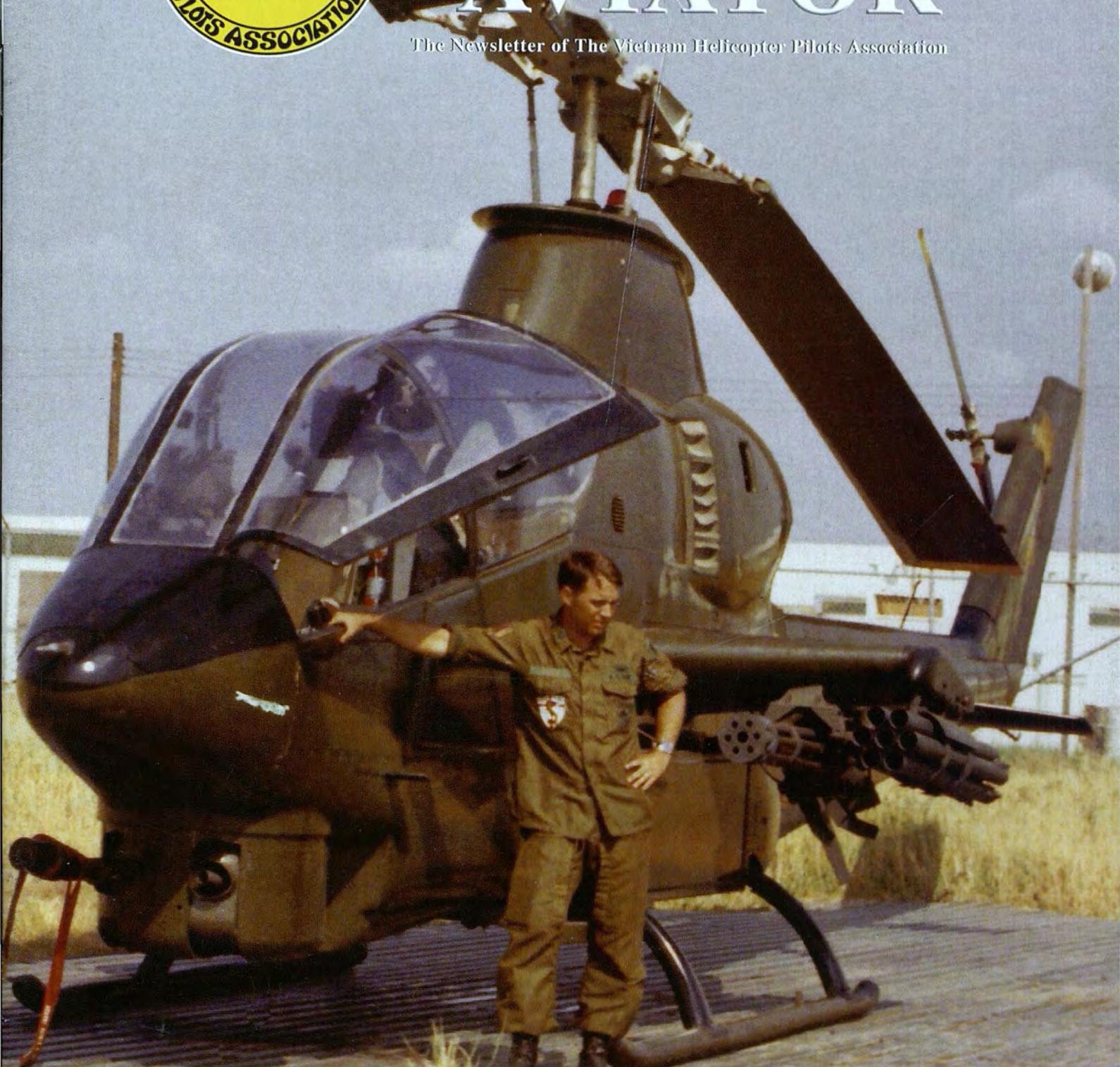




The VHPA AVIATOR

The Newsletter of The Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association



