhibit will still be under construction at the time of the reunion, however; you will still see the part depicting both Dust-off and Gunship Helicopters. A stretcher bearer, a nurse, Sharon Lane - the only female killed by hostile fire in Vietnam, an M-60 infantryman, and a helicopter crewman carrying a 2.75 rocket will be in the exhibit. Other points of interest on the tour include The Hall of Heroes which includes the names of all the recipients of the Medal of Honor; Overlord Embroidery with 34 tapestries created by Sandra Lawrence depicting the story of the Allied invasion of Normandy on June 6, 1944; Faces of the Fallen Memorial which features individual portraits in honor of the service men and women killed in Afghanistan and Iraq; the POW-MIA Corridor which is the exhibit recognizing United States military personnel taken as prisoners of war (POWs) or listed as missing in action (MIA); Soldiers and Signers of the Constitution Corridor commemorates the signing of the Declaration of Independence and portray the founding fathers of our nation and Pentagon Center Courtyard which is 5.5 acres of outdoor space in the interior of the building. You will also have the opportunity to visit the permanent outdoor National 9/11 Pentagon Memorial dedicated to the 184 men and women who died as victims in the building and on American Airlines Flight 77 during the September 11, 2001 attacks.

This is a walking tour about 60 minutes in duration. You will be expected to walk a distance of about 1.5 miles, including several staircases. This tour is wheelchair accessible.

All attendees must pass the Pentagon Security check point to proceed into the building. This security check is similar to the TSA checks at airports. Current instructions require the VHPA to provide a list of attendees and for each attendee to provide some form of ID. To avoid a huge last minute administrative nightmare and to be on the "safe side", the VHPA is collecting date of birth data for each attendee during the registration process.

*Capacity – each tour is limited to 100 participants*

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**Group Dinner at Café Paradiso #1:**

**25 August – 5:00pm – 7:00pm**

Gather with your friends for a delicious all-you-can-eat Italian dinner in a private setting. Café Paradiso is a family-owned Italian restaurant offering fresh, creative, & exquisite northern Italian cuisine in a modern, yet elegant setting. Your dinner includes traditional Italian favorites including pasta with meatballs, chicken, homemade bread and Caesar salad.

*Visit their website at:*

**[www.cafeparadisodc.com](http://www.cafeparadisodc.com)**

*Since this restaurant is less than a city block from the hotel, no transportation is included with this tour, except for those who are mobility challenged.*

*Price includes all taxes and gratuities associated with the meal. Cash bar will be available.*

*Capacity: Each day is limited to 80 people*

### Group Dinner at Lebanese Taverna #1:

25 August – 5:00pm – 7:00pm

Lebanese Taverna Restaurant is owned and managed by the Abi-Najm Family. They arrived in Arlington, Virginia in 1976 after escaping the civil war in Lebanon. The restaurant utilizes seasonal American cuisine while incorporating Lebanese and Mediterranean ingredients to create innovative recipes. This evening, enjoy a family style menu that will allow you to try some of the most popular Lebanese and Mediterranean dishes. Some of the menu items are traditional hummus, salad, chicken kabobs, shrimp, and much more. Don't miss this chance to spend time with your friends and try some truly authentic Mediterranean cuisine.

*Visit their website at*

[www.lebanesetaverna.com/restaurant\\_washingtondc](http://www.lebanesetaverna.com/restaurant_washingtondc)

*Since this restaurant is less than a city block from the hotel, no transportation is included with this tour, except for those who are mobility challenged.*

*Price includes all taxes and gratuities associated with the meal. Cash bar will be available.*

*Capacity: Each day is limited to 60 people*

### Group Dinner at Petit Plats #1:

25 August – 5:00pm – 7:00pm

Petits Plats is a combination of American and French Cuisine. This charming neighborhood restaurant is a favorite with locals and visitors. The cozy bistro is located in a converted Woodley Park house which was built in 1898. As you take a seat you feel like you have traveled to France. Despite the name, the servings are generous, and the food is delicious. Enjoy a sit down dinner that includes a salad, entrée choice, and dessert.

*Visit their website at: [www.petitsplats.com/home.html](http://www.petitsplats.com/home.html)*

*The room for the dinner is on the 2nd floor of the house. This is not handicapped accessible; you will be required to walk up stairs.*

*Since this restaurant is less than a city block from the hotel, no transportation is included with this tour, except for those who are mobility challenged.*

*Price includes all taxes and gratuities associated with the meal. Cash bar will be available.*

*Capacity: Each day is limited to 70 people*

### Group Dinner at Open City Cafe #1:

25 August – 5:00pm – 7:00pm

What happens when you marry a hip and relaxing 'Coffee-house, Bar & Lounge' with a bustling and energetic 'American Diner'? Open City, of course! A favorite with locals, this has become the place to relax with friends and take a step back from the rush of everyday life. The owners pride themselves in the restaurant being travelers' home-away-from-home while being part of what defines home to many in the DC community. While sitting on the enclosed patio you will enjoy classic American food including appetizers, homemade pizza, and chicken wings.

*Since this restaurant is less than a city block from the hotel, no transportation is included with this tour, except for those who are mobility challenged.*

*Price includes all taxes and gratuities associated with the meal. Cash bar will be available.*

*Capacity: Each day is limited to 32 people*

### Early Bird Gathering with Entertainment:

25 August – 7:00pm – 10:00pm

This social gathering continues the long standing tradition of having an appointed place and time for everyone who comes "early" to the Reunion to meet and greet with others. Since the room will be configured with lots of tables and chairs, you can sit, stand, and walk around as you see fit. Traditionally units, flight classes, and chapters display small signs (max 11X17) to "reserve" their meeting place/table. Thus when someone enters the room they can look for a 1st Cav or Americal Division sign then head to that table. The O'Club, in the Delaware Suite, is immediately across from Salon 2. We'll position other cash bars to make certain no one has to stand in a long line.

About one hour after the Early Bird Gathering kicks off, we will have musical entertainment at the other end of the Salon. At least one of the large air walls between the Salon sections will be closed for those who don't wish to have the music interrupt their talking.

*Note: No food is provided at this gathering.*

### KIA/MIA Gold Star Breakfast: 26 August 7:30am – 9:00am

#### GOLD STAR FAMILY BREAKFAST



For Veterans and KIA/MIA Families

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

and remember them like a brother.

If you would like to sponsor guests for the breakfast you can use the Event Sponsorship section under Voluntary Contributions in Step 2 of the online registration.

If you would like to invite KIA/MIA Gold Star family members who will not be registering for the Reunion, please call VHPA HQ to provide their names and contact information so we can have Name Badges prepared for them.

Julie Kink often writes something like the following as a separate article in The Aviator: "As aviators who have seen combat, most of you remember someone from that long-ago time who didn't make it back from Vietnam. A few of you have connected with the families of your fallen buddies, either through the Family Contacts Committee or by other means, to share with them a memory or two, perhaps a photo, most of all, the knowledge that their loved one was never forgotten. Have you thought of inviting them to attend the VHPA reunion, and particularly, the Gold Star Family Breakfast, with you? As a sister of a fallen Vietnam helicopter pilot, I remember the first time I sat down with veterans who served with my brother, who was killed while flying C 1/9 Cav scouts at age 19. The experience of being with men who could tell me more about his life and his service was powerful. I learned that not only are we families of the fallen welcome at veterans' reunions, we are welcomed "warmly" by those who knew our loved ones and shared

their last days. You might have wondered previously: "Should I invite John's family to a reunion? What in the world would they do there, among 600+ of us rowdy pilots? Would they feel out of place?" For the past few years, there's been an event designed especially to bring Gold Star Families (families of the deceased) together with pilots in remembrance and celebration of the lives we lost: the Gold Star Family Breakfast. We are still working out the details but we know this year, as in the past, the breakfast will be a fitting time for you to share great stories about the lives of the guys we lost, with their families, and the rest of us. For family members, reunions provide a great opportunity to experience, firsthand, the camaraderie that our loved ones shared with veterans who have never forgotten them. Have you been sending Christmas cards to John's family all these years? Been calling Harry's mom on the phone at Mother's Day just to brighten her day? Have you been emailing back and forth with Bob's brother for years, but just never got a chance to shake his hand? This is the opportunity to do that. Invite them to attend the reunion and bring them to the Gold Star Family Breakfast. I'm happy to answer questions about the breakfast, as details get confirmed, or about how to connect with a buddy's family. Little sister, Julie Kink sister of WO David Kink C Troop 1/9th CAV KIA 8-3-1969. I am also a member of VHFCN Family Contacts Committee. Visit [www.VirtualWall.org/contacts](http://www.VirtualWall.org/contacts) or email me at [REDACTED]

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**Breakfast with Speaker #1: 26 August - 7:30am - 9:00am - Speaker SGT Barry McAlpine - B Troop 1/9th Cav 1st Air Cav Division**

This is the first of four breakfasts with speakers offered for this Reunion. While you are enjoying the Marriott's Deluxe Continental fare with your family and friends, SGT Barry McAlpine will give a 40-minute presentation covering his tour in the Blues - the Aero-Rifle (infantry) platoon in an Air Cavalry Troop. From Oct 66 to Oct 67 Barry served with B Troop 1/9th Cav in the 1st Air Cavalry Division. Many VHPAers have poignant memories of inserting and extracting the Blues in Vietnam - now we will have an opportunity to hear the other side of those war stories. The three 'breakfasts with speakers' we had in Louisville were well received, so we decided to offer them again this year. Additionally with the hotel's breakfast buffet being over \$25 per person, we thought having a private breakfast with other attendees for \$22 might be a good thing. Finally we've scheduled each breakfast to conclude prior to most other Reunion tours or events for the day; Golf and 8am departing tours are the exceptions. So you'll know you can have a cup of coffee and something to eat before heading out for the day and you won't miss the bus!

*Please note Breakfast #1 and this year's KLA/MLA Gold Star Family Breakfast are scheduled at exactly the same times; so you must choose which one to attend.*

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**Memorial Collections Tour #4: 26 August - 8:00am - 11:00am**  
**Memorial Collections Tour #5: 26 August - 11:15am - 2:15pm**  
**Memorial Collections Tour #6: 26 August - 2:30pm - 5:30pm**

*See Description on 25 August*

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**Gettysburg Tour:**

**26 August - 8:00am - 6:00pm**

The Battle of Gettysburg was a turning point in the American Civil War, a conflict that determined the fate of the United States. Gettysburg National Military Park is the site where these two great armies clashed, and is a symbol of America's struggle to survive as a nation. You will travel over 18 miles amongst the 1,000 monuments and cannons as you experience the 3 days of the battle. Your visit begins at the new Visitor's Center & Museum. The Visitor's Center offers a wonderful introduction and several exhibits. It is here you will see the film "A New Birth of Freedom" narrated by Morgan Freeman, and view the Gettysburg Cyclorama program. Then board your coach with your Gettysburg guide for a narrated tour of the grounds. Following the guided tour you will have time for lunch on your own and to further browse the Visitor's Center before returning to the hotel.

*Capacity: 50*

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**Pentagon Tour #3: - 26 August - 9:00am - 12:00pm**

**Pentagon Tour #4: - 26 August - 1:00pm - 4:00pm**

*See Description on 25 August*

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**Mount Vernon Tour, Lunch & Wreath Laying #1:**

**26 August - 9:00am - 3:00pm**

**Mount Vernon Tour, Lunch & Wreath Laying #2:**

**26 August - 11:00am - 5:00pm**

Mount Vernon was the beloved home of George and Martha Washington from the time of their marriage in 1759 until General



Washington's death in 1799. He worked tirelessly to expand his plantation from 2,000 acres to 8,000 and the mansion house from six rooms to twenty-one. Mount Vernon is the

most popular estate in America. Your tour includes a guided tour of the Mansion and more than a dozen outbuildings including the slave quarters, kitchen, stables and greenhouse. Don't miss the Ford Orientation Center, The Gristmill, The Distillery, and the new Donald W. Reynolds Museum. You will also take part in a special private Wreath Laying Ceremony at Washington's Tomb. The tour includes a \$10 lunch voucher which can be used at any of the restaurants in the food court. Due to the size of the facility this tour involves a lot of walking.

*Capacity: Each tour is limited to 100 participants*

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**Writer's Presentation: 26 August - 9:30am - 11:30am**

The VHPA Writers Presentation is organized by John Penny our book reviewer. The theme for this year's presentation, for the benefit of VHPA members aspiring to be authors, is to bring three or four VHPA authors who have written in the various genres as well as in the different ways to get published: traditional, print on demand (self published), and electronic publishing. Please go to the Reunion Information page at [www.vhpa.org](http://www.vhpa.org) for updated information.

## National Museum of the Marine Corps #1:

**26 August – 9:30am – 3:30pm**

Spend the day at the National Museum of the Marine Corps. Follow in the footsteps of Marines: from the yellow footprints that young recruits must fill at boot camp to the boot prints left in the sand of Pacific Island beaches during World War II; in the snow of the Chosin Reservoir during the Korean War; and on Hill 881 South in Vietnam. Through the museum collections and uniforms you find here. It is the all-pervasive message that it takes “every Marine” to accomplish mission. The museum is self-guided; you can visit at your own pace. You may choose to purchase the audio tour (not included in the tour price). The audio tour includes dramatic details and oral histories not found in the galleries. There are also several docents located throughout the museum. Included in the price of the tour is a boxed lunch which will be available for pick-up in the café and you can then eat at your leisure.

*Capacity: 100*

## Group Dinner at Café Paradiso #2:

**26 August – 5:00pm – 7:00pm**

*See Description on 25 August*

## Group Dinner at Lebanese Taverna #2:

**26 August – 5:00pm – 7:00pm**

*See Description on 25 August*

## Group Dinner at Open City Cafe #2:

**26 August – 5:00pm – 7:00pm**

*See Description on 25 August*

## Group Dinner at Petit Plats #2:

**26 August – 5:00pm – 7:00pm**

*See Description on 25 August*

## 1st Time Attendee Reception: 26 August – 7:00pm – 8:00pm

This is a special reception for those attending a VHPA reunion for the first time. Besides meeting other first time attendees you will visit with members of the VHPA Executive Council and various VHPA committee chairmen in an informal setting. After a brief presentation about the history of the VHPA and the way the VHPA operates there is time for Q&A and one to one conversations. For example - maybe you want to meet and speak with the VHPA President or the Editor of The Aviator? Maybe you have a question about how the annual financial audit is conducted? Maybe you have a photo that you'd like to see published in the VHPA Calendar? Now is a good time to have these conversations! While the primary audience is VHPA members, their guests and friends are also welcome. A cash bar is available in this reception.

At the conclusion of this reception, you are welcome to join the Welcome Reception already in progress.

*Note: No food is provided at this reception.*

## Welcome Reception with Entertainment:

**26 August – 7:30pm – 10:00pm**

Traditionally this reception was the first official event for everyone to get together FOR SURE at a Reunion. Now it is just a “get together” at an appointed place and time for everyone who attends the Reunion. Please don't be concerned about the word “reception” ~ there will be NO RECEIVING LINE and NO FORMALITIES. The room will be configured with lots of tables and chairs so everyone can sit and talk. The O'Club, in the Delaware Suite, is immediately across from the Salon 2. We'll position other cash bars to make certain no one has to stand in a long line. You are welcome to bring a unit sign or guidon so people will know where “your table” is located. We CANNOT hang unit banners over the tables at this Reception, sorry.

About one hour after the Welcome Reception kicks off, we will have musical entertainment at the other end of Salon 2. At least one of the large air walls between the Salon sections will be closed so those who don't wish to have the music interrupt their talking will be happy. Additionally, tables and chairs in the O' Club are available for those who don't wish to talk over the music.

*Note: No food is provided at this reception.*

## Golf at Andrews South Golf Course:

**27 August – 6:30am – 3:00pm**



Buses depart the hotel at 6:30am. Golfers should be back at the hotel by 3 pm. Your golf ticket includes

continental breakfast plus box lunch at the golf course. This year we will play the Andrews South Golf Course. Please see [www.AAFBGC.com](http://www.AAFBGC.com) for details about the course. Golf will be non-refundable this year until we reach and maintain our guaranteed minimum.

A Power Pack is included in the golf ticket price this year. The Power Pack rules are carried forward from previous VHPA events. In the pack you get the following Power Pack Bonuses plus goodies: Mulligan's are for each player and cannot be used by another player in the foursome. Two each Mulligan's off the tee each side (four total). One each Get Out of the Hazard Free per side (two total). Rules are using the Get Out of Hazard: (1) Place ball where it last traveled before going into the hazard or OB, no penalty. (2) Use for sand traps, water, and Out of Bounds, with no penalty stroke. (3) One use of the most forward tee, one per side (two total). (4) Not available on Par 3's. (5) On the score card, on the player lines, in the where you normally enter a person's score, enter letters for what item was used. MT=Mulligan from Tee. H=Get out of Hazard free. FT=Forward Tee. (6) Circle the box if your drive was used. (7) Teams may buy a Power Pack for “Charlie”.

VHPA HQ will maintain the foursome and twosome pairings. After you've registered and purchased your golf tickets, contact HQ at 800-505-8472 with your preferences about whom you would like to play with.

Please contact Don Winter at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] with any technical questions about this event. Because we are playing on an active military base, there are security requirements. For this event the VHPA must collect the player's full name and date of birth plus whether or not the player has a military ID card. Yes or no is all we need in the ID card area. The VHPA needs to present this roster a day or two in advance of the event. In addition to the VHPA provided buses, players often drive POVs. Having a retired military ID tag will really help you get through the security check point faster.

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**VHPA Legacy Breakfast: 27 August - 7:30am - 9:00am**

While you are enjoying the Marriott's Deluxe Continental fare with your family and friends, VHPA President Bob Hesselbein will be the discussion leader for an updated version of the 45 minute presentation he delivered last year in Louisville.

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**Monuments by Water Via Alexandria #1:**

**27 August - 9:00am - 3:00pm**

**Monuments by Water Via Georgetown #2:**

**27 August - 10:00am - 4:00pm**



This is a great way to spend time in two unique neighborhoods and have the opportunity to see some of DC's Monuments and Memorials. Depending on the option you choose, you will start your day in Georgetown or Alexandria. Georgetown is one of DC's

best-known neighborhoods which evolved out of an 18th century port town. Spend time strolling down M Street towards Wisconsin Ave where you will find many locally owned shops, lovely cafes, gardens and historic buildings. Then board your boat for a 1 hour narrated cruise to Alexandria/Georgetown. As you cruise the Potomac enjoy wonderful views of Jefferson Memorial, John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, The Washington Monument, Memorial Bridge, and the 14th St. Bridge. Upon arrival in Alexandria/Georgetown, there will be time to explore Old Town. Stroll down King Street to immerse yourself in the 18th and early 19th century architectural landscape of the very historic main street where nearly every building has a unique history. As you stroll thru this quaint area, you will find many galleries, unique shops, bars, and restaurants.

Lunch is on your own in Georgetown or Alexandria. Light snacks and beverages are available to purchase on the cruise.

The boat for the cruise has open sides (there is a cover) and is not climate controlled. The cruise is 1 hour in length.

Roundtrip Motor coach transportation is included in the tour

price.

Tour #1 & Tour #3 starts in Alexandria and ends in Georgetown

Tour #2 & Tour #4 starts in Georgetown and ends in Alexandria

*Capacity: Each tour is limited to 100 participants*

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**Mount Vernon Tour, Lunch & Wreath Laying #3:**

**27 August - 9:00am - 3:00pm**

**Mount Vernon Tour, Lunch & Wreath Laying #4:**

**27 August - 11:00am - 5:00pm**

*See Description on 26 August*

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**National Archives: 27 August - 9:30am - 1:00pm**

This is a rare opportunity to learn about the National Archives in College Park. This special tour will give you an introduction to the National Archives, how they are stored, sorted, and catalogued. The National Archives building is the largest modern archives in the world, and this building is the 2nd largest Federal building in the United States. Today you will learn how to research and obtain copies of digital media. We were only able to obtain one group tour during our reunion dates. If you are interested don't delay, register as soon as possible.

*Capacity: 20*

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**Quilter's Show & Tell: 27 August - 2:00pm - 4:00pm**

The special meeting will continue the tradition started in Louisville of presenting quilts to both VHPA members and local area veterans. Contact Kathleen Sherfey 913-631-6811 [klksms@aol.com](mailto:klksms@aol.com) or Roslyn Atwood 602-859-1943 [southercrossquilting@cox.net](mailto:southercrossquilting@cox.net) for more details. As of late 2014 they have four quilts to present.

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**Udvar-Hazy Air & Space Museum Private Tour & Dinner: 27 August - 5:30pm - 11:30pm**



Join us for a fascinating evening that promises to create memories you will cherish for a lifetime! Our VHPA members will have exclusive use of the entire Air & Space Museum. During the course of the evening you can visit the world's fastest jet-propelled aircraft (the SR-71 Blackbird), the first supersonic airliner to enter service (the Concorde) or visit a space shuttle (Discovery), to name a few. There will also be an exciting IMAX movie available for viewing, you can visit the thousands of aviation and space artifacts on display and visit the observation tower that gives you a 360-bird's eye view of the Washington Dulles International Airport and the surrounding area. Top

off the evening by enjoying a wonderful buffet dinner and hosted bar. You can visit their website at: [airand-space.si.edu/visit/udvar-hazy-center/](http://airand-space.si.edu/visit/udvar-hazy-center/) for more details about the exhibits available for viewing.

Price includes round trip transportation, museum admission, dinner, hosted beer, wine and soda.

Motor coach departures from the Museum back to the hotel will be staggered throughout the evening, so you can stay as long as you like. As a special added bonus, for those who are interested we will have several buses stop at the Vietnam Memorial on the way back to the hotel. The Memorial takes on a whole new look and luster as it is beautifully illuminated against the night sky. Earlier return times will be available.

This is a non-refundable event until we reach and maintain our breakeven number of 950. Should you purchase a ticket for this event and then need to cancel, please contact HQ ASAP. HQ will maintain a list of those who have cancelled and wish a refund. Once sales exceed our breakeven number we will start recording refunds. See the full Cancellation and Refund Policy for additional details.

*Capacity: 1000*

#### **Breakfast with Speaker #3:**

**28 August - 7:30am – 9:00am – Speaker TBA**

This is the last group breakfast with speakers offered for this Reunion. While you are enjoying the Marriott's Deluxe Continental fare with your family and friends, we've scheduled about a 20-minute information presentation by a VHPA member or subscriber on the Vietnam War related topic. The three 'breakfasts with speakers' we had in Louisville were well received, so we decided to offer them again this year. Additionally with the hotel's breakfast buffet being over \$25 per person, we thought having a private breakfast with other attendees for \$22 might be a good thing. Finally we've scheduled each breakfast to conclude prior to any other Reunion tours or events for the day; Golf is the single exception. So you'll know you can have a cup of coffee and something to eat before heading out for the day and you won't miss the bus!

#### **Arlington National Cemetery & Special Memorial Dedication: 28 August - 8:30am – 12:30pm**



Join your friends for a once-in-a-life time event at Arlington National Cemetery. The VHPA will dedicate a VHPA Memorial Stone and will be contributing a living tree at Arlington. This will be a very special ceremony as the VHPA lays this significant memorial

stone (5ft wide by 4 ft high). The ceremony will include many distinguished speakers, music and memories. Following the ceremony you may return to the hotel, or you may stay and visit Arlington Cemetery on your own. You may choose to walk through the cemetery or return to the Visitor's Center to purchase a tram pass (not included in the tour price). The tram stops at the Kennedy Grave Site, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and Arlington House. There will be later buses departing Arlington Cemetery to return to the hotel for those who wish to stay. Bus schedule will be posted at the reunion.

*Important: Arlington has a very strict dress code for any ceremonies at the Cemetery. You will NOT be able to participate if you are wearing inappropriate attire.*

*Arlington Cemetery Dress Code Requirements: Men: Collared shirt, casual slacks, and appropriate shoes. Women: blouse, casual slacks, skirt or dress, and appropriate shoes. The following are not permitted: Blue jeans, patched jeans, shorts of any kind, tank tops, halter tops, tee shirts, shower type shoes, tube tops, shirts that expose the midriff.*

#### **Monuments by Water Via Alexandria #3:**

**28 August – 9:00am – 3:00pm**

#### **Monuments by Water Via Georgetown #4:**

**28 August – 10:00am – 4:00pm**

*See Description on 27 August*

#### **National Museum of the Marine Corps #2:**

**28 August – 9:30am – 3:30pm**

*See Description on 26 August*

#### **Marine Corps Evening Parade:**

**28 August - 5:00pm – 11:00pm**



Board your coach for the short ride to 8th & I for the "Evening Parade". This is the "Oldest Post of the Corps," established in 1801, and has performed military reviews and ceremonies since its founding. The present-day "Evening Parade", was first conducted on July 5, 1957. The parade features music and precision marching, as well as "The President's Own" United States Marine Band and "The Commandant's Own" United States Marine Drum & Bugle Corps. The parade also features the Marine Corps Color Guard, the Marine Corps Silent Drill Platoon, Ceremonial Marchers, and Sgt. Chesty XII, the official mascot of the Corps. The arrival must be at least 90 minutes prior to the Parade start. Included in the tour price is a "boxed dinner" for you to enjoy at your seat while waiting for the parade to start.

*Capacity: 700*

**Movie Night: 28 August – 7:00pm – 8:30pm**

VHPA Member Gerry Berry will introduce the newly released film produced by PBS and American Experience titled “Last Days in Vietnam”. The film is scheduled for national broadcast release in April 2015 after showing in select theaters starting in the fall of 2014. Gerry served in HMM-165 during both Operations Eagle Pull and Frequent Wind. Ambassador Graham Martin flew out of Vietnam in Gerry’s helicopter. The film chronicles the heroic efforts of American diplomats, soldiers mostly from the US Marine Corps and Navy, plus Air America and what was left of the South Vietnamese Air Force to save as many South Vietnamese lives as possible during the chaotic final days of the Vietnam War.

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**Pre-Memorial Service Breakfast:**

**29 August – 7:30am – 8:45am – Speaker TBA**

While you are enjoying the Marriott’s Deluxe Continental fare with your family and friends, we have scheduled a speaker presentation.

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**Memorial Service: 29 August – 9:00am – 9:30am**

The traditional Memorial Service is organized by the VHPA EC Member John Shafer. This is the perfect setting and opportunity to reflect and remember our fallen.

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**Annual Business Meeting: 29 August – 10:00am – 12:30pm**

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

Only VHPA Members in good standing (meaning the former pilot is dues current and HQ has a valid mailing address for him in the database) may attend. You must present your ticket at the door. VHPA Members in good standing who are not attending the Reunion can also attend the ABM but must obtain a ticket from the Registration Desk.

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**Kennedy Center for the Arts: 29 August – 10:00am – 2:00pm**



While the VHPA members are in the Annual Business Meeting, we have planned a special trip to the Kennedy Center for the Arts for spouses/guests. Situated on the banks of the Potomac

River, the John F Kennedy Center is a living tribute to President Kennedy. The tour highlights the historic events that led up to the establishment of a national cultural center, as well as an interactive exhibit on the life of President John F. Kennedy. Your tour will lead you through the majestic Hall of States, Hall of Nations, and five of the Center’s main theaters, including its three grand performance halls (these are subject to availability and performance schedules). Highlights include the magnificent Opera House chandelier, a gift from Austria that measures 50 feet across; the 3,700 tons of marble from Carrara, Italy lining the walls of the Hall of Nations, and the gorgeous Israeli Lounge. These gems reflect the many extraordinary gifts from the governments of more than 60 countries that make the Kennedy Center truly an international destination. The tour concludes on the top floor of the Center where you will enjoy lunch with your friends. The KC Café has some of the most incredible views of Washington, DC. After lunch, there will be ample time to visit the extensive gift shop, or just stroll the roof-top walkways and enjoy the spectacular views of the city.

*Capacity: 150*

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**Closing Banquet:**

**Registered Adults –**

**29 August**

**5:45pm – 10:30pm**

This ticket is for an adult banquet meal (beef, fish or vegetarian) plus the dance band for someone who has also paid the adult reunion registration fee.

The highlight for most reunion attendees is our closing banquet on Saturday night. This is the only “dress up” occasion of the reunion. It is a celebration of our time together opening with a tribute to our missing men and closing with the change of command from our current president, Bob Hesselbein to the new one, Clyde Romero after the meal.

For those who just want to visit after the closing remarks, please know you can stay at your table until 11 pm. Cash bars remain open until they are no longer needed.

For those who want to dance or listen to music, there will be a cabaret dance band playing tunes from our youth in the Ballroom. Those who want to visit with their friends without having to talk over the music and dancing are welcome to use the tables and chairs in the O’Club immediately across from Salon 2.

As per the finer Reunion traditions, the Band has a current copy of the Official VHPA Song List. A smaller ensemble from the band, probably a trio, will perform during cocktails,



5:15-5:45 pm. Following the VHPA President's closing remarks, the full Band will play a 90-minute set, take a 15-20-minute break, and conclude with a 45-minute set.

For anyone that is interested, time will be allotted for photo opportunities with the Missing Man Table and the large American flag. Please sign up at the Welcome Desk prior to 4:00pm on Saturday, 29 August.

#### Closing Banquet:

##### Registered Child <10 – 29 August – 5:45pm – 10:30pm

This ticket is for a "kid's meal" for the closing banquet. A word of warning is appropriate here. This meal is designed for children under the age of 10 years old. Trust us when we say that this meal will NOT MAKE a teenager happy at all!

A few years ago the only meal option available was an adult meal for children. Rather expensive indeed. While this price is still rather high for a "kid's meal" it is much more attractive than paying for an adult meal for a 10-year old!

#### Closing Banquet:

##### Non-Registered Guest – 29 August – 5:45pm – 10:30pm

This ticket is for an adult banquet meal (beef, fish, or vegetarian) plus the dance band for someone who has NOT PAID the adult reunion registration fee. Please review the Non-Registered Banquet Guest (NRBG) details in the Reunion Information at [www.vhpa.org](http://www.vhpa.org).

A non-registered guest enjoys all the features/details described in the registered adult narrative above.

## This year's Gold Star Family Breakfast

By Julie Kink

"This was an amazing experience we will never forget. We wanted to learn more about our uncle as a person. We now know he died doing what he loved to do - fly helicopters."

"Thank you for allowing me to experience one of the most poignant and moving experiences of my life. It has made me want to learn more about my dad and the experiences he had while in Vietnam."

Those comments, from two of the families who attended last year's VHPA Reunion, summarize the huge impact that veterans like YOU (yes, you!) can have when you share memories of a fallen buddy with his family.

Nearly 2,200 helicopter pilots who flew in the Vietnam War lost their lives. Did you know one of them in flight school or in Vietnam? Have you contacted his family to let them know you still remember him?

The Gold Star Family Breakfast gives you an excuse to make that long-overdue call, or send that much-postponed email. Invite them to attend the VHPA Reunion and the Gold Star Family Breakfast with you! You can share not only a meal, but memories of those whose lives were lost - the young aviators who died way too soon.

Each year, I seek out families of the KIA and MIA helicopter pilots who were from the area near where the reunion is taking place, to invite them to the Gold Star Family Breakfast. I tell them, "You should come - you will be welcomed." But I didn't personally know their dad . . .

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their brother . . . their uncle. I can only tell them of the camaraderie I have experienced, as a Gold Star sister myself. YOU can do a whole lot more than I can.

I encourage YOU to invite Gold Star families that you're already in touch with - wherever they happen to live. Bring them to the breakfast with you. It will help them learn what their loved one did in Vietnam. It will let them know they're not alone in their loss. And it will give YOU a chance to say, "Hey, I still miss the guy."

This year, the Gold Star Family Breakfast will be held on Wednesday, August 26 during the reunion. Even if you aren't bringing a Gold Star Family with you - please come to the breakfast to learn what it's all about. It will give you new insight into what families experienced during the Vietnam War. This is the year to do it. If you need encouragement I'll be happy to oblige. Just send me an email.

*See you there!*

Little sister,  
Julie Kink

sister of WO David Kink

C Troop 1/9th CAV KIA 8-3-1969

member of Family Contacts Committee

[www.VirtualWall.org/contacts](http://www.VirtualWall.org/contacts)

# VHPA'S 32nd Annual Reunion ~ Washington, DC ~ August 25-30, 2015

## NATIONAL REUNION REGISTRATION FORM

For information and to register online: [www.vhpa.org](http://www.vhpa.org) or mail completed form to:

VHPA Headquarters, 2100 North Highway 360, Suite 907, Grand Prairie, TX 75050

Toll Free: (800) 505-VHPA (8472)

Email: [HQ@vhpa.org](mailto:HQ@vhpa.org)

Fax: (817) 200-7309

Member name:	DOB:	Member No:
Address:	Telephone:	Wheelchair? <input type="checkbox"/> yes
City:	State:	Zip: Address Change? <input type="checkbox"/> yes
Email address:	Phone:	
Spouse name:	City:	DOB: 21 or older? <input type="checkbox"/> yes Wheelchair? <input type="checkbox"/> yes
Guest name:	City:	DOB: 21 or older? <input type="checkbox"/> yes Wheelchair? <input type="checkbox"/> yes
Guest name:	City:	DOB: 21 or older? <input type="checkbox"/> yes Wheelchair? <input type="checkbox"/> yes
Guest name:	City:	DOB: 21 or older? <input type="checkbox"/> yes Wheelchair? <input type="checkbox"/> yes
Guest name:	City:	DOB: 21 or older? <input type="checkbox"/> yes Wheelchair? <input type="checkbox"/> yes

EVENT	DATE	NUMBER	PRICE	TOTAL
Registration through 6/30/2015 **			\$ 25 EA	
Registration for under age 21 **			\$ 15 EA	
Registration 7/1/2015 and after			\$ 35 EA	
Mall & Monuments Shuttle	Aug 25-29		\$ 26 EA	
Memorial Collections Tour #1	Aug 25		\$ 26 EA	
Pentagon Tour #1	Aug 25		\$ 17 EA	
Memorial Collections Tour #2	Aug 25		\$ 26 EA	
Pentagon Tour # 2	Aug 25		\$ 17 EA	
Memorial Collections Tour #3	Aug 25		\$ 26 EA	
Early Bird Gathering w/Entertainment	Aug 25		N/C EA	
KIA/MIA Gold Star Breakfast	Aug 26		\$ 22 EA	
Breakfast w/Speaker #1 SGT Barry McAlpine	Aug 26		\$ 22 EA	
Memorial Collections Tour #4	Aug 26		\$ 26 EA	
Gettysburg Tour	Aug 26		\$ 48 EA	
Pentagon Tour #3	Aug 26		\$ 17 EA	
Mt. Vernon #1	Aug 26		\$ 52 EA	
Writers Presentation	Aug 26		N/C EA	
Museum of the Marine Corps Quantico #1	Aug 26		\$40 EA	
Mt. Vernon #2	Aug 26		\$52 EA	
Memorial Collections Tour #5	Aug 26		\$26 EA	
Pentagon Tour # 4	Aug 26		\$17 EA	
Memorial Collections Tour #6	Aug 26		\$26 EA	
1st Time Attendee Reception	Aug 26		N/C EA	
Welcome Reception w/ Entertainment	Aug 26		N/C EA	
Golf Outing - Andrews South Golf Course	Aug 27		\$121 EA	
VHPA Legacy Breakfast	Aug 27		\$22 EA	
Water Cruise # 1 via Alexandria	Aug 27		\$38 EA	
Mt. Vernon #3	Aug 27		\$52 EA	
National Archives College Park Tour	Aug 27		\$26 EA	
Water Cruise # 2 via Georgetown	Aug 27		\$38 EA	
Mt. Vernon #4	Aug 27		\$52 EA	
Air and Space Museum Udvar-Hazy Dinner	Aug 27		\$143 EA	
Air and Space Museum Udvar-Hazy Dinner-Child	Aug 27		\$100 EA	
Breakfast w/Speaker #3	Aug 28		\$22 EA	
ANC Memorial Dedication	Aug 28		\$26 EA	
Water Cruise #3 via Alexandria	Aug 28		\$38 EA	
Museum of the Marine Corps Quantico #2	Aug 28		\$40 EA	
Water Cruise #4 via Georgetown	Aug 28		\$38 EA	
US Marine Corp Evening Parade	Aug 28		\$40 EA	
Movie Night - "The Last Days in Vietnam"	Aug 28		N/C EA	
Pre-Memorial Service Breakfast	Aug 29		\$22 EA	
Memorial Service	Aug 29		N/C EA	
Spouse/Guest Event at Kennedy Center for the Arts	Aug 29		\$55 EA	
Closing Banquet - Adult	Aug 29		\$75 EA	
Closing Banquet - Child	Aug 29		\$19 EA	
Non-Registered Guest at Banquet	Aug 29		\$85 EA	
Total From Sidebars				
VHPA Dues (if not dues current) *** 1 year @ \$36 or 3 years @ \$99			\$36/\$99	
Life Membership (Call HQ for exact amount) **				
2015 CD Directory Fee *** (# of years x \$10)			\$10 EA	
2015 Paper Directory Fee *** (# of years x \$15)			\$15 EA	
GRAND TOTAL				

Aug 25 Group Dinners	
Café Pardadiso @ \$62	\$
Lebanese Taverna @ \$56	\$
Open City Diner @ \$58	\$
Petit Plats @ \$62	\$

Aug 26 Group Dinners	
Café Pardadiso @ \$62	\$
Lebanese Taverna @ \$56	\$
Open City Diner @ \$58	\$
Petit Plats @ \$62	\$

Banquet Meal	
___ Beef ___ Fish ___ Pasta	
Banquet Seating Preference	
_____	

___ S @ \$18 ___ M @ \$18 ___ L @ \$18	
___ XL @ \$18 ___ XXL @ \$19 ___ XXXL @ \$20	
T-Shirts Total \$ _____	

Voluntary Contributions:	
Gold Star Sponsorship @ \$22	\$
Membership Fund @ \$10	\$
Reunion Sponsorship @ \$10	\$
Scholarship Fund @ \$10	\$
Vietnam War Museum @ \$10	\$

**IMPORTANT:** Please review the details of the Refund Policy, including the limited opportunity to purchase a Refund Guaranty available only on a one-time basis at the time of registration, which is posted online at the VHPA website: [www.vhpa.org](http://www.vhpa.org)

**REFUND GUARANTEE FEE**  
10% of Total Events \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**OFFICIAL REGISTRATION CANCELLATION**  
**DATE IS CLOSE OF BUSINESS, CST**  
**FRIDAY, 14 AUGUST 2015**

<b>CREDIT CARD PAYMENT</b>
MC/Visa # _____
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" with your completed form

\* Date of Birth must be provided for each person registered. Certain tours require this info.  
 \*\* Each person 21 & older must pay the full registration fee, except banquet-only guests.  
 \*\*\* Denotes a contribution, donation or fee that is not refundable as part of any cancellation process.