Strip Alert at Chi Lang Airfield

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Founder	Larry Clark	[REDACTED]



VHPA Aviator Newsletter:
Aviator@VHPA.org

VHPA WebSite:
VHPA.org

VHPA Headquarters and Headquarter Staff contact Information

Phone:
1-800-505-VHPA (8472)

E-Mail:
HQ@VHPA.org

National Committee Chairmen and Committee Assistants

Aviator Magazine	Tom Kirk, Managing Editor Tom Hirschler, Editor	[REDACTED]
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Chapter Liaison	John Sorensen Jack Salm, Asst. Chair	[REDACTED]
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E-mail items to The Aviator at: Aviator@vhpa.org

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From the President
of the VHPA

CLYDE ROMERO



Those of us who were WOCs remember the saying "leave it better than you found it." Well we have continued that tradition at VHPA while I have been your president. The Executive Council has made it easier for the membership to renew on line. And there are more features to come in the near future that will greatly enhance your experience as a VHPA member.

Flying scouts in combat was a team effort as you can see by the picture, the same goes for what we do as volunteers at VHPA. I want to thank the entire staff and Executive Council for all their help during my tenure as President.

We are rapidly approaching the reunion in Reno, and rooms are going fast so please sign up, in fact some events have already filled up.

The Vietnam War officially ended 30 April 1975 so by the time you get this issue it will have been over 40 years since the war ended, and there are still stories to be told about what we as helicopter pilots did in that

war. On 30 march 1972 the Easter Offensive started and the US involvement in the war was in a draw down, and yet there were US Army Helicopter pilots still coming into country. Let us hear from the UH-1 pilots who flew out of Udorn Thailand in support of the USAF Commander General Lavelle in the later stages of the war, and what about the CH-54 Sky-crane pilots who flew in support of the CIA during Lam Son 719, and let us not forget the Buffalo Hunter Missions that were flown as well. Let's hear from the pilots who flew with their Vietnamese counter parts in II Corps. These are just a few of the untold stories that need to be told by the brave pilots who flew those very important missions.

While I am at it please don't forget to contact your elected representative with regards to HR 4298 the Vietnam Helicopter Memorial to be placed at ANC.

Be well, do good work, and keep in touch -see you at the reunion.

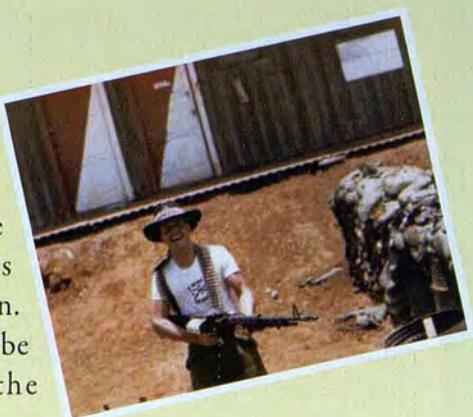
WONIC #3

Our 2016 VHPA Reunion in Reno (7/5-10/16) is fast approaching, so get signed up. This year at the Memorial Service there will be about a twenty minute program put on by the Truckee Community Chorus with one of our own Michael "Spiderman" Campbell, RLO. They will be accompanied by Sierra Nevada College. He says: "Hopefully we can put smiles on the audience's faces and tears in their eyes." So, sign up for the Memorial Service.

It's time to volunteer again, get involved with the election process to become a member of the EC, con-

tact Art Jacobs about how to get in the election, see the inside of the front cover for his contact information.

Contact HQ to be a volunteer at the reunion.



*By John Shafer
Vice President VHPA
Treasurer Washington State Chapter VHPA*

Selections from Past Newsletters

From time-to-time, this new column will be included in the Aviator to honor our VHPA Newsletter predecessors and contributors.

This issue's column is from June 1988, Incoming Mail

AVIATOR FO

Maybe this is a good time to share part of my tour experience with you. I arrived in-country April 1971 and flew "slicks" with D troop 1/10 Cav out of An Khe and An Son. After eight months our unit stepped down in December 1971. Having been assigned the extra duty of "supply officer", one of my last duties was to ensure the colors were shipped to Washington, D.C. and turn in the property books in Saigon.