# Official Schedule

Visit our website at: [www.VHPA.org](http://www.VHPA.org) for the latest details and to register for the reunion

Time

Event

## Monday, August 24

4:00 pm - 8:00 pm	Welcome Desk & Pre-registration & T-shirt Pickup
4:00 pm - 8:00 pm	Registration & Tour Desk

## Tuesday, August 25

7:30am - 8:00pm	Welcome Desk & Pre-registration & T-shirt Pickup
7:30 am - 12:00 pm	Registration & Tour Desk
8:00 am - 11:00 am	Memorial Collections Tour #1
9:00 am - 12:00 pm	Pentagon Tour #1
10:00 am - 5:00 pm	Mall & Monuments Shuttle
11:00 am - 11:00 pm	O' Club open
11:15 am - 2:15 pm	Memorial Collections Tour #2
1:00 pm - 4:00 pm	Pentagon Tour # 2
1:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Registration & Tour Desk
2:30 pm - 5:30 pm	Memorial Collections Tour #3
5:00 pm - 7:00 pm	Group Dinners @ Café Paradiso
5:00 pm - 7:00 pm	Group Dinners @ Lebanese Taverna
5:00 pm - 7:00 pm	Group Dinners @ Open City Diner
5:00 pm - 7:00 pm	Group Dinners @ Petit Plats
6:00 pm - 8:00 pm	Registration & Tour Desk
7:00 pm - 10:00 pm	Early Bird Gathering w/Entertainment

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## Wednesday, August 26

7:30am - 8:00pm	Welcome Desk & Pre-registration & T-shirt Pickup
7:30 am - 9:00 am	KIA/MIA Gold Star Breakfast
7:30 am - 9:00 am	Breakfast w/Speaker #1 SGT Barry McAlpine
7:30 am - 12:00 pm	Registration Desk
8:00 am - 11:00 am	Memorial Collections Tour #4
8:00 am - 6:00 pm	Gettysburg Tour
9:00 am - 12:00 pm	Pentagon Tour #3
9:00 am - 3:00 pm	Mt. Vernon #1
9:30 am - 11:30 am	Writers Presentation
9:30 am - 3:30 pm	Museum of the Marine Corps @ Quantico #1
11:00 am - 5:00 pm	Mt. Vernon #2
11:15 am - 2:15 pm	Memorial Collections Tour #5
1:00 pm - 4:00 pm	Pentagon Tour # 4
1:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Registration
2:30 pm - 5:30 pm	Memorial Collections Tour #6
5:00 pm - 7:00 pm	Group Dinners @ Café Paradiso
5:00 pm - 7:00 pm	Group Dinners @ Labanese Taverna
5:00 pm - 7:00 pm	Group Dinners @ Open City Diner
5:00 pm - 7:00 pm	Group Dinners @ Petit Plats
7:00 pm - 8:00 pm	1st Time Attendee Reception
7:30 pm - 10:00 pm	Welcome Reception w/ Entertainment

# Of Events

Time	Event
<b>Thursday, August 27</b>	
6:30 am - 3:00 pm	Golf Outing - Andrews South Golf Course
7:00 am - 12:00 pm	Registration Desk
7:30 am - 9:00 am	VHPA Legacy Breakfast
8:00 am - 5:00 pm	Welcome Desk & Pre-registration & T-shirt Pickup
9:00 am - 3:00 pm	Monuments By Water Cruise # 1 via Alexandria
9:00 am - 3:00 pm	Mt. Vernon #3
1:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Registration Desk
2:00 pm - 4:00 pm	Quilters Show & Tell
5:30 pm - 11:30 pm	Air and Space Museum Udvar-Hazy Dinner
<b>Friday, August 28</b>	
8:00 am - 12:00 pm	Consolidated Reg, Pre-Reg & T-Shirts
7:30 am - 9:00 am	Breakfast w/Speaker #3
8:30 am - 12:30 pm	Arlington National Cemetery Memorial Dedication
9:00 am - 3:00 pm	Monuments By Water Cruise #3 via Alexandria
9:30 am - 3:30 pm	National Museum of the Marine Corps @ Quantico #2
10:00 am - 4:00 pm	Monuments By Water Cruise # 4 via Georgetown
1:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Consolidated Reg, Pre-Reg & T-Shirts
5:00 pm - 11:00 pm	US Marine Corp Evening Parade
7:00 pm - 8:30 pm	Movie Night - "The Last Days in Vietnam"
<b>Saturday, August 29</b>	
7:30 am - 8:45 am	Pre-Memorial Breakfast
9:00 am - 9:30 am	Memorial Service
9:00 am - 12:00 pm	Consolidated Reg, Pre-Reg & T-Shirts
10:00 am - 12:30 pm	Annual Business Meeting
10:00 am - 2:00 pm	Spouse/Guest Event at Kennedy Center for the Arts
12:30 pm - 1:00 pm	Presidents Recognition
12:30 pm - 1:30 pm	Chapter President Meeting
12:30 pm - 11:00 pm	O Club open
5:45 pm - 10:30 pm	Closing Banquet & Dance

## REUNION CONTINUING EVENTS:

Unit Mini-Reunions and Unit TOC's are scheduled daily at various times - See schedule posted in the Registration Area

The Vendor Room - Opens August 25 at 1:00pm and remains open daily from 9:00am-5:00pm through the last day of the Reunion, August 29th

The O'Club - Open from 11:00am - 11:00pm on August 25 through August 28, open 12:30pm - 11:00pm on August 29

Mall & Monuments Shuttle will run August 26 through August 28 10:am-5:00pm



## WHAT A DIFFERENCE A PHOTO MAKES.

Vietnam Veterans Memorial

STEPHEN J ECKLE

Stephen J. Eckle  
Columbus, OH



Stephen J. Eckle  
Columbus, OH

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- Tom Tesmar, Crusader 23



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## Membership application/change of address

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NAME

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HOME PHONE: ( )

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OCCUPATION:

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

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

☐ Add \$15 for printed Membership Directory \*\* ☐ Add \$10 for Membership Directory on CD \*\*

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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?

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

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

## BAUGH, Russell E.

Russell E. Baugh, COL USA (Ret.) was born in Baxter Springs, Kansas. Because of his fascination with airplanes from an early age, he entered the U.S. Army Air Corps in 1943, and completed his pilot training in August 1944 at Craig Field in Alabama. He was a training pilot in Colorado Springs, Colorado through the end of WWII.

Col. Baugh subsequently served in the Air Force for several years, but transferred to the U.S. Army in order to have more flying time. He had two tours of duty in Korea – one from 1950 – 1951 and one from 1969 – 1970. During the first tour, he became a charter member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars in Pohang, Korea at the urging of his brother Dale, who was serving there at the same time in the Seabees.

Subsequent postings in the U.S. included Omaha, Nebraska, where Col. Baugh completed his Bachelor's degree in Military Science; Leavenworth, Kansas; Fort Sill, Oklahoma; and Fort Rucker, Alabama, where he was cited by Major General Delk Oden for his accomplishments in the field of Rotary Wing training throughout the world from 1951 - 1968. From 1966 – 1969, Col. Baugh trained more than 12,178 aviators for a total of 885,837 flight hours.

During his tour of duty in Vietnam from 1965 – 1966, he served as pilot for Major General William Westmoreland, among others. He also had several tours of duty in Germany. During the first one he met his wife Elisabetha; they were married in 1956.

During his second tour of duty in Korea from 1969 - 1970, Col. Baugh served as the Commanding Officer of the 7th Infantry Battalion for six months, and as Special Assistant to the Division Commander. He received several commendations and letters of appreciation from the local Yang-Ju County and national Korean government for his "outstanding contribution to the promotion and strengthening of the ties of friendship existing between our two countries."

Col. Baugh was very fortunate to be able to attend several ceremonies held at Fort Campbell, Kentucky in honor of the 50th Anniversary of the Korean War, and received a commemorative medal in 2000, 2001 and 2002 presented by MG (Ret.) Seung-Woo Choi of the Korean Army.

His final assignment with the U.S. Army was as the Director of Army ROTC at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee; during

1974 – 1978, Col. Baugh worked with many fine cadets in the program. After his retirement in 1978, Col. Baugh finished his law degree at the Nashville Law School, and worked eight years for Service Merchandise in their Property Management division. During his retirement, he was asked by the Governor of Tennessee to serve as the Native-American representative to the state Archeological Advisory Council.

During his 35 years of service, Col. Baugh was the proud recipient of a number of medals and commendations, including among many others the WWII Victory medal, the Legion of Merit, the Defense Meritorious Service medal, the Meritorious Service medal, 10 air medals, the Army Commendation medal, the Republic of Vietnam Civil Action medal, a Good Conduct medal, the Korean Service Medal, the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry, the Army Meritorious Unit Commendation, Republic of Korea War Service medal and the Military Outstanding Service medal. A Master Army Aviator, he was recognized for this contribution to Army Aviation at a ceremony at the U.S. Army Aviation Center of Excellence at Fort Rucker, AL in 2010, and was named a pioneer of Army Aviation with his name inscribed on the monument dedicated to The Originals.

Col. Baugh was a life and founding member of the Army Aviation Association of America (AAAA), and a proud member of the Korean War Veterans Association, the Army Otter Caribou Association, the Order of Daedalians, the Quiet Birdmen, the Experimental Aviation Association (EAA), and the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA).

## DYER, Robert Lee,

Robert Lee Dyer, MAJ, USAF (Ret) of Great Falls, Montana, passed away on November 20, 2014 of natural causes. Interment of ashes will take place in January 2015 at Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, DC. At the age of 20, Robert enlisted in the US Air Force. He was a Command Helicopter Pilot during the Vietnam War and was awarded the Purple Heart, among many other medals and commendations. Robert obtained the rank of Major and retired as such in 1970.

Robert was married to the love of his life and mother of his four wonderful children in 1956 in Nashville, TN. He and Patricia

Owens were blessed with 58 years together and in that time were able to enjoy many of life's riches. They shared the responsibility and joy of owning a local business, Hobbyland, where Robert freely tinkered with the many hobbies he loved. Each of their children worked at Hobbyland and are all very proud of the work ethic they were taught. Outside of work, Robert loved to watch his kids playing sports in High School. Aside from his interests at the business he spent his time in several diverse activities, such as playing the organ and accordion at church, was a member of the Model Railroaders Club and Montana Pioneer Classic Auto Club.

Robert is survived by his wife, Patricia Dyer, four sons, one sister, one brother as well as ten grandchildren.

**FEATHERSTONE, Stephen E.** ~ Graduated flight training with Flight Class 56-14, flew in Vietnam with HHC/1 AVN/1 INF DIV (1965-66), HHC/158th AVN/101 ABN (1971) and HHC/101 CAG, 101 ABN (1972)

Stephen Elvin (Bud) Featherstone, age 86, our much loved husband, father, grandfather, brother and friend passed away peacefully on October 12, 2014 in his home in American Fork, Utah surrounded by those he cared for deeply.

Stephen was born September 12, 1928 in Salt Lake City, Utah; the oldest of eight children. He graduated from South High School in 1947, went to Utah State University with a football scholarship, continued to play for the University of Utah, attended the Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth as a student and faculty staff and then received his degree in business from the University of Nebraska at Omaha in 1969. He married his sweetheart, Eva Louise Romney in the Utah Logan Temple on August 5, 1949 and together they raised three sons that he loved dearly.

Stephen joined the Army in 1955 where he received numerous medals and awards, including the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Legion of Merit and three Bronze Stars. He served in Korea and two tours in Vietnam where he commanded the 158th Combat Assault Helicopter Battalion, of the 101st Airborne Division. He retired in 1975 as a Lieutenant Colonel, Master Army Aviator, an Airborne Jump Master and an Army Ranger. He was the Executive Vice President of the Utah Home Builders Association in the



Greater Salt Lake Region and then became an Independent Business Consultant until his retirement.

Stephen loved the gospel and was a faithful servant in many LDS church callings and positions. In January 1995 he was called to be a Sealer in the Salt Lake Temple and then as Second Counselor in the Presidency of the Mount Timpanogos Utah Temple in 2003. He was blessed upon his release from the temple presidency to continue to serve as a Sealer for the Mount Timpanogos Utah Temple for several more years.

He cherished his retirement years spending time with his family and at his cabin. He enjoyed playing golf, cheering for BYU football, serving others and writing. Above all the great things he accomplished in his life, Steve's greatest joy came from being a devoted husband, father and being called grandpa. Stephen is survived by his eternal companion, Eva Lou, his children, 15 grandchildren, 22 great grandchildren and his six siblings.

Condolences may be sent to the family at [www.warenski.com](http://www.warenski.com). The family asked to please make a donation to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints General Mission Fund or Humanitarian Fund.  
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**FOSTER, James Elmer** ~ Graduated flight training with Flight Class 60-5, he flew in Vietnam with B/227th Avn, 1st Cav Div from 1966-67.

James Elmer Foster, LTC, USA (Ret) - It is with extreme sorrow and heavy hearts that the family of James E Foster announces his unexpected passing at Penrose Memorial Hospital secondary to injuries suffered in an automobile accident. Jim as many knew him and "Po" as his grandchildren lovingly called him was a husband, mentor, dad, brother, and wonderful friend to those lucky enough to have had his acquaintance.

He was a proud retiree of the US Army and served bravely in Vietnam for two tours as a helicopter pilot where he returned home as a wounded veteran. He reached the level of Lieutenant Cornell before retiring after many years of service. As mentioned; Jim was a mentor not only to his family, but to others looking to serve in the US Armed Forces. He was always available to offer both advice and actual help when needed and served as a problem solver within our family.

The world feels a little less safe without him

looking out for all of us. There are so many things to say about this special man; he would probably want us to mention that he graduated from Tennessee Tech, worked for Georgia Power for many years, but we think that his greatest accomplishment was his impact on all of us.

James was preceded in death by his brother Ronnie and his son Scott. He is survived by his wife Barbara, three daughters, four sons, twenty three grandchildren, and two great grandchildren. Inurnment will be at a later date at Arlington National Cemetery. The family would appreciate in Jim's honor that any memorial gifts are made to The Wounded Warrior Program.

## HULEN, Howard P.

Howard P. "Jake" Hulen, CW4, USA (Ret). Our dad, Jake, passed away on November 8, 2014 after battling cancer for 20 years. He was very courageous throughout. Dad was always a fighter and a strong, determined man but he lost the final battle. Thankfully his pain has ended and he is finally at peace. Dad was born in Hallsville, Missouri, he was predeceased by his first wife, Barbara, the mother of his children.

After graduating from high school, he joined the U.S. Army and spent time at Fort Ord and Fort Lewis before attending the Officer Training School at Fort Riley, Kansas, where he was awarded a commission as First Lieutenant. Following two years of service in Germany as a tank commander, he returned to the states and retired from active duty with the rank of Captain, but he remained in the reserves and never lost touch with the military. He had a love for flying and at the age of 38 volunteered to go to Vietnam to put his skills to good use and serve his country. He flew over 385 missions during his tour of Vietnam, was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star, 22 citations, Army Commendation Medal and many more. He retired as a Chief Warrant Officer 4 from the National Guard at Camp Murray, WA, then went on to continue working with the military in a civilian capacity as the Chief Maintenance Officer in charge of the Army National Guard's helicopters and fixed wing aircraft at Ft. Lewis.

In addition, he worked for a short time as an Air Traffic Controller then spent many years with Douglas Oil Company, Titus Will and Mallon Ford and was an excellent salesman



and Marketing Director. Dad lived many years in the Pacific Northwest, including on the water in Gig Harbor for 10+ years and at Lake Cushman for 15 years. He loved to go fishing and take his boat up to the San Juan Islands for vacation. He had a wonderful sense of humor and was always the life of the party. He loved to tease or tell a joke and had so many stories to tell. He retired finally to Yuma, AZ to be in the sun and warmth and that's where he spent his final days.

Surviving dad are his wife of 40+ years, Judy in Yuma, his 5 children; his two step children plus 11 grandkids and 11 great grandkids. He also had a huge extended family and so many friends that will surely miss him. If you would like to honor him you may donate to one of the many charities that help our veterans, such as the Wounded Warrior Program.

## JAMBON, Ted Rawley ~

Graduated flight training with Flight Class 57-15 and 60-40. He flew in Vietnam with the 18th AHC (1965-66) under the Thunderbird 3 and Scorpion 16 callsigns.



Ted Rawley Jambon, a native of Golden Meadow, LA and resident of Baton Rouge, LA left earth on his last "flight" on Saturday, November 8, 2014 at the age of 81. Ted proudly served in the United States Army and Louisiana National Guard for 25 years as a helicopter and fixed wing pilot. During his career, he served in Germany and Vietnam where he received the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Bronze Star and the Air Medal and the Master Aviation Award. Ted was a true raconteur, never at a loss for a great story or good conversation. He was immensely proud of his Cajun ancestry and was fluent in French. He is survived by his loving wife of 58 years, Diana Robinson Jambon; one daughter, two sons, three grandchildren. He graduated from Louisiana State University receiving two Bachelors of Science Degrees in 1964 and 1969 and Masters of Arts in 1972.

Upon attaining his Master Degree in Early Modern French Political History, his life long career in teaching history began. Ted also enjoyed careers in safety consulting and management. In retirement, he volunteered 15 years at the LSU Rural Life Museum. Ted was a member of the military organizations MOWW and MOAA, L'Assemblee Francaise, Friends of French Studies at LSU, Friends of the Louisiana State Archives, Baton Rouge Genealogy & Historical

# TAPS

Society, the French Table and enjoyed many reunions with the National VHPA. A private burial will be held in Port Hudson National Cemetery. Because of Ted's love of history and community, the family requests that donations be sent to the LSU Rural Life Museum, P.O. Box 14852, Baton Rouge, LA 70898.

**MANN, Michael Herbert.** Graduated Officer Rotor Wing Aviator Course with Flight Class 70-50. He flew in Vietnam with 335th AHC (1971) and with the 175th AHC (1971-72).



Michael H. Mann, LTC, USA (Ret). was born in Louisville, Kentucky and became a resident of Miami, Florida in 1962, passed away on September 27, 2014 @ 0500 hours.

Michael participated in ROTC at the height of Vietnam, when military service was at its least popular. After graduating from the University of Miami with a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology, he was commissioned in the Army in January 1970, and graduated from the Officer Rotor Winger Aviator Course in February of 1971. He served in Vietnam under the Cowboys, 335th, AHC, 8/71-11/71 and with the 175th, AHC, 8/71-2/72, under the callsign Outlaw 18, where he earned the Bronze Star. After he returned home, Michael entered the Army Reserves, serving with 347th Aviation Support Detachment, where he became Airfield Commander. He also served with the 3220th Medical Detachment and continued to hone his skills for the next 20 years, retiring as a Lieutenant Colonel with his Master Aviator Wings, an achievement he was very proud of.