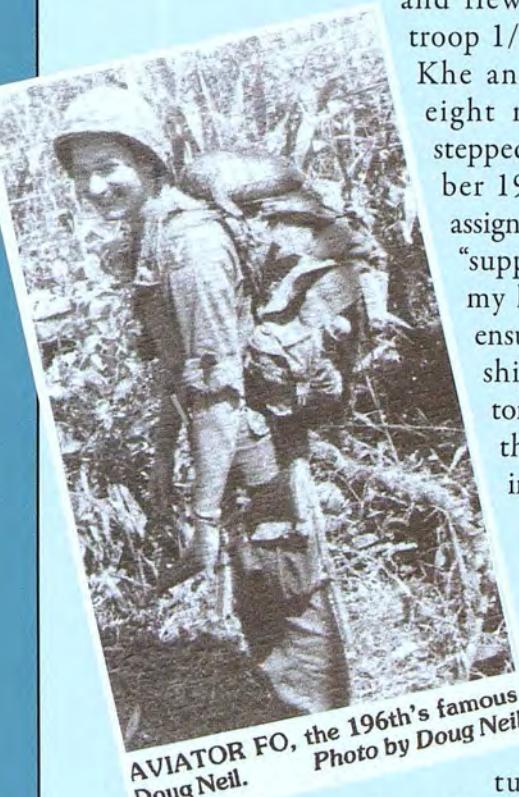
Returning to An Son, I thought I would be reassigned to the 129 AHC or another Cav unit. No such luck! As it turned out, 1LT

artillery officers were in short supply in Jan. 1972, slick pilots were not. My next assignment – forward observer A Battery 3/82 Artillery 196 Infantry Brigade. I was one of four or five aviation artillery LTs that got tapped for this assignment.

I spent my last four months "humping the bush" with A Co. 2nd Bn 196 Infantry northwest of Da Nang as an FO! Naturally the grunt CO thought it was great I was there, no longer could he be accused of not preparing LZs properly.

Sometimes I think about the other aviator FOs who were assigned to other infantry units at the same time. Several were new in-country. I wonder if they ever made it to an aviation unit? At least I got eight months of flying in. Have you ever heard from anyone with a similar story?

Doug Neil



AVIATOR FO, the 196th's famous
Photo by Doug Neil
Doug Neil.

FROM THE VHPA STAFF AT HQ!

Tours are selling quickly for R2016! Be sure to get registered! We hope to see you there!

We will be bringing copies of the 2017 VHPA Calendar with us to the reunion to sell. Be sure to stop by the HQ Registration Desk to purchase one for \$15.00!

You can now pay your dues and pre-order your CD or Paper Directory on line thru the On Line Directory at <https://directory.vhpa.org>!

Don't forget...if you move, 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. You can also call HQ with an update to your contact information! If we do not have your correct address on file, you will not receive your Aviator!

If you know of anyone who 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 we can do to make that happen, PLEASE LET US KNOW!

Sherry Rodgers, VHPA Office Manager

From the Chairman of the VHPA Reunion Committee, Mike Law

An Update on the 33rd Reunion of the VHPA

Speaking for the VHPA Executive Council, the Headquarters Staff, and the entire Reunion Committee – I cordially invite you to attend the VHPA's 33rd Annual Reunion in Reno, Nevada from Monday, July 4th through Saturday, July 9th 2016 at The Peppermill Reno hotel. We have a wonderful Reunion planned for you, your family, and your friends! The Jan/Feb issue of The Aviator devoted thirteen pages to the Reunion. The Mar/Apr issue had five. Continuing the "sitrep" style, this issue will have five as well. So, here are FOUR points for your consideration.

First, THANK YOU! – Please don't procrastinate!

As you can see in the Morning Report on www.vhpa.org, the Reunion registrations continue at a nice pace since the Online Reunion Registration Application (ORRA) opened to the public in mid-December. As of late March, the Reno Reunion Registrations are just slightly higher than our 2013 Reunion in San Fran. At this point, we believe we have over 55% of the projected attendance of 1550 adults. Our hotel reservations are also strong with 74% of the VHPA's adjusted room block at the Peppermill taken. As of late March all three room types in the VHPA block are still available. Recently the hotel said:

- While they will sell out over the July 2 through 4 weekend/holiday period, VHPAers can expect to get rooms on those nights at the VHPA rate until the cutoff date.
- Over our peak nights July 6 through 8, rooms in the Tuscany Tower suites may all be gone by the end of April and rooms in the Peppermill Tower will be nearly all taken.
- June 1, 2016 is the cutoff date to receive the VHPA rate. After that, while you can most likely get a room in

the Peppermill; it may not be at the VHPA rate. So **THANK YOU** for all who registered early as we begged you to do.

Second, the Reunion Committee still needs VOLUNTEERS – please.

Please go to www.vhpa.org and see the Volunteer Schedule AKA "Duty Roster" – dates, tasks, number of people needed, etc. This

has worked very well for the last few years. Surprise, surprise – the list of volunteer opportunities is LONG! Big party – big list - go figure!?! Please call Melissa Allen at HQ (Mondays and Fridays are her normal days) or send her a message at melissa@vhpa.org. THANKS!!

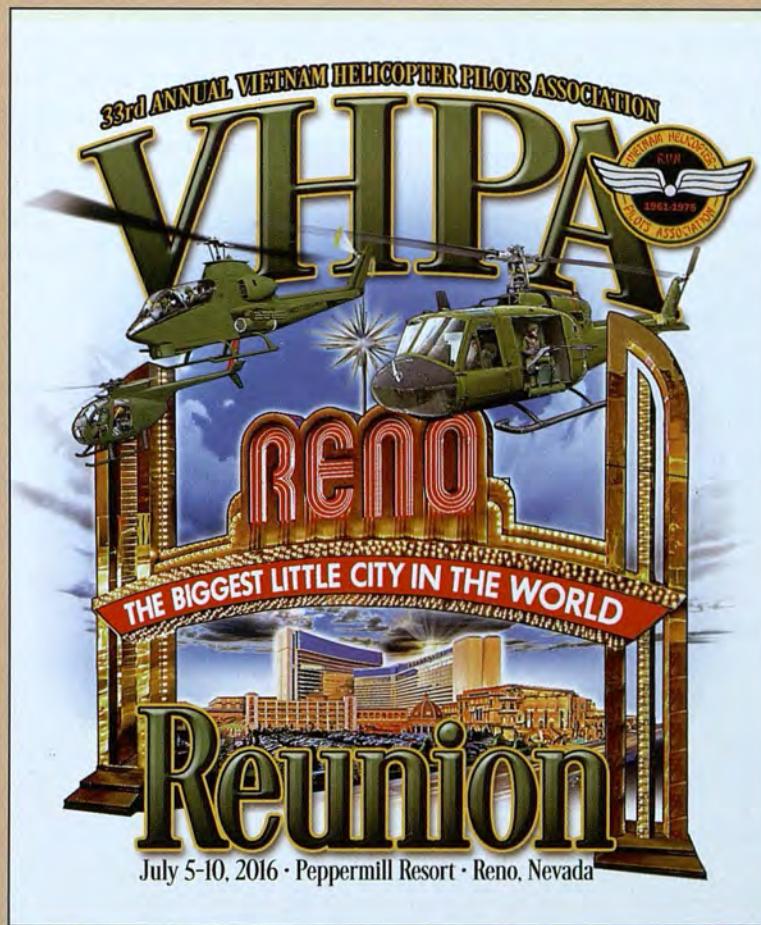
Third, the winter snows have been "good" for the mountains around Reno versus the unusually dry conditions they've experienced over the last few years. So, good news, the lake levels are up. There is water for the golf course. Hopefully there will be no fires in the Reno area.