Also, during this time, Michael began his career with the Metro-Dade Police Department, graduating with the title of Most Outstanding Student. His career with the police department spanned 29 years, during which he received countless Certificates of Appreciation for his presentations at numerous Dade County Public Schools and many accommodations for his exceptional contributions to law enforcement in the community. As an Aircraft Operator, Michael trained many of the Police Pilots as they entered the unit, and greatly enjoyed the privilege and opportunity to do so. He loved his career and friends in the department, and

had limitless enthusiasm and dedication for his work. During Hurricane Andrew in 1992, Michael rode out the storm with his partner in a police cruiser with riot helmets on while the hanger and helicopters inside were completely destroyed.

Michael was a great asset to the community and will be missed dearly by his family and friends. He is survived by his wife of 34 years, Karen Mann; one daughter and his beloved brother Thomas W. Mann, the last of the four brothers. Michael's company was enjoyed by all who met him, and he will always be remembered as gracious and easy natured with a quick wit. Michael's wishes were for all Memorials to be made to the DAV.

**MENTZER, Frederick R.** ~ graduated flight school with Flight Class 63-4T, flew in Vietnam with 117th AHC (1954-65), B/25th AVN, 25th INF DIV (1967-68) and the 281st AHC (1968).



Federick Forrest (Fred) Mentzer, MAJ, USA, (Ret), 77, died suddenly November 15, 2014 at his home in Keizer, OR, from complications of heart disease. Fred graduated from flight school in class 63-4T, and retired from the Army as a Major. He served two tours in Vietnam, first with the 117th AHC in 64/65, and later in 67/68 with B/25 AVN, 25 INF., and the 281st AHC.

Fred was a professional helicopter pilot after leaving the Army working for companies in Europe, the Mid East, and in the US. He is survived by his wife of seven years, Karen, his high school sweetheart who he found again after 50 years. Also surviving are two daughters, and several grandchildren and great grandchildren. Another daughter predeceased him.

In retirement he became very interested in computer technology, honing his skills to become proficient with both MAC's and PC's. He was an active member of the Keizer Elks Lodge. Fred's remains were cremated, and inurnment will be held at Arlington National Cemetery on April 14, 2015.

Fred was a founder and one of the driving forces behind the 281st AHC Association. He was well liked and respected by all the members of the Association who knew him, and he will be missed. Our sentiments are reflected here in the following comments

written by his former Company Commander:

*Remembering Major Frederick (Fred) Mentzer*

Fred joined the 281st Assault Helicopter Company, the U.S. Army's first Special Operations Helicopter Company in 1967 and immediately took command of the Wolf Pack Gun Platoon, as the previous commander had been seriously wounded and hospitalized. During 1967/68 Fred continued to develop the Wolf Pack into one of the top weapons platoons in Vietnam. His mission was to protect and support the long-range reconnaissance teams of Project Delta, the members of the ARVN Special Forces Battalion attached to Delta and the flight crews of the 281st AHC.

Fred was an outstanding leader and one who could be counted on to manage his fire teams in a manner that resulted in the Delta forces and the 281st flight crews having a very low casualty rate under his watch. The members of the Wolf Pack held him in high esteem, as did the flight crews who depended on him and his unit to protect them in the performance of highly dangerous Special Operations missions.

During my tour with the 281st I was honored to be among highly skilled young men who performed one of the most dangerous missions of the war, and Fred was one of my most trusted leaders. We all owe him and the members of his beloved Wolf Pack a great debt.

Several years after the end of the war Fred supervised the organization of the 281st AHC Association and served as its first president, webmaster, and editor/publisher of the newsletter. He held Membership Number One. Until his untimely death, Fred was a strong supporter of the 281st. AHC Association, the Special Operations Association, and the VHPA.

As I look back over my service in the military, I realize that those of us who had the honor of serving in the 281st AHC with Fred, and others like him, allowed us to look within for our heroes. I'm confident that I speak for all Intruders when I say that Wolf Pack 36, Frederick Mentzer, Army Aviator, was always above the best and he shall never be forgotten.

John W. (Jack) Mayhew  
Colonel USA Ret.  
281st Commander 1967/68

**MILLER, Charles L.** Graduated flight training with Flight Class 57-2. He flew in Vietnam with A/1/9 CAV, 1st Cav Div (1966), USARV FLT DET ((1966), HHC 214th CAB (1967), HHC/165th CAG (1970-71) and HHC 11th CAG (19721) under, among others, the Dong Tam 6 call-sign.

Charles "Chuck" L. Miller, LTC, USA (Ret) passed away at Bella Vista Transitional Care Center on October 9, 2014 after a courageous battle against complications from three strokes.

The fifth of six children, Chuck was born in a small logging camp in Sulphur Springs, Oregon. When Chuck was 14 his father passed away suddenly, leaving the two youngest children orphans.

In 1946 as WW II was winding down, both Chuck and his younger brother wanted to join the Army Air Corps. On a trip to Salem, Oregon they talked to an Army Air Corps Recruiter who told them they and their 15 year old buddy could sign up if they could get a piece of paper signed by an adult saying they were all 18. The mother of their young sister-in-law was only too glad to oblige, and the Army Air Corps promptly inducted 16-year old Chuck, their 15-year old buddy and Chuck's 14-year old brother George.

Chuck wanted to be an aircraft mechanic but was sent to Heavy Equipment Crane and Shovel School instead. He spent his first enlistment stationed at Harmon Field in Guam. During his first year in Guam, a Major General named William E. Farthing stopped and visited with the young man. Apparently impressed with Chuck's "can do" attitude he put in orders promoting Chuck to "Buck Sergeant" 10 days before Chuck's 17th birthday and 13 months after his enlistment date.

In 1951 Chuck joined the Paratroops and was part of the 82nd Airborne and later the 11th Airborne. Chuck earned his Senior Parachute wings after making 35 jumps. In 1954 he was accepted for OCS (Officers Candidate School) He had to "fess up" and admit his true age and discovered there were only two schools available - Infantry or Artillery. Chuck chose the Infantry because he knew Artillery had advanced math, but the military again knew best and put him into the Artillery School. Many long hours were spent in Study Hall every evening to keep up with the college graduates in his class, but he graduated as one of two in the top 5% of his 1953 class. The 5% ranking earned him the choice of going to the Corps of Engineers.

In 1957 Chuck was sent to Gary Air Force Base in San Marcos, Texas for primary flight training, and Fort Rucker, Alabama for Advanced fixed wing flight training. This was followed by flying helicopters, which he dearly loved, and earning a Master Aviator rating. He was assigned with the 30th Topographical Survey Team and was sent to Iran for a year mapping that country. He spent three years in Italy with the Mediterranean Engineer Division as a pilot and Civil Engineer flying to the Middle East, Africa and Burma.

Chuck completed two tours in Vietnam (1966-67 and 1970-71) with the 1st Air Cav Division and the 9th Air Cav Squadron. During his 1970-71 tour, Chuck was assigned as Airfield Commander of Marble Mountain, Da Nang, relieving the last US Marine Air unit based there. He ended his 24 year career in the US Army as the Regular Army Engineer Advisor to the California National Guard, based out of Santa Rosa and covering San Francisco north to the Oregon border.

His medals and awards include the Distinguished flying Cross, Bronze Star with 2 Oak Leaf Clusters, the Meritorious Service Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, Air Medal with V for Valor and 10 Oak Leaf Clusters, Senior Parachute Wings, Master Aviator Wings (6000+ hours fixed wing, 2000+ rotary wing) Army Commendation Medal, Good Conduct Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, Atlantic Pacific Campaign, World War II Victory Medal, Army of Occupation Medal, National Defense Service Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, Vietnam Service Medal with four Oak Leaf clusters, Armed Forces Reserve Medal, Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal, Republic of South Vietnam Cross of Gallantry Unit Citation with Palm, Republic of Vietnam Civil Action Unit Citation.

Following military retirement, Chuck became a Construction Superintendent for Dart Industries, flew for a regional airline, built custom homes in Camarillo, and was the City of Paso Robles' first full-time Airport Manager, best remembered for putting on Air Shows featuring the USAF Thunderbirds and the USN Blue Angels. After his retirement from the City of Paso Robles, Chuck and his wife moved to Central Oregon and continued their love for travel, returning back to Atascadero in the late 90's.

Chuck was a long time member of the Estrella Warbirds Museum, serving as President twice, The Atascadero Elks Lodge, MOAA, MOWW, VUMS (Veterans of Underage Military Service) and the Vietnam

Helicopter Pilots Association.

Chuck is survived by his loving wife of 42 years, Elizabeth "Betty" Renton Miller, one son, one daughter, two grand children and three great-grandchildren. He is also survived by his sister Donna, his brother, Dwayne and numerous nieces, nephews, cousins and many dear friends. Donations in his memory may be sent in his name to the Estrella Warbirds Museum Aviation Scholarship Fund in Paso Robles, CA.

**NELSON, Ronald K. ~** Graduated flight training with Flight Class 66-23 & 67-1, flew in Vietnam with B/7/17th Cav (1967-68) under the Red 16 call sign



Ronald Kenneth "RK" Nelson passed away Saturday, September 26, 2014, at the age of 67 at the VA hospital in Milwaukee.

He completed flight school with WOC class 66-23/67-1. He deployed to Vietnam with B/7/17 Air Cav in 1967, served with Bravo Troop as RED 16 into 1968 working out of Camp Enari near Pleiku. He was awarded the Air Medal and Purple Heart with Oak Leaf Cluster. He was given 100% service-connected disability about 2008, and died from his service-connected conditions.

*Barbara wrote:* "Ron and I were married during primary flight school at Fort Wolters, and reflecting on our 50 years together I can only say I am so grateful that in 2007 he began treatment for his PTSD at our VA Hospital. The group therapy changed Ron's life and I encourage others to receive treatment if they have PTSD. Our son's full name is David Leonard Nelson. The "David" came from two David's in Ron's Flight class - David W. Timm (died in Vietnam) and David R. Olson. Our son's middle name "Leonard" is for another very special friend from flight school - Leonard Robbins. I would love to hear from others who have memories of my husband. I would particularly love to hear from Bill Warbington - "Warbie" was often at our house during flight school."

Ron is survived by one son and one daughter and three brothers. RK was a commercial photographer for over 35 years and member of the Milwaukee wood turning community. Ron was a man of many talents with a love of learning and teaching. He courageously battled leukemia starting in 2009 and was surrounded by his loving family at his time of passing.

## **PARKER, Allan Charles ~**

Graduated flight training with Flight Class 66-23 & 67-1, flew in Vietnam with A/1/17th CAV (1967-68).

Allan Charles Parker, 73, died Monday, September 1, 2014 in Louisville, Kentucky with his family at his side. He was born in New Bedford, Massachusetts. Allan retired in 2003 after thirty-one years with Bell South (now AT&T) Communications in Louisville.

Allan proudly served his country in the United States Army during the Vietnam War and earned the Air Medal and Purple Heart. Allan loved his wife, girls, grandchildren, and family. He cherished his life with his family and will always be fondly remembered and greatly missed.

Survivors include his wife of 46 years, Marie T. Felten Parker; three daughters, seven grandchildren, his mother and one sister. Contributions in his memory may be made to St. Mary's Catholic Church in New Albany.



## **PARVIN, David E.**

David E. "Bugman" Parvin, MAJ USA (Ret.) - (from the newsletter of the Order of Daedalians). As a former Vice Flight Captain of Wing 18, Dave wore

both Marine Corps and Army wings. He was designated a naval aviator at MNAS Pensacola in 1967 and later a Master Army Aviator.

After graduation from Marine Corps OCS at Quantico in 1966, he served with the USMC and USMC Reserve until April 1969, at which time he joined the Colorado Army National guard and served until 1993. He retired from the Army in 2003. All together Dave recorded flight time in over 75 different types of aircraft, after retiring from COARNG, flew for AirLife Denver, as a helicopter demonstration pilot for MBB (Messerschmitt-Bolkow-Blohm) and as a charter pilot for Rocky Mountain Airways. As of November 2008 when he joined the Order of Daedalians, he'd accrued over 3,000 hours of military flight time and over 7,300 hours of civilian time. On the ground he became a professional sculptor whose talents were in high demand. Blue Skies and Tailwinds, Dave - RIP



*David's Son added this:*

Dad led a full and enriched life. He studied to be a Catholic priest by attending a seminary during high school, and graduated from Seat-

le University with a degree in Biology. He volunteered for and served as helicopter pilot for the Marine Corps in Vietnam, where he was twice shot down. He was very proud to have served with the Purple Foxes of HMM-364. His nickname in Vietnam was Bugman, because of his fascination with capturing and looking at insects. He retired as a Major, and then later flew helicopters for Air Life.

My father saved countless lives during his flying career.

He was a very talented artist that influenced and inspired many people. He was extremely generous and gave his time freely. He had a love for being alive. If he had lived to be a thousand years old, he would not have accomplished everything he wanted to. He will be greatly missed. Brett David Parvin

**PETERS, Donald C. ~** Graduated flight training with Flight Class 66-23 & 67-1. Flew in Vietnam with A/7/17 Cav (1967-68) and 604th TC Co (1971-72).

Donald Curtis Peters of Peyton, CO died on November 16, 2014. Don was born Wheat Ridge CO. and was married to his dear wife Seline for 21 years. Don graduated High School from Charleston, Illinois and also attended North East Junior College in Greeley, CO.

Don honorably served in the Army as a helicopter pilot in Vietnam, where he served two tours. Don loved his country and took great pride of the time he served in the military. Don retired from the Federal Aviation Administration Denver Center where he dedicated 32 continuous years. He is survived by his wife, Seline, three children, eight Grand Children and 3 Great Grand Children. Don liked spending special time with family and friends, enjoyed fishing and had a passion for watching the Denver Broncos. Don will be greatly missed by all that knew him.

**PLUMMER, Ron E. ~** Graduated flight training with Flight Class 66-17, flew in Vietnam with 129th AHC (1966-67) under the Bulldog and Cobra call signs.

Mr. Ronald (Ron) Eugene Plummer, 69, passed away September 29, 2014, at his home with his friends by his side. He was born November 20, 1944, he is survived by his brother, Wesley and his wife, Carol of Colorado.

Ron was a U.S. Marine Corps veteran who served two tours of duty in Vietnam as a helicopter pilot. He joined the N.C. Air National Guard after serving in Vietnam where he

attained the rank of Lt. Colonel before retiring. Ron worked in Gastonia, N.C. as City Executive for First Citizens Bank prior to going to Rock Hill to assume the management of the Rock Hill National Bank Consumer Loan Division. He left RHNB to start his own mortgage lending business; Crown Mortgage in Fort Mill. Ron's ashes were scattered according to his wishes by his brother and friends. Memorials may be made to the Wounded Warrior Program or the York County Animal Shelter.

## **PROCTER, James ~**

Graduated flight training with Flight Class 67-15, he flew in Vietnam with D/1/10th CAV, 4th ID (1967-68) and B/7/17th Cav (1968)



James (Jimmy) Procter was born on 23 Oct 1940 and passed away on 10 Nov 2014. Jim spent 10 years on active with the Army & 23 years with the California Army National Guard. He was with the Army rifle team in Germany & spent a tour in Korea before going flight school as a WOC. He completed a tour in Vietnam, flying OH-23's, UH-1 gunships & AH-1's in 1967 & 1968. He taught at Ft Wolters, Texas in TH-55's until his separation from the Army. He joined the California Army National Guard in 1970 & stayed until his retirement. He is survived by his sisters Victoria & Donna & numerous nephews & nieces. He will be sorely missed by all. The funeral will be held on December 29th at the Riverside California VA Cemetery.

*Sent to us by member Bruce Bridge*

**ROBLES, Fred T.** Graduated flight training with Flight Class 66, flew in Vietnam with the 1010 ABN (1967-68) under the Merlin call sign.

Fred T. Robles passed away Thursday, November 20, 2014. Fred was an Army Veteran serving during the Vietnam War. He was a member of the Eagles Aerie 490, Bellevue Moose, American Legion Post 46, VFW Post 1238, and IBEW #1194. He loved sports cars, was an avid boater, and a member of the Sports Car Club of America.

He is survived by his wife, Alicia whom he married August 11, 1995 in Bellevue, OH; and numerous aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces and nephews. The family requests that memorials be made to the American Heart Association.

**SERIG, Jack** ~ Graduated flight training with Flight Class 55-LFW; he served in the 18thAVN Co. in 1961-1962, and was Platoon Leader, 1st Platoon, of the 281st AHC with the call sign Rat Pack 16 in 1966-1967. He later served in the 10th CAB as adjutant and safety officer.



Jack William Serig, SR, LTC, USA (ret), peacefully transitioned on the evening of October 17 surrounded by love and family after a short illness. He is survived by his loving wife of 64 years, Lourdes Hernandez Serig, his three sons, one daughter, five grandchildren and one great grandchild. His son, Jack, Jr., preceded him in death. He is also survived by his two loving brothers.

The legacy of Jack's life was his love for family and service to country. A decorated Viet Nam veteran, Jack bravely served the United States Army from 1953 until his honorable discharge and retirement from service as a Lt. Colonel in 1972. He completed two tours of Viet Nam, flying DeHavilland 11-place "Otter" aircraft and later as a Flight Platoon Commander in the 281st Assault Helicopter Company commanding UH-1 Huey helicopters on special operations missions in support of the Fifth Special Forces Group. After retirement, he entered employment for the Miami-Dade County Public School System, serving as Director of both Safety and Transportation departments. He was widely respected and greatly admired among his peers, colleagues and employees for his sense of fairness, professional guidance and insistence of safety - above all - for the students and employees of the district.

Mr. Serig's love and dedication to family was legendary, especially with regards to his beloved wife of 64 years and his special-abilities son, Jack Jr., In the 1980's, Mr. Serig assisted in the development and growth of Community Habilitation Center, now the WOW Center in Kendall, and served as the Director of the Board for many years, guiding the growth and development of this education and training facility for special-abilities adults. Mr. Serig will be remembered as a hero for his selfless dedication to God, country and family. His legacy lives on through his children, grandchildren, great grandson and in all who knew him, learned from him and were blessed to be loved by him. Donations are being accepted in his honor at the WOW Center, 11450

S.W. 79th Street, Miami, FL, 33173 or online at <http://wowcentermiami.org>

**SEELY, Raymond Charles** ~ Graduated flight training with Flight Class 67-9 & 67-13. He flew in Vietnam with the 7/1 CAV (a968), B/7/17 Cav (1968-69), B/1/9 CAV, 1 CAV DIV (1970-71 and F/1/9 Cav, 1 CAV DIV (1971) under the Blackhawk and Ruthless Riders callsign.

Raymond Charles Seely was surrounded by his family at home when he passed peacefully into the arms of Jesus, after a long courageous battle with cancer, on October 29, 2014. Raymond was born March 12, 1942 in Billings, MT, he grew up in Spokane and graduated from Shadle Park High School in 1960. In college, Raymond met the love of his life, Luella Marie Johnson, and they wed on February 3, 1962 in Coeur d'Alene, ID. They shared 52 adventurous, loving years together, raising five children in the process.