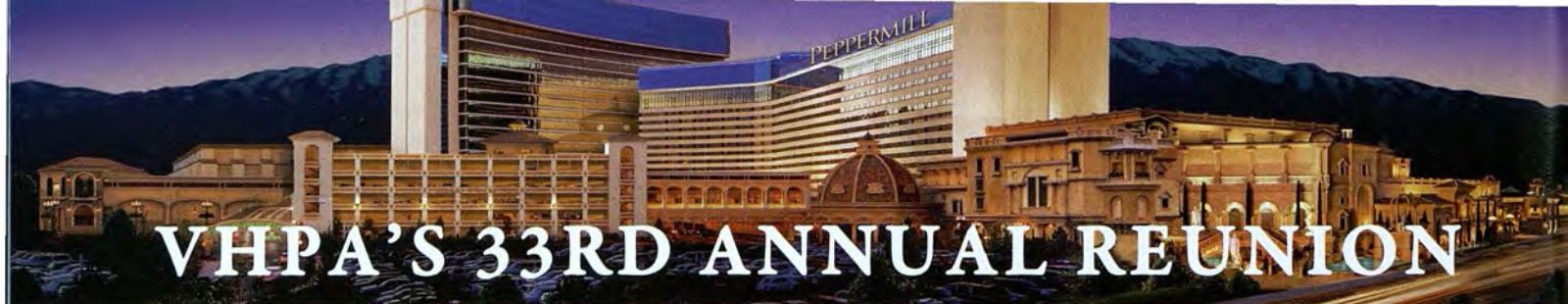
Fourth, please look to www.vhpa.org for all your Reunion needs!

This VHPA Reunion follows our pattern of having literally a "hundred moving parts." As GREAT as The Aviator is [and it is GREAT!!]; there is no way we can communicate details and status to you with printed media. Please, please use www.vhpa.org, then the Reunion Information page. For example, see the 'Details for all reunion information' line. The underlined and bolded "reunion information" is a link. Double clicking on it lets you see the entire document.

Questions or Comments...?

As always, get in touch with HQ at 800-505-8472 or HQ@vhpa.org or Mike Law at [REDACTED]





VHPA'S 33RD ANNUAL REUNION

A Second Shuttle Route for Reno Reunion

By Mike Law, Chairman of the VHPA Reunion Committee

At least on Thursday, July 7th, the Reunion will have a second shuttle route to complement the Reno City and Museum Shuttle bus. We say "at least" because there are plans to extend the July 7th activities to Friday, July 8th if we get the approvals. If you registered for the Nevada Army National Guard Aviation Tour or are interested in this Tour or have some free time on July 7th, please read on.

The Original Plan

As of mid-December when the Reunion details were published online and given to The Aviator for the Jan/Feb issue, the July 7th activity consisted of one private 10am to 1pm tour for at most 100 Reunion attendees of the Nevada Army National Guard Aviation facilities at the Reno-Stead Airport. The 189th Aviation Battalion, equipped with modern CH-47 aircraft, is based at this facility.

More Opportunities Present Themselves

In early January, VHPA member Mike Billow (on the Board of Directors of the Vietnam Helicopters Museum based at Buchanan Air Field, Concord, CA) contacted the Reunion Committee with the news they would fly their famous Pancho's 25th Inf Div Huey to Reno and arrange for Reunion attendees to visit it at Stead. Since he retired from the Operational Support Airlift (OSA) Flight Detachment, another Nevada Army National Guard Aviation unit, based near the 189th Avn Bn's facilities; he felt the Huey could complement the Tour of the CH-47 facilities. The Huey will park near the OSA building which will also serve as a rest area out of the sun. The Vietnam Helicopters Museum will have a table in the vendor area. You can sign-up at their table to visit Pancho's Huey. You can also contact Mike Billow at [REDACTED]

Now...to refresh your memory, the Vietnam Helicopters Museum brought Pancho's Huey to the "fly in" the VHPA 2013 Reunion had at the Hiller Museum in San Carlos at no expense to the VHPA.

In mid-January, VHPA member Bud Martin passed details to the Reunion Committee about the won-

derful, private museum, Harrah Military Museum, featuring some very special military items mostly from WWII. The owner is willing to open the museum and provide tours at no cost to the VHPA or attendees. Contact Bud Martin at [REDACTED] for details.

Bud added: "Oh, by the way there is this world class hunting, fishing, and outdoor sporting gear outlet called Scheels not far from the museum that is about twice the size of a Cabela's. I'd bet a lot of guys would enjoy getting lost in that place for an hour or so!" Just Google "Scheels Reno" and enjoy!

The Reunion Committee went back to the 189th Avn Bn with the idea to expand the Tour from "at most 100 from 10am to 1pm" to something like an "all day Open House" until about 4pm. To quote, CW3 Steve Nielson, "You guys served us years ago; it's our turn to serve you. We will make that happen."

The Current Plan

(remember this may expand to July 8th as well!)

The VHPA will have two additional buses (independent from the Reno City Shuttle) for Thursday, July 7th. The "Stead Shuttle" departs the Peppermill every hour on the hour starting at 10am. After passing the Security Check Point on Army Aviation Drive (see the Reno Stead photo), the first stop is near the 189th Avn Bn's building. All those interested in either the CH-47 Tour or visiting Pancho's Huey get off here. There is a large classroom in the 189th's building that can serve as a waiting area. It's air conditioned, has bathrooms, chairs and beats standing outside to wait for

the bus! The second stop is the Harrah Military Museum. Please see the photos from the Museum. The third stop is Scheels. From Scheels the bus returns to the Peppermill. The loop takes more than 90 minutes but less than two hours depending on the length of time at each stop, plus traffic. Hence two buses on staggered times. Detailed bus schedules will be posted at the Peppermill and are available as hand-outs for the riders.



Scheels Sporting Store

~ RENO, NEVADA JULY 5-10, 2016

IMPORTANT Notes about The Current Plan

1. While the price of the ticket for the Tour is zero, the Reunion is paying real money for the buses. We **expect** everyone who rides the "Stead Shuttle" to have purchased a Reno City Shuttle ticket.
2. We must provide attendance **rosters** for everyone going to visit either the 189th Avn Bn or Pancho's Huey. Each bus will have a printed roster to present at the Security Check Point.

■ Those who registered for either the AM or PM NV Army Guard Tours, we've got you covered! Because you pre-registered for the 10am or 1pm Tours, you will have priority getting on those buses; however, you can now visit Stead anytime on July 7th – you are not restricted to just the 10am or the 1pm Tours.

■ For those who have registered for the Reunion and now wish to take this Tour, please call or email VHPA HQ and they will add you to the roster.

■ For on-site walk-ups, please make certain you visit the Registration Desk not later than 5pm on

Wednesday, July 6th to be added to the roster.

The basic security requirements for this Tour are: (a) Names on the rosters AND (b) some sort of valid TSA identification such as a driver's license. Perhaps the online reunion registration website was a little "over the top" collecting full name, date of birth, etc. details for this Tour, so we've stopped requiring that.