Major Raymond Seely spent 12 active duty years in the U.S. Army and is a Vietnam Veteran serving two tours as a helicopter pilot. He returned home to Spokane to raise his family a mile from where he grew up. Raymond spent 28 years working at Kaiser Aluminum until retiring in 2001. During his retirement, he spent his leisure time working on model airplanes and fishing. Raymond especially loved hanging out at Clear Lake teaching all 13 of his grandchildren how to fish. He was active in the Knights of Columbus and presided as the president of Vietnam Veterans of America. He is also survived by one brother, one sister, 13 grandchildren, and one great-granddaughter. Please consider donating to Vietnam Veterans of America (vva.org) in his honor.

**SHARPE, Richard A.**

Graduated flight training with flight class 68-511 & 68-17, he flew in Vietnam with the 135th assault helicopter company 1968-1969, under the call sign Taipan 12 and Emu 35. Richard A. Sharpe CW4 USA, (Ret) aged 67, of Downey, California, passed away November 5, 2014 following medical complications after suffering a Quad accident while riding in the desert.



He was born January 22, 1947 in New York, New York. He graduated from Downey high school class of 1965. He graduated from Cal State Long Beach with a BS degree in voca-

tional education.

He was inducted into the army August 26, 1968 and went to helicopter mechanics school and helicopter crew chiefs course. He immediately applied to Warrant Officer flight school and was accepted. Rich flew gunships in Vietnam and along with the various service medals he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, Meritorious service medal, multiple Air medals, Army Commendation medal, and the Vietnamese Gallantry Cross. After duty in Vietnam he served as a flight instructor at Ft. Wolters, Texas. After leaving active duty he flew an addition 20 years with the California National Guard.

He was also a Los Angeles city police officer for 29 and one-half years and flew helicopters for the LAPD for 25 and one half of those years.

He is survived by his wife of 42 years Patti, 5 children and 4 grandchildren. He and Patti attended Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in Downey, California. He was a loving husband, father, grandfather, and a friend to everybody who knew him. He was a truly good man of the highest integrity. He will be sorely missed by all who knew him.

*Submitted by his friend, VHPA Life Member  
Rod Dykhouse*

**STEWART, Harvey E.**

Graduated flight training in 1954 and helicopter training in 1955, was



Commander of the 118th AHC Thunderbirds 1964-65. He was Senior Advisor to an ARVN Division in the Delta 1969-70.

Harvey E. Stewart, COL USA (ret) died August 27, 2014 in Huntsville, Alabama. Harvey was born in Alabama, attended Talladega High School until he enlisted underage in the Army in 1945. Following his term of enlistment he attended Jacksonville State University, where he met and married Travis Stricklin. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Chemistry and an officer's commission in the Army. He later earned a Master of Science degree from Hardin Simmons University in Abilene, Texas. Following his retirement from the Army, he attended Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama, in preparation for his second career as an ordained minister.

Harvey's career as an Army officer spanned 28+ years and included one combat tour in Korea and two combat tours in Vietnam. He

# TAPS

commanded in Field Artillery, as well as aviation units. Harvey logged about 10,000 pilot and instructor hours in the air. After commanding the 118th AHC Thunderbirds, he was selected to receive the Kitty Hawk Memorial Award as Military Aviator of the Year in 1965, the first Army Aviator to be selected for that award.

His military awards and decorations include the Distinguished Service Cross; Purple Heart w/1 Oak Leaf Cluster; Soldiers Medal; Air Medal w/V device & numerals 54; Bronze Star Medal w/V Device and 1 Oak Leaf Cluster; Legion of Merit; Army Commendation Medal; Vietnam Service Medal w/1 Silver Service Star (2 awards); Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry w/Palm (2 awards); Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry w/Gold Star; Master Army Aviator Badge; Parachutist Badge; Combat Infantrymen's Badge; several expeditionary and service medals from areas of service. He received his DSC for his command and actions in the Battle of Dong Xoai up by Song Be in N. III Corps in May of 1965.

Harvey retired from the Army in 1975 and spent the next 39 years in ministry and mission work in more than 75 countries and all of our states. Harvey is survived by his wife of 63+ years, Travis Stricklin Stewart; one son, one daughter, three grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

He was characterized by single-minded determination, boundless enthusiasm, and fearless devotion to God, Country, Family, and Friends. His enthusiasm and positive approach are greatly missed by his family and those he has worked with through the years.

**UNDERWOOD, Donald L.** ~ Graduated flight school with flight class 68-1, in 1968-69 he flew in Vietnam with the 283 Medical Detachment (Dust Off), Air Ambulance under the Dustoff 61 call sign; in 1971 he served a second tour flying fixed wing aircraft in the Command Airplane Company (CAC).



LTC Donald L. Underwood, LTC, USA (Ret), took his last flight on 18 October 2014 in Spring Lake, MI. Don was born in Hickory, NC, at the time of his death he had fought long and hard for over a year battling pancreatic cancer, all with great courage, faith and dignity.

Don's life was filled with enormous accomplishments both in his military career and his

second career with industry. Don attended the University of Southern California, pursuing a degree in Industrial Engineering, prior to entering the US Army. Don graduated with Class 68-1, Rotary Wing flight school, and became a Warrant Officer upon completion of his training in 1968. As with most flight school graduates during this timeframe, Don was sent to Viet Nam where he flew Dust Off with the 283rd Medical Detachment/Air Ambulance, Pleiku. On one fateful day, while attempting to evacuate wounded soldiers from a mountain top fire base, his ship was hit by heavy enemy fire resulting in a loss of aircraft control and subsequent crash. He and the Air Craft Commander, Cpt. Conners (his unit C.O.) were both severely injured. WO Underwood was evacuated to the 71st Evacuation Hospital in Pleiku and eventually to Japan where he quickly recovered and was back with the 283rd Dust Off in only a month's time. Dust Off 61 completed his year-long combat tour in spite of his injuries. Don's second Viet Nam tour (1971) was far less stressful in that he was now flying fixed wing aircraft in the Command Airplane Company (CAC).

In 1971 Don accepted a commission as a 2LT in the Air Defense Artillery branch of the US Army where he commanded a Hawk Missile Battery and served as assistant Battalion Operations Officer. Don completed his BS in Industrial Engineering while in the Army and returned to USC in 1976 to earn a Master's Degree in Operations Research Systems Analysis. Don graduated from the US Naval Test Pilot School in 1980, class 78. His next four years saw him working as an experimental test pilot and Integrated Systems Division Chief in the US Army Aviation Engineering Flight Activity (AEFA) at Edwards AFB, CA. The project for which Don is most famous was a flight test of the Williams Aerial Surveillance Platform (WASP). The vehicle was essentially a cruise missile engine mounted vertically and stabilized only by the pilot shifting his weight. He was one of only two uniformed service members to achieve sufficient proficiency to operate the WASP in free flight. After graduation from the Air Command and Staff College in 1985, Don returned to AEFA as the Director of Fight Test and Deputy Commander. He accrued over 3700 flight hours in 35 models of 24 different types of aircraft.

Don retired from the Army in 1989. His military awards and decorations include: Purple Heart, Legion of Merit, Meritorious Ser-

vice Medal (2nd award), Air Medal (17th award), Army Commendation Medal (3rd award), National Defense Service Medal, Viet Nam Service Medal, Army Service Medal, Overseas Service Medal, Republic of Viet Nam Campaign Medal, Republic of Viet Nam Gallantry Cross Unit Citation (with palm), and Master Army Aviator Wings.

Don's career did not end following military service. He continued to work in the research and development field on advanced aircraft and ground combat vehicle systems concept design, development and multi-disciplinary integration of electronics, software, hybrid-electric technologies and advanced energy management systems for military and industrial markets. He held numerous program leadership positions, initially with the McDonnell Douglas Helicopter Company as the Long Bow Apache Program Manager for Test and Evaluation; later as Director, Airborne Programs at Litton Guidance and Controls, then Director, Advanced Concepts for the DRS Technologies Incorporated, and also in a number of positions with L-3 Communications Combat Propulsion Systems culminating as Vice President of Engineering. Don kept close to the technical world he so loved by establishing X-Winged Consulting, LLC.

A strong supporter of SETP, Don served on the Membership Committee for six years and presented papers at several technical symposia. He was presented the Fairchild Award at the 16th San Diego Symposium for best paper.

Don is survived by his wife Becky, his son Christopher Underwood, daughter Kelly Underwood, sister Drenda Randell, step children Kristin Fisch, Jennifer Hayter, Ben Dewitt, Jeff Dewitt, Abby Moulatsiotis, and six grandchildren.

Donations may be made in Don's memory to the charity he strongly supported, the Central Indiana Teen Challenge, CITC, PO Box 564, Lebanon, IN 46052.

Sent to us by Member Mike Rinehart

**TWIGGS, George E.** ~ Graduated flight training with Flight Class 63, flew in Vietnam with B/229 AVN. 1 CAV DIV (1966-67) and MACV (1970-71) under the Preacher 3 and Preacher 26 callsigns.

George Eugene Twiggs, died at the age of 77 years of a massive heart attack on November 23rd, 2014, in a Homestead, Florida, hospital. Gene was born in Wilmington, N.C., but moved to Toombsboro, Ga., as a child. He

# TAPS

**TWIGGS, George E.** ~ Graduated flight training with Flight Class 63, flew in Vietnam with B/229 AVN. 1 CAV DIV (1966-67) and MACV (1970-71) under the Preacher 3 and Preacher 26 callsigns.

George Eugene Twiggs, died at the age of 77 years of a massive heart attack on November 23rd, 2014, in a Homestead, Florida, hospital. Gene was born in Wilmington, N.C., but moved to Toombsboro, Ga., as a child. He attended Toombsboro High School until he joined the Army in 1954. Gene served in the Army until April 1978, flying helicopters for two tours in Vietnam. He commanded the 205 Attack Helicopter Unit at Fort Benning, Ga., and in Germany for three plus years. He then served as airfield commander at Hunter Army Airfield, Savannah, Ga.

His enthusiasm for life was contagious. He is survived by his wife, Betty M. Twiggs; one daughter, one son, his mother, two stepdaughters, 11 grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, two brothers, and two sisters. Many nieces and nephews also survive. Friends may sign the online register book at [www.joineranderson.com](http://www.joineranderson.com).

Records of the recent deaths of the following seven potential members of the VHPA were gleaned from internet searches within these last two months. All information that the VHPA has for these men may be found at [VHPA.org](http://VHPA.org) or by calling 1-800-505-VHPA. If any of our members have more information please report it to: [HQ@VHPA.org](mailto:HQ@VHPA.org) or call 1-800-505-VHPA (8472).

**BENO, Joseph P. LTC, USMC (Ret)**, departed the pattern on Oct. 22, 2014, last seen on heading and course, full throttle forward, after burners glowing.

**BREWER, Frank Lewis, COL, USMC (Ret.)**, 69, died Monday, November 24, 2014 at his home in Greenville NC

**CAMPBELL, James David**. Graduated flight training with Flight Class 68-6, passed away October 16, 2014.

**GOEBEL, Jerome L., COL, USMC (Ret)**, of Milton, Florida, passed away on Sunday, November 16, 2014. He served in WWII, Korea (2 tours) and Viet Nam.

**MENTZER, Frederick Forrest** passed away on November 15, 2014. He graduated flight train-

ing with Flight Class 63-4T, flew in Vietnam with 117th AHC (1964-65), B/25 AVN, 25th INF (1967-68 and the 281st AHC (1968).

**MILLER, George E.**, US Marine Corps aviator, passed away at home on Saturday, November 15, 2014 surrounded by his family.

**MULLINS, Obie D. SR.** Graduated flight training with Flight Class 64-4W passed away, Tuesday, October 14, 2014, at his home in Germantown, Ohio.

**ROCKEL, Robert (Bob) H, USAF Aviator**, passed away Saturday, November 15, 2014 at Liberty Heights Retirement Community where he lived in Colorado Springs.

**SMITH, Raleigh Merritt**, US Naval Aviator. Raleigh died at home surrounded by his family on Oct. 31, 2014 following a short battle with an aggressive cancer.

**WEST, Kenneth L. LTC, USA (Ret)**, of Springfield MO, passed away at his home on October 8, 2014.

**WOLFE, Ronald Forrest**, died suddenly on November 22, 2014. At his home in Montgomery, Alabama.

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67 - 68 & 70 - 71  
Master Army Aviator, Ret

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# CURRENT VHPA CHAPTERS

## ALASKA CHAPTER

Lynn Kile, President

[REDACTED]

## ARIZONA CHAPTER

Bill Sorenson, President

[REDACTED]

## CALIFORNIA CHAPTER NORTH

Ken Fritz, President

[REDACTED]

## CENTRAL NEW YORK CHAPTER

Tom Mc Millen, President

[REDACTED]

## FORT WOLTERS CHAPTER

Adam Steczko, President

[REDACTED]

## GEORGIA CHAPTER

Bill Mc Rae, President

[REDACTED]

## LOUISIANA GULF COAST CHAPTER

Victor Lent, President

[REDACTED]

## MICHIGAN CHAPTER

Richard Deer, President

[REDACTED]

## UPPER MIDWEST CHAPTER

Bert Leach, President

[REDACTED]

## MONTANA CHAPTER

Todd Brandoff, President

[REDACTED]

## NORTH ALABAMA CHAPTER

Les Haas, President

[REDACTED]

## NEW JERSEY CHAPTER

Pete Purnell, President

[REDACTED]

## NORTH CAROLINA CHAPTER

Brock Nicholson, President

[REDACTED]

## OHIO RIVER LZ CHAPTER

Bob Hamilton, President

[REDACTED]

## OKLAHOMA CHAPTER

John Gaines, President

[REDACTED]

## OLD DOMINION CHAPTER

President: Don Agren

[REDACTED]

## SOUTH DAKOTA CHAPTER

Jim Miles

[REDACTED]

## SOUTH MISSOURI CHAPTER

Bill Thompson, President

[REDACTED]

## ROCKY MOUNTAIN CHAPTER

John P. Hargleroad

[REDACTED]

## THE ALAMO CHAPTER

Chip Brown, President

[REDACTED]

## SOUTH CAROLINA CHAPTER

(Celebrate Freedom) Chapter

Larry Russell, President

[REDACTED]

## SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

Sven Akesson, President

[REDACTED]

## VHPA OF FLORIDA

Frank Hoover, President

[REDACTED]

## WASHINGTON STATE CHAPTER

J.C. Combs, President

[REDACTED]

## HAWAII CHAPTER – Provisional

Ken DeHoff - POC

[REDACTED]

### Notice to all Members of the VHPA

For a limited time, liaison between the National HQ of the VHPA and the Independent Chapters has reverted to John Sorensen of the Chapter Liaison National Committee. John can be reached at 417-759-7487 or via E-Mail at: [jsorensen7106@gmail.com](mailto:jsorensen7106@gmail.com). Feel free to contact John concerning any details on opening your own local Chapter of the VHPA and/or for seeing what assistance is available from HQ to support your efforts.

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

# VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

## ALAMO CHAPTER

Officers for 2015 were elected during our October meeting at the Barn Door Restaurant. The following will take office on January 1: President Dave Whitney; Vice President Ben Treadaway, Secretary Al Flory (re-election), Treasurer John Deer, Sr. Member-at-large Jim Meyers, Intermediate MAL Chic Carter, and Jr. MAL Chuck Oualline.

Al Flory again hosted a great Christmas party in the Sky Lounge at the Army Residence Community on December 12. Over fifty of our members and guests attended and it was, again, a real success. We danced to live music, dined, and even had a few drinks. This is sure to be an annual event.

Tentative plans for 2015 include another trip to the Hangar Hotel in Fredericksburg, Texas, and another bus trip to Luckenbach, Texas – dates are not firm. The next general membership meeting will be at the Barn Door, probably in March. The yearly ceremonies honoring Medal of Honor recipients will be held in Gainesville, Texas, on April 9-12, 2015.

Members should watch for e-mails and check our Chapter website [www.vhpa-alamo.org](http://www.vhpa-alamo.org) in order to participate in any or all of these events. Members are also reminded that 2015 dues are payable on the January 1.

**Chuck Oualline**

## FORT WOLTERS CHAPTER

The March chapter meeting will be held at Logan's Road House restaurant, on Saturday, March 7th, 2015. The address is 948 N.E. Loop 820. The EC will meet at 11:30, followed by the general membership meeting beginning at noon (1200 hours). Flat rate for the meal is \$20 per person. Come early and enjoy the company of your friends. As usual, all are welcomed to attend."

**Adam Steckzo**

## GEORGIA CHAPTER

The Georgia Chapter continues to hold a Saturday morning breakfast meeting every other month. We furnish speakers to high schools, colleges, Boy Scout Troops, other youth organizations, and civic groups who want to learn more about the Vietnam War, from those who participated in it. Newnan High School teaches a course on the Vietnam War, and the Georgia Chapter provides assistance to them whenever possible, such as at the Student-Vet Connect activities held each semester.

Our November guest speaker was Andy Zimmerman. Andy was too young for the Vietnam War. Back in 1982 he flew C-130 missions throughout Southeast Asia for the USAF, out of Clarke AB in the Philippines. In 2007 Andy went to work for Atlantic Southeast Airlines (ASA) in Atlanta. In 2010 he transferred to Air Mekong, the first privately held airline in Vietnam, where he flew the CRJ 900, a 90-seat passenger jet. Air Mekong lasted about three years before somebody pulled the plug and refused to allow them to operate any longer. Andy's presentation included pictures of the airfields they serviced and other points of interest throughout Vietnam. He said the old South Vietnam is dotted with many first class airport facilities, while the North still has only two or three. The people are very friendly, and they love the tourist economy and capitalism.

Our principal activity consists of bi-monthly breakfast meetings. The members who participate really enjoy the opportunity to get together with other combat helicopter pilots, swap war stories, and discuss VA-related information. Most importantly we maintain those bonds that were forged so long ago.

Chapter elections were held at our November meeting. Bob Lanzotti will be our new President. Dick Butler will remain as Vice President, and Gary Earls will remain as Sec/Treasurer. Congrats to Bob. We all know he will do a great job. We extend our thanks to Dick and Gary for agreeing to serve another tour. This will be their third one year extension.

For those former Vietnam Helicopter Pilots in the Atlanta area, who

would like to check us out and/or join our group, please see our web site at [www.ga-vhpa.org](http://www.ga-vhpa.org), for the next meeting date or contact me at

**Bill McRae**

## MICHIGAN CHAPTER

As this is being written, winter has settled in with a vengeance in this area. Not the kind of weather we remember from our tours in RVN. Hopefully it will be more moderate by the time this is published.

Our participation with the Moving Wall in Hamburg Township last Labor Day weekend was a great success. We are looking for another event in 2015 to keep spreading the word about our organization.

Michigan Chapter Members are asked to monitor their emails for details of our next meeting, in the spring. The probable location will be the Log Jam in Grand Ledge. Any member, however, who is able to host a meeting in another area of the state is encouraged to let me know and I'll get the word out.

Keeping members email addresses current is an ongoing process. Please send any updates to me at [richdeer@att.net](mailto:richdeer@att.net).

Chapter members are also reminded that hats, shirts, and other apparel with the Michigan VHPA logo are available online. Links can be found at our website [vhpami.wordpress.com](http://vhpami.wordpress.com) and on our Facebook page at Michigan VHPA.