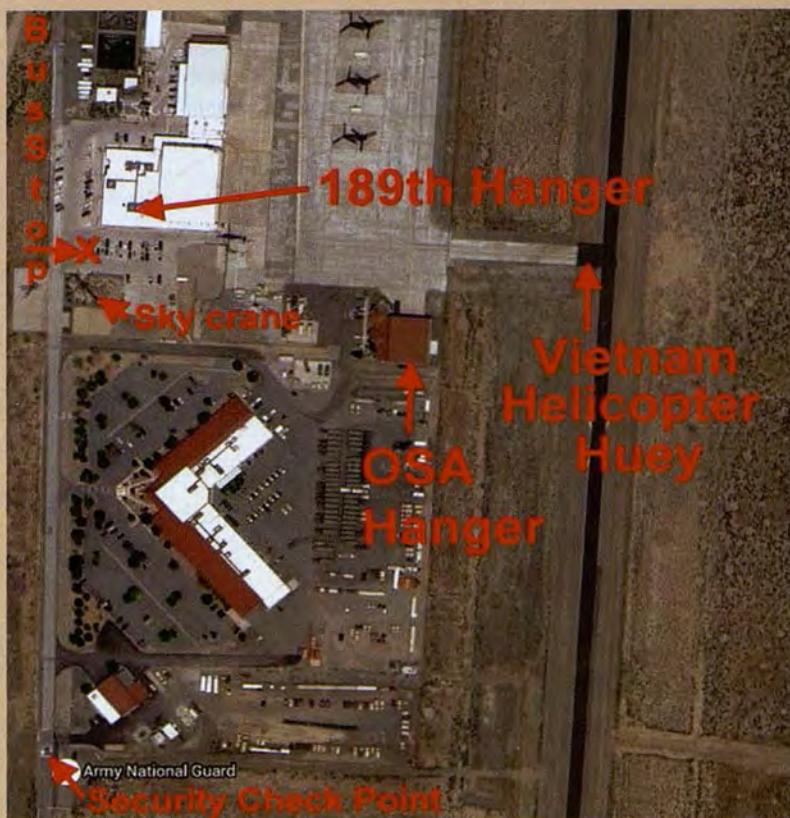
3. As a general rule, the Stead Shuttle will visit the three stops outlined above each hour. Thus, when you get off to visit, for example, Scheels unless you want to take a taxi; you are on your own for one hour. We have built a "clean-up run" at the end of the day into the Stead Shuttle schedule.

We make every effort to provide the latest information concerning tour/event status in the Aviator.

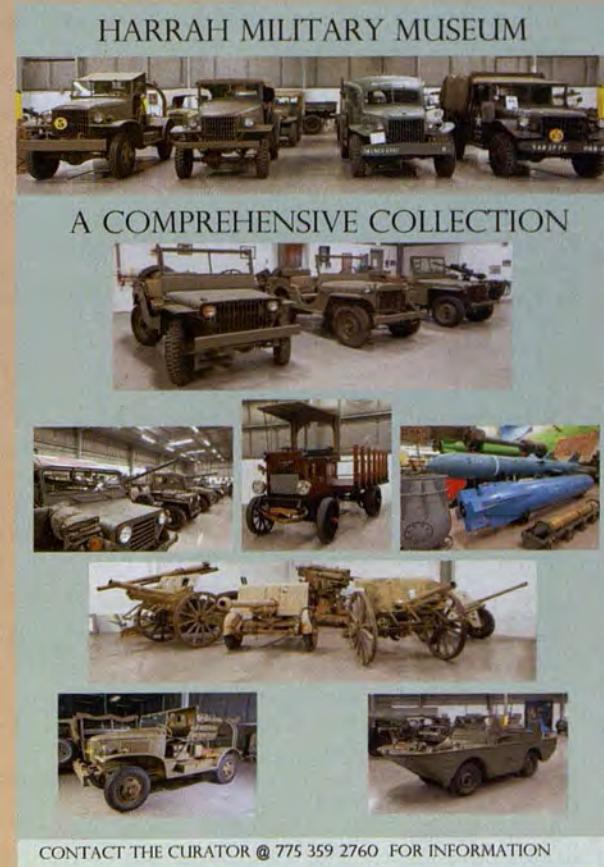
The lead time for printing, however, means that some tours/events shown as available may have sold out in the interim. Please consult the website

vhpao.org
for the current status of all reunion activities.

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



Guard facility map



CONTACT THE CURATOR @ 775 359 2760 FOR INFORMATION

OFFICIAL SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

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

Monday – July 4

4:00 pm - 8:00 pm Welcome Desk & Pre-registration
4:00 pm - 8:00 pm HQ Registration Desk
4:00 pm - 8:00 pm O'Club Open
6:00 pm - 10:00 pm Take Me Out To The Ballgame