**Rich Deer, President**

## SOUTH MISSOURI CHAPTER

The fourth quarterly meeting of the South Missouri Chapter of VHPA was held on November 8 at the Keeter Center, located on the campus of the College of the Ozarks. Our membership is very appreciative of the support and reception we receive from the college staff and students, as evidenced by the fact that this is our best attended meeting annually. Among the guests attending, the chapter welcomed Dr. Jerry Davis, President of the College of the Ozarks and Caleb McElvain, student host of John Sorensen on a recent trip to Vietnam, sponsored by the college.

Due to health reason, Chapter President Bill Thompson announced the resignation of the Chapter Vice President and nominated John Wilkinson to fill that vacancy. A motion was made, seconded, and John was elected by acclamation. We welcome John into this leadership position and offer our prayers and support to our ill member. We are thankful to have members willing to step up, help us grow and develop as a chapter, and we look forward to the future that awaits us all.

Dr. Davis addressed our membership and guests, outlining the college's Veterans Education Travel Program. The recent trip to Vietnam was the sixteenth trip of taking veterans, paired with college students, to their areas of service. While this was the first trip to Vietnam, others have been taken to many areas of Europe, the Pacific, and Korea. Additional trips to Vietnam are planned in the future.

Following the meal, John Sorensen made a photo journal presentation of the recent trip to Vietnam. The well-planned itinerary stretched from Can Tho, in the Mekong Delta, to Con Thien and the DMZ. The last stop of the trip was to Hanoi and the Hanoi Hilton, where former POWs John Clark, USAF, and Bill Bailey, USN, were held captive for six and five and a half years respectively. They openly and candidly shared their experiences and the fellow veterans, college staff and students were in awe of these true American heroes.

Our first quarterly meeting of 2015 returns to the Holiday Inn Airport West in Earth City, Missouri (St. Louis area), and will be held on Saturday, March 21. As further details evolve, the information will be posted on our website, [vhpasmo.org](http://vhpasmo.org), so please be sure to check it often for this and other chapter activities.

**Bill Thompson, President**

# VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

## FLORIDA CHAPTER

With Christmas and New Year's over, things are again quieting down here in Florida. Before we know it, families will be off on summer vacation and the snow birds will flock back up north to their summer nests to enjoy the cooler weather. Then we will be back in the busy spring-summer-fall schedule of supporting veteran events all over Florida. As usual, we fully enjoy the warm winter weather here in the tropics. Although it is not as nice in the subtropics which is north of a line running from Tampa to Daytona, it is sure a lot better than up north in winter.

There are several events that we participated in but that had not included in the last Aviator.

Members supported the "Veterans in the Classroom" program in Citrus County Florida from 4 to 14 November by giving talks about the Vietnam War. We did the same for classes at Rockledge High School in Brevard County. We supported a fun event at the Sea Park Elementary School in Titusville, Florida on November 7. The activity was the annual Veterans Day event. This year it was titled "Bring a Vet to School Day." Over one hundred and thirty veterans attended the function, including current, prior, and retired service members, as well as dads and grandparents who had served. All branches of the military were in attendance. In the afternoon, several of our members spoke in classrooms and later the children put on a little program with singing for the veterans. Pastry and coffee was provided for all in the morning and a free lunch was served. Water was provided all day. The Chapter also brought our OH-6 Light Observation Helicopter, which was the hit of the day. Six members of the VHPA of Florida supported the event.

Throughout the morning, class groups of about twenty children at a time, from pre-kindergarten and up, were brought out to view the helicopter and ask questions. The majority of questions were about the mini-gun and the M-60 machine gun which seemed to fascinate the children. The kids thought the helicopter was big, but the adults thought it was small. With Patrick Air Force Base located a few blocks away, there is a large population of military-family children who attend the school. The kids asked so many questions it was hard for the teachers to keep them moving to other exhibits to accommodate the next group. After the scheduled visit, many kids came back and asked even more questions.

On 11 November we supported the Veteran Day parade in Inverness, Florida. We trailered the OH-6 LOACH and also trailered a small helicopter. The small helicopter had previously been used as one of the kiddie rides in a mall. Gary Harrell had his granddaughter



Frank Storm addressing the Board of Directors



From left to right are Dr. Joe Ponds - Vice President, Stan McGlamery - member, Tom Rountree - Chairman of the Board, Tom Tomlinson - Treasurer, and John Hawn - member.



Just starting out in the Inverness parade

ride in the little chopper (It is still operational for 50 cents). Children can get in it and ride when we set it up at events. It is always a hit and we get lots of smiles and laughs, especially when older kids try to get in it and ride. Seven members attended the event along with two wives and five other family members who marched or rode in the parade. Our displays were well-received and got a lot of applause from the spectators. After the parade we all met in a local restaurant and enjoyed a nice late lunch.

We held our monthly board meeting on November 20, in Tampa, Florida. Prior to the meeting most of us met at a local sports bar for lunch. Nineteen people attended the meeting. Tom Rountree, outgoing president at the time, conducted his last board meeting and is now Chairman of the Board. Old business was covered and new business voted on. The meetings are held at the Hillsborough County Veterans Park on Highway 301 between Martin Luther King Boulevard and Highway 60. The park is our home loca-

tion and we keep the OH-6 there when not attending events. We also have three CONEX storage sheds there and memorabilia on loan to the museum.

At that same meeting, Frank Storm, Managing Director of the Hillsborough County Division of Veterans Affairs, gave a talk about some long-range plans. He proposed using the current museum in the park as a VA center and to build a new museum. The park is one of the prettiest Veteran's parks and well worth a side trip if you are in the Tampa area. Concrete paths meander under large oaks along the Tampa River. Visitors will enjoy numerous statues, military equipment, a museum and large displays commemorating the different wars. The Vietnam, Korean, Desert Storm, and World War II displays have been dedicated. World War I and the other wars are in the works. Beside our OH-6, a Cobra and a UH-1 on pedestals are on display in the park, while an OH-55 is sited at the main gate.

We will be supported the Desoto County Veterans' Appreciation Days in Arcadia Florida. The event was held in Desoto County, at the Turner Agri-Civic Center. The event ran from 4 to 8 December. We brought the LOACH, the little bird mall helicopter and our sales tent.

On January 29 - 30, 2015 we will support the ninth Annual Volusia County EMS/Military Expo in Orange City Florida. The event will take place at the University High School. We will display the OH-6 Helicopter in a joint event, including military, police, firemen and EMS personnel. This is a big event and they bus in around three thousand high school and JROTC students from multiple locations. There are military vehicles on display such as:

# VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

## FLORIDA CHAPTER CONTINUED

armored vehicles, helicopters - from the National Guard, Reserve, and Coast Guard, fire trucks, ambulances, police cars, etc. The kids arrive at about fifteen minute intervals, having first attended a briefing in the school prior to visiting the display. It is a very positive event that we attend every year.

On February 28, we will support the Washington Day Parade in Eustice, Florida with the OH-6 LOACH and the mini mall helicopter.

In closing, we wish to extend a hearty "Thank You" to the outgoing board members and wish the new board members great success.

**Frank Hoover**

## NORTH CAROLINA CHAPTER

The NCVHPA continues to make many appearances in the Southeast and takes an active part in bringing honor and recognition to Vietnam Veterans. In June, from 19-22, the Wheels Through Time Motorcycle Museum in Maggie Valley, NC, of "WHAT'S IN THE BARN" fame, hosted the Veterans Appreciation Weekend with owner Dale Walksler and his son, Matt Levatich. The NCVHPA proudly displayed a Huey Charlie model gunship and an OH-6 for visitors' viewing. July 4 was spent at the Caldwell, NC, community patriotic parade that included an NCVHPA member's active duty grandson. In August, an OH-6 was displayed at the Flat Rock Theater, in Flat Rock, NC, for the showing of MISS SAIGON. September 1-8, the NCVHPA supported The Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall in Ashburn, GA, with four aircraft at the weeklong Vietnam Veterans recognition ceremonies. On September 19 the Charlie model Huey participated in the twentieth annual Veterans Stand Down in Durham, NC, honoring Vietnam Veterans. The NCVHPA also supplied helicopters to each of the following events: Kangaroo Express (who has many events throughout the year) in Sanford, NC, Supporting Wounded Warriors; Lenovo Computer Company in Research Triangle Park, NC, with employees preparing care packages to send to troops; a Golf Tournament in Raleigh, NC, also supporting Wounded Warriors and the USO.

On November 2 we participated in the Family Day at the Charlotte Motor Speedway, with two helicopters for Bank of America. On November 5 through 9 we were invited by the National Corvette Museum in Bowling Green, KY to help celebrate their annual Vets 'n Vettes with four helicopters. Before leaving Bowling Green, we had two of our A/C in a Veterans Day parade with a large number of Corvettes, many owned and driven by Vietnam veterans. As we have done in past years, we have had several A/C on display at different venues such as Golden Coral in support of Veterans Day.



Chapter Members in front of the HUEY and OH58



All four aircraft in front of the Corvette Museum

Wilmington, NC on Veterans Day to share first hand with middle school students and faculty what it was like to fly in Vietnam. Having the Huey there with him greatly enhanced their experience.

Congratulations to VHPA and NCVHPA member Ron Hope, who is now the National Commander for the DAV.

*By Brock Nicholson: president and by B. Seago*

## CALIFORNIA CHAPTER NORTH



The Sacramento Kings Dancers with Curt Knapp and RLO Greg Hutson

Since our latest posting CCN has been busy spreading the legacy of the VHPA by displaying our restored Charlie-Model at local events such as: the Nicolas Labor Day Parade, the California Capital Airshow, the Fair Oaks VFW POW/MIA tribute, the Just For Corvettes show and contest, and the Placerville Christmas Parade We took a picture of the Sacramento Kings Dancers who stopped by to help at the airshow. Although several other CCN members provided assistance that weekend, Loach pilot Curt Knapp and RLO Greg Hutson just happened to be included the picture.

It is now winter maintenance season for the Huey and Mobile Officer's Club. This behind-the-scenes effort is what provides the framework that attracts the public so that we may continue to go out and tell our story.

*Welcome Home, Guys*

**Curt Knapp, Secretary/Treasurer**

# VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

## NORTH ALABAMA CHAPTER

You may recall from our last chapter report, that we expected the North Alabama chapter to be "busier than beavers" for the fall. The numbers of requests for us to participate in veterans' activities and school exhibitions of our UH-1C, Bucaneer 3 (Buc 3) have been gratifying. Unfortunately, as a volunteer organization, we have to pare the lists to avoid burning our members out. They are all old RVN vets who are used to being "above the best", but even they can be overwhelmed. Plus, we still want to have fun and enjoy the fellowship of our chapter. Our third quarter Social Event was a dinner theater presentation of "Ain't Misbehavin'", at Chaffin's Barn in Nashville, TN on September 28. More than thirty couples attended. The activity was organized by NAVHPA member Don Bisson. We had a good lunch because it was a matinee showing, followed by lots of "singin' and dancin'". It was Nashville after all.

At the Madison, AL Street festival on October 4, we provided our restaurant sponsor, Schnitzel Ranch, with semi-skilled labor. They were semi-skilled because, for many of them, this was their second experience at preparing and serving German food. We sold out of many of our favorite German food like Schnitzel sandwiches, bratwurst and, of course, funnel cakes.

Our exhibit schedule for Buc 3 started at the Jackson Center in Huntsville on November 3. We were participating and supporting the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Vietnam War. Many Vietnam vets were able to get an up close and personal experience of the Huey. For some it was their first time to climb aboard since their DEROS. We shared many hugs and some tears. We next displayed Buc 3 at the Goldman-Schiffin School on November 7. Hundreds of school children got the chance to touch and feel a living part of history.

The members of the North Alabama Chapter believe that these school displays are the heart of what we do for



Don Bisson and Les Haas At Chaffins Barn



Member Bob Stewart (R) reminiscs with LTG Libutti (Ret) Ctr and SGT Joe Bongiovani (L) at Fiftieth Anniversary of Vietnam War Celebration



Sam Maki explains what it was like to be a gunship pilot - "There I was"



Members march with 'Buc 3' on Veterans Day



Ben and Ginny Bentley place wreathes on Veterans' graves

the community. Bringing children whose parents are too young to remember Vietnam is our attempt to ensure that, in our own small way, the sacrifices of our brothers in arms does not fade away. It makes the history of Vietnam real for these youngsters.

Veterans Day celebrations started with a display at the Veteran's park in Cullman, AL on November 8. The Cullman community asked the NAVHPA to return after the very well received display of Buc 3 in 2013. Some of our members also took a break to host family members in riding in a UH-1H flown by another veteran's organization. Their families were able to experience some of the feelings which hooked many of us on flying helicopters.

Then it was back to Huntsville for our fourth year of marching and towing Buc 3 in the Veteran's Day Parade on November 11. The NAVHPA has participated in this parade since our founding in 2008. We try to make it bigger and better each year. This year, we again handed some of the children a sweet treat to brighten their day. The weather was great (not always the case) and a good time was had by all. Then we towed Buc 3 to the Schnitzel Ranch where they donated a part of the receipts for the day to our Chapter. Their good German beer was terrific after a long walk in the sun...but isn't it always?

NAVHPA is again supporting "Wreathes across America". Wreathes across America is involved in placing over three thousand Christmas wreaths on graves of veterans of any US war. This is Huntsville's eighth year. Huntsville was the first city in the State of Alabama to honor our fallen Veterans with a wreath. We use artificial wreaths, not fresh, and save them for several years to enable us to remember more Veterans. We also encourage other places to do the same.

Our active schedule can only be sustained by a committed and active membership. We have, as of this writing, 61 paid members in our chapter. If you know of any VHPA members who reside in North Alabama or Southern Tennessee, please let them know about us. They can contact our chapter President, Les Haas at [REDACTED]

Ralph Weber

## WASHINGTON STATE CHAPTER

Greeting from the Pacific Northwest! We have had a very busy fall so far. We met with our east side brothers in Spokane WA. at the Timber Creek Grill. Seventeen members arrived to catch up on chapter news and trade war stories. We then met on Nov 8 of this year for the annual Veterans Day parade in Auburn WA. This parade is the largest of its kind in the western area. We were able to show off our brand new Huey for the first time. We have to say it was a bird of beauty. We followed this with a parade in Elma WA. This was our first time there and it was great.

For some time, the chapter and Northwest Helicopters have spent many hours and resources on the restoration of the HUEY. This all started about a eighteen months ago with a lot of pieces and determination. It came together slowly, bit by piece and with a lot of sweat. With the help of chapter members and NW Helicopters, it finally came together. After the last touches of paint and polish we came up with the idea to honor the unit that served in Vietnam the longest. Accordingly, the 114th AHC logo now adorns the doors and front of the HUEY. A lot of this work would not have happened with the help Mr. James Fleming and Israel Velez, Flight Engineers with over forty years of experience between them. They were awarded associate membership in the WSCVHPA for their help.

Feb of 2015 we will meet once again to elect new officers at Famous Dave's in Tacoma WA. Also note that in June, we are going to dedicate the HUEY and the 114th AHC. Any former members of the 114th are invited to our website for further information.

The Washington State Chapter is an active veterans group and we invite all Vietnam helicopter pilots to join us and re-connect with those that you served with so many years ago. Finally, thanks to the many members who put in the hours to make our state chapter a success.

Bill Lyons



A diamond in the rough



Ending the Veterans Day parade in Auburn, WA



Just finished putting the 114th markings on the door and battery cover.



Some of the workers on the project

## OLD DOMINION CHAPTER

Our February meeting will be at the Fort Eustis Club in Newport News, VA on Saturday, Feb 7 at 12:00 hours to sign up some new members from the Tidewater area.

On Saturday 25 October, several of our members joined in a work day in the garden at the Community Living Center of the Hunter Holmes McGuire Veterans Hospital in Richmond. We joined with the American Red Cross, Master Gardener, Chris Buck, and twenty Active Duty Volunteer Army Troops from Fort Lee, VA.

At our November 1 meeting we had guest speakers, Gwen McMillan, Area Coordinator for the My HealtheVet Program and Charles Johnson, who leads the Rural Mobile Health Care service. Several members signed up for My HealtheVet program and a few registered for the first time with the VA Healthcare system.

Our Christmas Gala will be with the Richmond Chapter of the MOAA at Meadowbrook Country Club on Saturday 6 December at 18:00 hours.

Don Agren: President



The Garden at Hunter Holmes McGuire Veterans Hospital



# “Looking For”

## *Looking For...*

I was in charge of, five or six Chinooks that were assigned to move just about as many firebases on one particular day in the middle of September of 1969. We all joined up on the radio and started to make contact with the individuals on the ground that would coordinate the moves. I believe I was going to start with three or four of the aircraft; because we were moving the largest base first to ensure we finished that day.

As the first aircraft was beginning its approach, the firebase came under mortar attack, accompanied by small arms fire from around the perimeter. We immediately called off the CH47s, and re-assigned them to other firebases that were scheduled to be moved that day. I was in contact with the path-finder element under fire who was a friend of mine. He informed me that there were two flight crews that had landed for a briefing, and that they had been hit real badly during the initial attack. He asked if I would come down and pick them up and take them back to AN KHE. I told him that it was company SOP that we were NOT to go into a “HOT” LZ. I allowed that it had to be “cold” for at least an hour before we could attempt a landing. He informed that the five crew members were badly injured. He added that it would take a long time to launch Medivac out of AN KHE and return them to the hospital. So, I told him to get them ready and I would be right down. I made a high speed approach, flared sideways and landed a little past the “heliport”. That was a good choice, because as they were loading the wounded crew, I could see mortar fire landing back behind the aircraft in the heliport area. We had them on the Med Evac pad in AN KHE in less than twenty-five minutes from the time they were shot.

We continued the day, without incident, finishing all the scheduled firebase moves. I never heard, however, how the crew members made out after we flew them in that day; neither do I know what location they flew from. My unit was the Shrimp Boats out of Pleiku, working in the An Khe area.

**Jerry Anderson**  
[Redacted]

## *Looking For...*

I served with Blackjack helicopters at Dragon Mountain, Pleiku, Viet Nam for all of 1967. I was a crew chief/ door gunner on D and H models. Recently, I attended an A/B company reunion in Ft. Myers, Florida, the first one ever.

I am now interested in locating any pilots that served with the 4th Division in Vietnam. If that's one of you, please contact me using the information below. I have been a member of the Vietnam Crew Members Association for years and I'm sure we would all like to make contact with one another. Sincerely,

**Albert “Swede” Ekstrom, CE. 1967**  
[Redacted]

## *Looking For...*

Anyone who knew my father, David L. Johnson, Colonel USA, retired and/or served with him in Viet Nam in 1965 and 1969. He was with the 1st Cav, the 227th and then the 228th and 229th air

assault battalions. We do not have many stories from his tours back then, mostly because they scared my mother too much. But now my mom is gone and my Dad has advanced Parkinson's disease. I'd like to pass any of his stories on to not only my children and grandchildren, but to my twin brothers who weren't born until after my dad retired. Those army years are as much a mystery to them as they are to me.

**Thank you!**  
**Sally Johnson**  
[Redacted]

## *Looking For...*

Anyone who served with WO Brian Harris, 101 Abn in Vietnam, 69-70. I believe he flew Loaches, maybe with a Cav unit out of Camp Eagle or Camp Evans. I'm trying to help out family members.

**Randall Gilliam, 158th Aslt Hel Bn, 69-70, 101st Abn**  
[Redacted]

## *Looking For...*

I'm a historian at DPMO (Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office) and our former colleague Herb Artola (who retired earlier this year) suggested that you might be able to help with a puzzling call sign from Nov 1968.

A chopper with the call sign “Western Flex” participated in an SAR effort on 17 Nov 1968 for a USMC F-4 that went down about twenty - five miles south of Chu Lai. That chopper recovered the body of the RIO from that F-4, but the pilot from that aircraft remains unaccounted for to this day. The identity of “Western Flex” has always been a mystery to our office, and my most recent attempt to identify it hasn't gotten anywhere either. There is no indication within the SAR log if the chopper was USMC or Army, but since western flex is a type of saddle, I would suppose that it was assigned to an Air Cav unit, but I've yet to find an Army or Marine Corps outfit with a nickname/call sign anything close to that. The chopper's call sign is cited multiple times in the SAR log, but never with a number suffix, just “Western Flex,” which makes it even more puzzling. It leaves me thinking that possibly it was the unique, personalized name stenciled on an individual bird by its crew, hence, didn't need a number suffix to distinguish it from other birds in the unit. Herb wasn't aware of this practice, but supposed that there must have been some aircraft crews that used the unique name of their bird as a call sign.

I'd be most appreciative of any insights you might be able to share about this mystery. If we can identify the unit that this bird came from, we're hoping that possibly its veterans, or records that may survive from it, could provide new clues for the recovery of the missing F-4 pilot.

*Sincerely,*

**Niall Brannigan**  
**Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office**  
**Southeast Asia Division**  
[Redacted]



If you served in any of the following Aerial Rocket Artillery units during the Vietnam Era you are invited to the 18th Aerial Rocket Artillery Reunion in Columbus, GA, May 6 – 10, 2015:

C Battery/2nd Battalion (ARA)  
/42 Artillery/11th Air Assault Division  
3rd Battalion/377th Artillery (ARA)/11th Air Assault Division  
2nd Battalion/20th Artillery (ARA)/1st Cavalry Division  
4th Battalion/77th Artillery (ARA)/101st Airborne Division  
F Battery/77th Artillery (AFA)/1st Cavalry Division  
F Battery/79th Artillery (AFA)/1st Cavalry Division  
Any Provisional ARA Battery

*This Reunion celebrates 50 years since deployment of the first Aerial Rocket Artillery Unit to the Republic of Vietnam.*

For details please go to [www.araassociation.com](http://www.araassociation.com) and reference Newsletter Q4, 2014 or contact Bruce Wilder ([wbwilder@yahoo.com](mailto:wbwilder@yahoo.com)) and/or Jesse Hobby ([jesse\\_hobby@hotmail.com](mailto:jesse_hobby@hotmail.com))

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**Ned Crimmin**  
TSgt, USAF, Ret

USAFSS Intelligence Analyst 1964-74  
USAF Admin Supervisor 1974-83  
Tours of Duty:  
1963-64 Basic Lackland AFB, Tx  
1964-68 RAF Chicksands, England  
1968-71 NSA Ft. Meade, Md.  
1971-74 Osan AB, ROK  
1974-83 Vandenberg AFB, Ca



**1.509.523.4213**

email:

**KHABT114@FRONTIER.COM**

### VHPA Satisfied Clients

- |                                   |                     |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
| - Dan Fox                         | - Bruce Brattain    |
| - John Shafer                     | - James Tinney      |
| - John Penny                      | - Bill Medsker      |
| - Lanny Julian                    | - Pete Rzeminski    |
| - Terry Opdahl                    | - James Oden        |
| - Korean War Vet Satisfied Client | - William C. Brooks |
- Kenny Hames Photos of War Tour  
1952-53 Heartbreak Ridge & Sugarloaf

## UPCOMING REUNIONS

**A Snowbird Reunion of the Aviation Platoon, HHC, 1st Brigade 101st Airborne (ambl) division**  
Feb. 13-14, 2015 in Cape Coral, FL. POC Terry Hunt- [3terryc@gmail.com](mailto:3terryc@gmail.com)- or phone: 574-220-2872.

**Annual reunion for any pilot/trooper who served with D-Troop, 3rd Squadron, 5th Cavalry in Vietnam.**

April 23rd-26th of 2015, Holiday Inn and Suites at Daytona Beach, FL; reservations #386-255-5494

POC is Rick Roll – e-mail [rroll@comcast.net](mailto:rroll@comcast.net). So far, the response has been phenomenal with 52 rooms already booked.

A reunion of all Veterans who served with the **121st Assault Helicopter Co., 93rd 121st, (renowned Soc Trang Tigers and Vikings), 80th attached and supporting units** will be held in Nashville, Tennessee on June 4 – 7, 2015. Everyone who served with these units in Da Nang and Soc Trang RVN 1961 through 1970 is invited and encouraged to attend. Families are also invited. Hosted by the members of the 121 Avn Association, Inc., details of the reunion and hotel information may be found on their web site: [121avn.org](http://121avn.org) or by contacting secretary John Schmied @ e-mail: [johndschmied@yahoo.com](mailto:johndschmied@yahoo.com) or call 352-633-0541.

**The 134th Assault Helicopter Company** will be holding its first west coast Reunion on June 24-28, 2015 in Boise, Idaho. Full details at: [www.134thahcid.weebly.com](http://www.134thahcid.weebly.com). POC for the event is: Kirk Muth at (208) 297-7730 or Dick Sheehan at (208) 891-4315. Special offer for first time reunion attendees!

**57th Assault Helicopter Company (AHC)** 12th Biennial Reunion, Possum Kingdom Lake, Texas  
August 28-30, 2015. Full details at: [www.57thahc.com](http://www.57thahc.com), POC is Jim McKenzie, (817) 821-4070

**D Troop, 1/1 Cav** will be holding their tri-annual Reunion on September 25-27, 2015 at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. POC for the gathering is either Gary Smith ([gsmith1158@yahoo.com](mailto:gsmith1158@yahoo.com)), Chuck Abbott ([redbaron28@aol.com](mailto:redbaron28@aol.com)) or Don Wargi ([dlwargi@usa.net](mailto:dlwargi@usa.net)). Complete details to follow.

Want to see your Reunion listed here?  
Send details to: [Aviator@VHPA.org](mailto:Aviator@VHPA.org)

Remember - the deadline for this year's "Lighter Side of Vietnam" Issue is COB on Wednesday, 28 January 2015. Be a part of the Aviator, send us a story to run!

Mommy, when I grow up I want to be a pilot!

I'm sorry son, you can't do both...



# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## *To the Editor of the VHPA Aviator*

I'd like to offer another opinion to the article "So Few Vets" in the September/October 2014 issue. I agree that there are few Americans that have served in the US military and fewer still who have served in combat. It by no means takes away the fact those who served, did so honorably, whether in combat or not. As a helicopter pilot with the 128th AHC, part of our training was to realize that without the services of our crew chiefs, gunners, mechanics, cooks and clerks, we would be pilots without helicopters to fly. Vietnam, as in other wars, had a number of casualties who were not pilots or infantry. As a family note, my uncle was a clerk in a coast artillery battery in the Philippines. He did not survive the war.

The cliché, "the tip of the spear", holds true. To support the tip, you need a shaft. As many combat troops as there were in Vietnam, a large number of troops were required for support. Having met truck drivers, convoys were not walks in the park. The troops that manned the bunkers at the support bases were clerks, mechanics and cooks. They came under fire, and, in some cases were wounded or killed. The fact that they were there speaks volumes. They served. They deserve to be called Veterans.

Don "Duck" Beatty, CW5 USA (Ret)  
Gunslinger 31, 128th AHC, 1970-71  
[REDACTED]

## *To Moon Mullins, Past-President of the VHPA*

I just wanted to say thanks again for getting me on the list for your Association's newsletters. I guess I never realized just how many army pilots flew combat missions during the Vietnam War. We A-1 Skyraider warriors are a pretty small group in comparison, even if you add in the Navy AD types and the SVN A-1 pilots.

I wanted to tell you, also, about my family's old, very personal connection with all of you. On a March day in 1971, our squadron and lots of others were flying ground support strike missions for the SVN Army's incursion into Laos, called Lamson 719. What I did not know at the time was that my cousin, John Traver, was flying Hueys from the SVN side in support of the effort, as well. He was killed not very far into Laos while supporting that operation. I have attached the information that I have about his death. I may actually have been in the area on the day that he bought the farm as did the rest of the aircrew. I can very clearly remember the C-130s dropping 15,000 pound hard bombs to clear LZs for the Slicks - massive shock waves and mushroom clouds formed from the energy of the blasts.

Reading the latest newsletter has queued up some of those old memories anew for me, and I thank you for that.

Hope you are well.

Alan  
Alan Price Young, Young & Haros, LLC  
[REDACTED]

## *To the Editor of the VHPA Aviator*

As the wife of a VHPA Life Member, I must admit that I enjoy the stories and articles in the VHPA Aviator. I often will read it before my husband does pointing out to him pertinent stories that might interest and/or affect him. One of these "point outs" is always about how we are losing members every day.

That leads me to wonder, why doesn't the VHPA advertise its reunions in the other many fraternal military magazines such as

MOAA, American Legion, AAAA and others? All of those magazines are received by Aviators in ALL branches of the military who may have no idea the VHPA exists (yes, I'm sure that indeed happens no matter what we think!) and may also enjoy attending reunions in order to catch up with long lost friends and colleagues.

It is a shame that we do not have someone in our organization whose job it is to monitor, submit and possibly even advertise our Association in all related magazines for our membership and reunion recruitment efforts. Even worse, if we already have such a person tasked with this job, they need a lot of prodding to get the job done right. I see many reunions advertised in the MOAA magazine that covers all branches plus civilian and/or DOD groups, yet I never see notice of our VHPA Reunion. - how sad. I am sure that there are many potential members that just need the knowledge that VHPA exist in order to join up.

Meanwhile keep up the good work on the magazine and the content that is of interest to everyone.

Janet-Anne Boykin  
Wife of Jim Boykin

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

## AAAA/VHPA SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINE ALERT

*by Mike Scheuerman*

The deadline for applying for a VHPA Scholarship is right around the corner. You can request Scholarship packets from AAAA after January 1, 2015. Applications are due NLT May 1, 2015. VHPA will have five \$3,000 awards available for 2015. Last year, over forty people applied for our scholarships. Five received our scholarships and another twenty received AAAA awards totaling over \$35,500. In addition, another ten people whose parents or a grandparent we consider eligible to be members of VHPA, were awarded a further \$26,000 in scholarships. This included the recipient of a \$12,000 - four year award.

Last year VHPA members donated over \$20,000 to the VHPA scholarship fund. The Executive Council (EC) voted, last year, to match membership donations. To say the least we, the EC, did not expect the membership to be that generous. One member gave \$10,000. This year the EC will match up to \$15,000.

To be eligible for a VHPA Scholarship there are only two requirements to apply. The recipient must meet both of the following requirements:

- 1) You must be the descendant of a dues current VHPA member or a descendant of a helicopter pilot who died in Vietnam while serving as a pilot.
- 2) You or your sponsor must be a dues current member of AAAA. There is an Associate Membership classification for students.

Encourage your descendants to apply. If you know of someone who qualifies as stipulated above, please let them know about our scholarships.

**GOOD LUCK!**



# DPMO

Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office

DPMO has announced that the remains of one US Army and one US Air Force soldier missing from the Vietnam War have been identified.

The remains of SSG James L Van Bendegom, USA, missing in Cambodia since July 12, 1967, were recovered March 21, 1986, and identified August 26, 2014.

The remains of Capt Richard L. Whitesides, USAF, missing in South Vietnam on March 26, 1964, were recovered September 9, 2013, and identified September 22, 2014.

The number of Americans announced by DoD as returned and identified since the end of the Vietnam War in 1975 is now 944. Another 63 US personnel, recovered by the US and ID'd before the end of the war, bring the official total of US personnel accounted for from the Vietnam War to 1,007. Of the 1,639 total, 90% were lost in Vietnam or in areas of Cambodia and Laos under Vietnam's wartime control: Vietnam-1,274 (VN-469, VS-805); Laos-306; Cambodia-52; PRC territorial waters-7. Over-water losses on DoD's list of No Further Pursuit cases number well over 600.

On September 23rd, JPAC hosted annual Technical Talks with Vietnamese counterparts. Once again, US officials heard Vietnamese requests for expanding the pace and scope of field operations that have been sporadic at best, depending on funding and weather-related challenges. A total of nine US teams are now operating in Vietnam, the largest deployment ever, finally responding to Vietnam's offer to the League in 2009, repeated often, to expand the pace and scope of field operations.





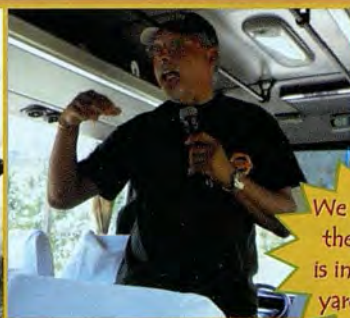
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**The Cub Inn** is a 5,000-square-foot log cabin that offers unique charm that blends our love of aviation with the great outdoors. Located in California's Sierra Nevada mountains just 25 miles from Yosemite National Park, our five guest rooms sleep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

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

Full details and booking information are available on our website:  
**TheCubInn.com**  
 Or call us at: 209-962-0403 (land line) to book.





## Vietnam Helo Operations "Rotorheads Return"

2—15 May 2015 & 7—20 May 2016

*"The bottom line is, the war is over. It really wasn't over till I came back,"* General Norman Schwarzkopf, during his 1993 return.

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Above: VHPA Veep Clyde Romero shares a story on the MHT VHPA Tour bus!  
 Right: VHPA President Bob Hesselbein at the Chu Chi Tunnels!



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*Thanks For The Ride, continued from page 7*

"Overlord Delta, Wisdom Crown, hear you loud and clear. What's the status of our extraction, over," the team leader said his voice half yelling half gasping over the radio. His voice contained the urgent sounds of expectancy and hope. "Wisdom Crown what is your situation, over" the lieutenant in the C&C helicopter asked.

The LRRP team was on a dead run. They were trying to put some distance between themselves and the pursuing NVA. The jungle was dense and the going was painfully slow. The only good thing in their favor was that they were traveling downhill.

As the four helicopters travelled further north in the river valley the cloud base continued to lower. The forward visibility made worse by a thick misty swirling fog that was slowly encasing the helicopters.

"Lucky Star lead, Starblazer One Five" came the call from the gunship leader to the leader of the two slick helicopters.

"Starblazer One Five go ahead.

"This cloud base is too low for us to give you any gun cover for your extraction. What are your intentions?"

Sam keyed the mic and said, "We are in radio contact with the LRRP team now and we are going ahead with the extraction, over."

The Starblazer fire team leader replied, "Lead, we don't have enough altitude or forward visibility to cover you. We are turning around and RTB (returning to base). Sorry Sam, you are on your own."

"Roger One Five, understood", was the only reply.

The situation went from bad to worse. The weather was making flight on the valley floor nearly impossible. The extraction site was in the obscured ridges above, there was a LRRP team in enemy contact with shots fired and now the gunships had gone home. It was expressly forbidden to make a hot extraction, such as this one, without gunship support. The prudent decision for the remaining helicopters would be to turn around and RTB with the gunships. That, however, IS NOT what they did. The mission continued.

When asked, after the mission, why he continued when it was obvious that the mission should have been aborted, WO Kyle simply said, "If I were out there on the ground I wouldn't want the helicopters to leave me, so I didn't leave them."

The forward progress up the valley floor, however, did not continue. The two helicopters, out of necessity, had formed into a

trail formation and were flying only 100 feet apart. Even at that distance it was difficult to see the aircraft ahead. Both helicopters slowed to only a fast hover when suddenly the FM radio erupted.

"Overlord Delta, Wisdom Crown, we hear the helicopters, over."

"Wisdom Crown, what is your position, over?"

"We left our last RP 10 minutes ago moving east toward the blue line. Estimated platoon size NVA unit is pursuing us. They're tracking us with dogs, sir."

"Wisdom Crown, can you prepare an LZ (landing zone) for extraction? Extraction birds are on station."

"Negative, Overlord Delta, we are on the move, over."

As the LRRP lieutenant and sergeant discussed how best to proceed with the mission, another radio call from Wisdom Crown interrupted them. "The helicopters are louder now. They sound below us. We are in fog and can see nothing, over," Lucky Lead, sensing that time was running out and with very few options available, decided to split the helicopters up - sending the empty extraction ship after the LRRP team while the C&C ship landed on sand bar in the middle of the An Lo River. The weather conditions would not allow the C&C ship to orbit over the LZ as is the usual practice. In fact, continued flight by the C&C ship anywhere in the valley was too risky.

Team Foxtrot's situation worsened. The NVA troops had caught up to the team and a firefight had begun. The LRRPs set up a defensive perimeter to return the enemy's fire while constantly pulling back from the NVA toward the valley in pairs. This action continues until the team reaches a bluff over the valley. It is a rock ledge with a 100 feet shear drop. On a clear day it would offer a spectacular view of the An Lo Valley. Today it is shrouded in dense fog. Further retreat is no longer possible. This is where LRRP Team Foxtrot will make their stand until they are either overrun or extracted.

Sam Kyle, piloting the extraction ship, heard the radio chatter of the LRRP team and decided that he must make an attempt to locate them and pluck them off the ridge. Time is not on their side. Their location is 500 feet above the valley floor. The cloud height being a mere 100 feet above the valley presents the pilot with only one option. Sam turns his helicopter sideways to the ridge and, while looking out the left side window, starts hovering up the side of the hill. With the crew chief helping keep the tail rotor clear of rocks and trees, the helicopter disappears into the clouds climbing slowly up the hillside.



LZ English - 61st AHC's base in 1968

The LRRP team announces that the sound of the helicopter is getting closer. To maintain sight of the trees covering the hill Sam maneuvers the helicopter as close as possible to the trees and rocks. Normally the sound of the main rotor blades striking tree limbs is unwelcomed... but in this case it is somewhat reassuring.

"Lucky Star, I hear you. You are below us and to our south. Move farther north, over."

Sam starts the helicopter moving forward while still climbing upward slowly. After several minutes, which seemed like hours to all those involved, the radio crackled, "I hear you louder now. You are directly below us. Please hurry. We can't hold on much longer. Ammo almost depleted, over." The sound of small arms fire can be heard in the background.

"I see you. I see you. You are about 50 feet below us. You need to move forward 100 feet. We are popping smoke, over."

Looking upward through the rotor blades Sam sees purple smoke mixed with the fog.

"Wisdom Crown, I have your smoke insight."

He slowly moves upward and forward until he can place the left landing skid against the rock ledge. The rotor blades clicking away as they hit the trees above while the remainder of the helicopter



Returning from CA for 173rd Airborne

dangles over the foggy valley. Beads of sweat travel down the pilot's nose and drip into his lap. With the helicopter perched delicately on the rocky ledge, the LRRPs move two at a time toward the helicopter, step on the skid, and jump into the cargo bay. Once the last LRRP is in sight, the rest of the team, along with the crew chief start firing their weapons at the advancing NVA. Upon hearing the helicopter the NVA charge the LRRP teams position. Knowing that this would happen the LRRPs earlier placed their remaining Claymore mines with trip wires around the LZ. The advancing NVA tripping the Claymores created sufficient chaos and distraction to allow the team to move toward the helicopter and escape.

Amid the exploding Claymores and small arms fire, Sam moved away from the edge and descended into the fog. All six LRRP team members were aboard were, safe and sound.

The helicopter makes its approach to the Crap Table at LZ English. It hovers into the revetment and lands. As the LRRPs are gathering their gear and leaving the helicopter, the team leader walks up to the open door where WO Kyle is sitting, taps him on the shoulder and says, "Thanks for the ride, sir."

No greater thanks were ever expected or accepted.

**Dany Pennington**  
**VHPA Life Member**



The infamous An Lo Valley



Inserting troops in fishing village



Inserting 173rd troops near LZ Pony

*This is a non-fiction piece about an event that occurred in the An Lo Valley in November 1968. The main character, WO Sam Kyle, flight school class 67-19 and 67-21. He served with the 61st Assault Helicopter Company in Viet Nam from January 1968 to January 1969. Upon returning from Viet Nam he served as an SIP in Standards Division at Ft. Rucker in Instrument MOI and RWQC Courses. After release from active duty in 1970 he served in the Tennessee National Guard as a full time technician IP. He was killed July 2, 1984 when his OH-6 bit a wire in remote Tennessee while searching for escaped convicts.*

*The author Dany Pennington attended flight school class 67-19 and 67-21. He served with the 61st Assault Helicopter Company in Viet Nam from January 1968 to January 1969. He is a freelance copywriter and lives with his wife of 45 years in Monticello Florida.*

# WELCOME TO THE VHPA!

Look the list over and if you recognize anyone, give them a call, drop them a line or send them an e-mail welcoming them into our Association. Full contact information is available either on-line in the Member Services section of our website, or through our staff at HQ by calling 1-800-505-VHPA. Line 1, Last, first, MI and/or nickname of new member; double asterisks (\*\*) ID new life members. Line 2, his current city and state, branch of service. Line 3 -5, his (Flight) Class and Vietnam Unit(s) served with, if that info is available

We welcome these 52 new Members to the VHPA!  
All have joined our Association during the period from 1 August - 15 December, 2014

Angert, Hugh F. Fernandina Beach, Florida US Army Flight Class(s): 68-19 68-31 Vietnam combat unit(s): A/227 AHB 1 CAV in 69-70	Graves, Ralph C Huachuca City, Arizona, US Army Flight Class(s): 71-7 Vietnam combat unit(s): 7/17 CAV in 71-72; 129 AHC in 72	Ivey, Ramon A. ** Azle, Texas, US Army Flight Class(s): 68-17 Vietnam combat unit(s): 189 AHC in 1970	Melugin, Michael R. Manteo, North Carolina, US Army Flight Class(s): 69-25 Vietnam combat unit(s): 114 AHC in 70-71
Benjamin, Mark E. ** Traverse City, Michigan, US Army Flight Class(s): 69-9 Vietnam combat unit(s): 128 AHC in 69-70	Grimm, Thomas T. 'Tom' Hope, Idaho, US Army Flight Class(s): 71-9 71-5 Vietnam combat unit(s): 57 AHC in 71-72	James, Jerry L. ** Sandy, Utah, US Army Flight Class(s): 68-21 68-35 Vietnam combat unit(s): 116 AHC in 69-70	Meyers, Daniel L. 'Dan' San Antonio, Texas, US Army Flight Class(s): 69-44 Vietnam combat unit(s): 119 AHC in 69; 176 AHC in 69-70
Boisseau, Mark F. 'Filthy Pierre' Wethersfield, Connecticut, US Army Flight Class(s): 69-17 Vietnam combat unit(s): C/1/9 CAV 1 CAV in 69-70	Hambly, Ernest N. 'Ernie' Clarksville, Tennessee, US Army Flight Class(s): 71-1 Vietnam combat unit(s): F/1/9 CAV in 71-72	Lee, Robert C. Reno, Nevada, US Army Flight Class(s): 69-50 Vietnam combat unit(s): 282 AHC in 70-71	Mitchell, William G. 'Bill' Tampa, Florida, US Army Flight Class(s): 71-6 Vietnam combat unit(s): F/79 AFA 1 CAV in 72; 1 2 AVN GP in 72-73
Buboltz, Randall C. 'RANDY' Litchfield, Minnesota, US Army Flight Class(s): 69-45 Vietnam combat unit info not provided	Hartland, Walter A. Coon Rapids, Minnesota, US Army Flight Class(s): 68-511 68-19 Vietnam combat unit(s): 2/20 ARA 1 CAV in 68-69	Lemes, Ralph V Bulverde, Texas, US Army Flight Class(s): 57-1FW 63 QC Vietnam combat unit(s): HHC 145 AVN in 65; 1 AVN BDE in 65-66; 1 ASA in 67-68	Mooney, Kenneth W. 'Ken' ** Riverside, Illinois, US Army Flight Class(s): 65-4W Vietnam combat unit(s): 1/9 CAV in 65-66
Burkes, David H. ** Birmingham, Alabama, US Army Flight Class(s): 69-20 Vietnam combat unit(s): HHC/1 CAV in 67-68; 1 AVN BDE in 71-72	Head, Archie J. ** Waycross, Georgia, US Army Flight Class(s): 69-2 Vietnam combat unit(s): 173 ABN BDE in 65-66	Marczak, Stanley A. 'Andy' ** Markle, Indiana, US Army Flight Class(s): 68-14 68-22 Vietnam combat unit(s): 228 ASHB 1 CAV in 68-69	Palinski, Paul J. Anchorage, Alaska, US Army Flight Class(s): 68-507 68-7 Vietnam combat unit(s): A/4 AVN 4 INF in 68-69; HHC 1 AVN BDE in 71-72
Calvert, Robert R Palestine, Illinois, US Army Flight Class(s): 70-47 Vietnam combat unit(s): 334 AHC in 71; 187 AHC in 71-72	Hogan, Terence A. 'Terry' Syracuse, New York, US Army Flight Class(s): 69-33 69-31 Vietnam combat unit(s): 281 AHC in 69-70	Marks, David A. 'Dave' ** Madisonville, Kentucky, US Army Flight Class(s): 70-10 Vietnam combat unit info not provided	Pasquarelli, Timothy L 'Tim' Golden, Colorado, US Army Flight Class(s): 70-6 Vietnam combat unit(s): 1 CAV in 67-68; B/158 AHB 101 ABN in 70-71
Cismowski, Dennis M. ** Enterprise, Alabama, US Army Flight Class(s): 68-509 68-13 Vietnam combat unit(s): 71 AHC in 68-69	Holcomb, Michael R. 'Mike' Marietta, Georgia, US Army Flight Class(s): 71-50 Vietnam combat unit(s): F/8 CAV in 72	Martin, John T. ** Lakewood, Washington US Army Flight Class(s): 69-37 69-35 Vietnam combat unit(s): 134 AHC in 69-70	Petullo, Thomas P. 'Tom' Hendersonville, North Carolina US Army Flight Class(s): 69-16 Vietnam combat unit(s): 118 AHC in 69-70
Davis, Jethro J. 'Jeff' ** Palmyra, Pennsylvania, US Army Flight Class info not provided Vietnam combat unit(s): 21 AVN in 65-66	Holden, Larry J Westlake, Texas, US Army Flight Class(s): 72-10 Vietnam combat unit(s): 57 AHC in 72-73	McCabe, Robert J. 'Bob' Westchester, Illinois, US Army Flight Class(s): 68-2 Vietnam combat unit(s): 114 AHC in 68-69; HHC 164 CAG in 69	Reihle, Paul R. Brandon, Mississippi, US Army Flight Class(s): 70-47 Vietnam combat unit(s): 52 ART GRP in 71-72
Forbes, James V. Evanston, Illinois, US Army Flight Class(s): 68-521 68-35 Vietnam combat unit(s): 2 SIG GP in 69	Hoskins, Lary L. ** Colorado Springs, Colorado US Army Flight Class(s): 68-512 68-20 Vietnam combat unit(s): 118 AHC	McCalmon, Malcolm J. 'Mac' Arnold, Nebraska, US Army Flight Class(s): 69-37 69-39 Vietnam combat unit(s): 145 AVN BN in 70; 190 AHC in 70	Rogers, James R. 'Rusty' Round Rock, Texas, US Army Flight Class(s): 68-20 68-34 Vietnam combat unit(s): 3/5 CAV in 69-70
Fraggos, James C. 'JIMMY' Claremont, California, US Army Flight Class(s): 69-26 Vietnam combat unit info not provided	Hunter, Bruce C. Minneapolis, Minnesota US Army Flight Class(s): 70-40 Vietnam combat unit(s): 162 AHC in 71-72	McManus, Charles K. 'Charlie' ** Chester Springs, Pennsylvania US Army Flight Class(s): 68-6 Vietnam combat unit(s): 121 AHC in 68-69	Shepard, Joe E. 'Joe' Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, US Army Flight Class(s): 68-16 68-26 Vietnam combat unit(s): 129 AHC in 69-70
Gilbert, Lawrence J. 'LARRY' Savannah, Georgia, US Army Flight Class(s): 68-510 68-16 Vietnam combat unit(s): 282 AHC in 68-70	Hutson, James J. 'Jim' ** Coral Gables, Florida, US Army Flight Class(s): 69-39 Vietnam combat unit(s): C/227 AHB 1 CAV in 70		

## WELCOME TO THE VHPA (CONT.)

**Stanko, John B.**  
Mesa, Arizona, US Army  
Flight Class(s): 68-2  
Vietnam combat unit(s):  
228 ASHB 1 CAV in 68-69

**Teeter, Charles E. 'Chuck' \*\***  
Mc Queeney, Texas, US Army  
Flight Class(s): 59-11FW 68 QC  
Vietnam combat unit(s):  
173 AVN in 65-66; HHC 268 CAB  
in 68-69; 134 AHC in 69

**Trautman, Thomas S. 'Tom'**  
The Plains, Virginia, US Army  
Flight Class(s): 68-12 68-18  
Vietnam combat unit(s):  
118 AHC in 68-69

**Tucker, Robert B. 'Bix'**  
Melba, Idaho, US Army  
Flight Class(s): 68-512 68-20  
Vietnam combat unit(s):  
23 ART GRP in 69-70

**Venable, Edward B. 'Ed' \*\***  
Merritt Island, Florida, US Army  
Flight Class(s): 71-23 71-21  
Vietnam combat unit(s):  
60 AHC in 71-72

**Welch, Gene B. \*\***  
Beavercreek, Ohio, US Army  
Flight Class info not provided  
Vietnam combat unit(s):  
114 AHC in 64-65; 1 CAV DIV in 66-67

**Wellman David J. \*\***  
Statesboro, Georgia, US Army  
Flight Class(s): 68-510 68-16  
Vietnam combat unit(s):  
B/4 AVN 4 INF in 68; 129 AHC in 69

**Westbrook, Robert S. 'Bob' \*\***  
Irvington, Virginia, US Army  
Flight Class(s): 71-21  
Vietnam combat unit(s):  
240 AHC in 71; 117 AHC in 72

**Weyhrich, William P. 'Bill'**  
Englewood, Colorado, US Army  
Flight Class(s): 70-41  
Vietnam combat unit(s):  
3/17 CAV in 71-71

**Wilhite, James M. \*\***  
Chico, California, US Army  
Flight Class(s): 68-509 68-13  
Vietnam combat unit(s):  
1 CAV DIV in 68-69

## GETTING MY SON A COBRA RIDE

As my son Hunter climbed in to the front seat of the Cobra and strapped in, the grin on his face was the biggest I have ever seen. He had ridden in a Huey several times but this was his first time flying in a pilot's seat of a Cobra and the view from where he would be sitting was awesome.

I had heard from a fellow VHPA member and college classmate, Bill McRae, that the Army Aviation Heritage Foundation, based south of Atlanta, was giving discounted AH-1 and UH-1 rides on Saturday, November 15 in order to increase membership and interest in its operation. Hunter's seventeenth birthday was coming up and Melanie, my wife, and I thought this would be a present he would never forget. So, on Saturday morning, Hunter and I drove to DFW airport and caught a 7 AM flight to Atlanta. We arrived at 1030 AM, picked up a rental car and drove the 30 miles to Hampton airport where the AAHF has its hangers - complete with seven flyable Snake's and six flyable Hueys. His ride was scheduled for one PM.

The AAHF is a 501C3 non-profit organization whose mission is to maintain and fly vintage Army rotorcraft and tell the public about what we did in Vietnam. They fly their aircraft to schools, air shows and public events all over the Southeast US. It is a great organization.

As I watched Hunter I was reminded of a young 1LT back in early March 1971, fresh from Flight School at Rucker, waiting for his orientation ride in the front seat of a Cobra. I remembered the thrill of seeing and feeling what the aircraft could do. The Pilot for Hunter's ride finished the run up, pulled the Snake to a hover, turned and taxied over to the active, pointed the aircraft east, lowered the nose, pulled power and started down the strip gaining speed. He performed a power climb to about 750 feet before starting a left hand turn to a westerly direction while still climbing. He flew to the far west end of the field where he executed a perfect "turn on target" maneuver, then lowered the nose, and came screaming out of the sky. I had forgotten the sound of a Snake in



a gun run. It brought chills up and down my spine. As the aircraft passed in front of us I saw the now even larger smile on Hunter's face. All the expense of the ride was now repaid. It took him over two hours to tell me about his flight.

The ride lasted thirty minutes. The Pilot was John Woodward, a college classmate of mine. John was a freshman in Charlie Company in 1968 at North Georgia College (a military college). At the time, I was a Senior and Company Commander of Charlie Company. He graduated in June 1971, went to Flight School in 1972, Cobra School in 1973, and made a career of the Army, retiring as an O-5. We had met again in Los Angeles at the Helicopter Association International convention earlier this year. John is very involved in all aspects of the AAHF, such as: performing maintenance, marketing, and giving rides. He's a good guy.

If you live in the Atlanta area or even within three-hundred miles of it, I strongly suggest you consider taking your kids or grand kids to the AAHF airfield in Hampton and get them a ride. It's an experience they will never forget- neither will you.

**Mike Sheuernan**

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

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## By VHPA Life Member: JOHN PENNY



**Black Cat 2-1** by VHPA Life Member Bob Ford is the memoir of his service with the 282nd AHC in 67-68, call sign Black Cat. His arrival on the ramp at Pleiku, RVN with its heat and pungent odors followed graduation from the University of Oklahoma, an ROTC commission, branch school, Ft. Wolters and Ft. Rucker—a familiar routine. The future was not routine.

With no openings in the 1st Cav, Ford was shuttled to Nha Trang and was assigned to the 282nd at Marble Mountain, Da Nang. Just 15 minutes after his arrival at Marble Mountain, Ford found himself flying copilot on an emergency combat assault. It was the first of over 1,000 missions he flew in what proved to be a very intense tour of duty.

When Ford learned that the OIC slot of the 282nd Hue Detachment would be open in two months, he worked hard to earn the assignment. Highly regarded, the unit operated from the Hue Citadel airstrip with an AO

that went north to the DMZ. In Sept 67 he took over at Hue and moved into the MACV compound. Insertions and emergency extractions in support of the units at LZs and firebases which were often under fire in the mountains of Northern I Corps, was very challenging. The TET offensive of 1968 found Ford and his aircrews defending their own perimeter at Hue.

Ford's story is a well-crafted, riveting reading experience. He has done a great job describing the character and sense of humor of the pilots, crew chiefs, and gunners he flew with, and in particular those who didn't make it home. His narrative also includes the soldiers, Marines, and Australians he encountered and fought alongside. When Ford arrived in-country he was told to put his own safety aside and do everything possible for the troops on the ground—a philosophy that continues to resonate and define the nature of our service even today.

**Black Cat 2-1: The True Story of a Vietnam Helicopter Pilot and His Crew** (288 pages, \$24.95 hardcover) by Bob Ford, ISBN 978-1612542089 is available by order from your local book store, directly from his publisher, Brown Books, at: <http://www.blackcat2-1.com/buy-the-book.php>, or other book suppliers.

**Fixin' To Die Rag** by Roy Mark, is the story of those who served with Charley Company of the 229th Assault Helicopter Battalion, 1st Cav, between March and September 1970. During that period C/229 lost 18 Aviators and crewmembers along with 4 passengers. Mark, is a Marine Corps veteran and writer. He read a story written by a C/229 member about a mid-air collision the unit suffered. After numerous interviews with C/229 veterans, Mark has shaped this and other stories of their service and sacrifice in those 7 months of 1970 in Vietnam into an excellent, although at times, very somber reading experience, which is hard to put down.

Mark uses chapter titles that refer to song titles we all knew well in Vietnam; music which continues to resonate with us. There are many black and white photos in the book, most of which were originally in color.

Each photo in the book has a QR code which can be scanned by a smart phone or tablet computer allowing the reader to view all of the photos in their original quality. You may also visit Roy Mark's web site at: [www.roymark.org](http://www.roymark.org) to see the pictures.

**Fixin' To Die Rag: Gooood Morning Vietnam... We've Just Had a Mid-Air Collision** (178 page, paperback \$12.59, \$4.99 Kindle) by Roy Mark, ISBN: 978-1484135105 is available from your local book store, Amazon or other book suppliers.



### A Tribute to their veteran husbands continued from page 11

Rosemary describes the group's travels as "the highest level of a test of friendship" and Marvin jokingly characterizes those trips as "What happens on the ship stays on the ship."

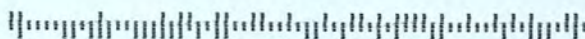
Apparently, the relationships have passed the test since the couples are planning another cruise to the Caribbean in February. What accounts for the success of the tight-knit bunch? "It's unique because of the ability to pray for each other's families and the kids' and grand-kids' struggles. It's a covenant group," Nancy said. "I think this is the first group of people in our marriage that we've done this with on such an extended basis." The fact that all the men are veterans and the women wives of veterans is another bonding element. Though there's very little conversation about the war at the Friday night gatherings, the husbands can talk about their Vietnam experiences from time to time, and the others understand.

"It's a safe place where we can be ourselves," David said. "For me there aren't many outlets like that."

Ken said he likes "the fellowship and the company. There's always something to look forward to."

One of the trips that the group will almost certainly take again someday is to the Angel Fire memorial to see the bricks that contain their names. The memorial was established at a time when the war was still extremely unpopular, but the Waco group is thankful that Lt. Westphall's family persisted in order to honor Vietnam vets. And, although the men are not happy with the outcome of the war, they all served patriotically, doing what their country required of them, and said they would do so again.

Vicky Kendig



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***HAPPY NEW YEAR !***

*This year will be filled with special events...Father's Day, Mother's Day Birthdays, Anniversaries, and the 2015 VHPA Reunion. Now is the time to start your treasure hunt through your photos both new and old, to find the perfect picture to put into a 3D CUSTOM Crystal. We look forward to seeing them all !*

*Happy Hunting...  
Brian and Marilyn*