Tuesday – July 5

7:00 am - 12:30 pm HQ Registration Desk
7:45 am - 3:00 pm Naval Air Station Fallon Tour #1
8:00 am - 8:00 pm Welcome Desk & Pre-registration
8:00 am - 8:00 pm T-shirt Pick Up
9:00 am - 4:00 pm Virginia City Tour #1
10:00 am - 11:00 am Peppermill Geothermal Plant Tour #1
10:00 am - 4:00 pm Reno City Shuttle
10:00 am - 4:00 pm Reno Shuttle with Museum Pass
11:00 am - 11:00 pm O' Club Open
1:00 pm - 5:00 pm Vendor Room Open
1:30 pm - 5:30 pm HQ Registration Desk
6:30 pm - 8:00 pm HQ Registration Desk
7:00 pm - 11:00 pm Early Bird Gathering
8:00 pm - 11:00 pm Early Bird Entertainment - "Hank Cramer"

Wednesday – July 6

6:45 am - 3:00 pm Golf Outing - Lakeridge Golf Course
7:15 am - 12:30 pm HQ Registration Desk
7:30 am - 9:00 am Breakfast with Speaker #1 ~ Vietnam Now
8:00 am - 8:00 pm Welcome Desk & Pre-registration
8:00 am - 8:00 pm T-shirt Pick Up
8:30 am - 5:30 pm Heavenly Day in Tahoe w/Sightseeing Cruise #1
9:00 am - 4:00 pm Virginia City Tour #2
9:00 am - 5:00 pm Vendor Room Open
9:00 am - 10:00 pm Mini Reunions / TOCs
9:30 am - 3:30 pm Frey Distillery & Winery Tour #1
10:00 am - 11:00 am Peppermill Geothermal Plant Tour #2
10:00 am - 12:00 pm Writers Workshop
10:00 am - 4:00 pm Reno City Shuttle
10:00 am - 4:00 pm Reno Shuttle with Museum Pass
1:30 pm - 5:30 pm HQ Registration Desk
2:00 pm - 3:00 pm Peppermill Geothermal Plant Tour #3
3:00 pm - 5:00 pm Banquet Seating
6:30 pm - 8:00 pm HQ Registration Desk
7:00 pm - 8:00 pm 1st Time Attendee Reception
7:30 pm - 11:00 pm Welcome Reception
8:00 pm - 11:00 pm Entertainment - "Robin Street Band"

Thursday – July 7

7:15 am - 12:30 pm HQ Registration Desk
7:30 am - 9:00 am KIA/MIA Gold Star Breakfast
7:30 am - 9:00 am Breakfast with Speaker #2 ~ Bill Albracht - FSB Kate
8:00 am - 5:00 pm Welcome Desk & Pre-registration
8:00 am - 5:00 pm T-shirt Pick Up
8:30 am - 5:30 pm Heavenly Day in Tahoe w/Sightseeing Cruise #2
9:00 am - 4:00 pm Virginia City Tour #3
9:00 am - 5:00 pm Vendor Room Open
9:00 am - 10:00 pm Mini Reunions/TOCs
10:00 am - 11:00 am Peppermill Geothermal Plant Tour #4
10:00 am - 4:00 pm Reno City Shuttle
10:00 am - 4:00 pm Reno Shuttle with Museum Pass
1:00 pm-3:00pm Nevada Army National Guard Aviation Tour
1:30 pm - 5:30 pm HQ Registration Desk
2:00 pm - 3:00 pm Peppermill Geothermal Plant Tour #5
2:00 pm - 4:00 pm Quilters Show & Tell
3:00 pm - 4:30 pm Movie Night #1 - "Cathy at War"
4:30 pm - 10:30 pm Tahoe Dinner Cruise #1
6:00 pm - 9:00 pm Dinner at the National Auto Museum #1

Friday – July 8

7:15 am - 12:30 pm Consolidated HQ Reg, Pre-Reg & T-Shirts
7:30 am - 9:00 am State of VHPA Breakfast
7:45 am - 3:00 pm Naval Air Station Fallon Tour #2
8:00 am - 5:00 pm Welcome Desk
9:00 am - 12:00 pm Nevada State Railroad Museum in Carson City #1
9:00 am - 5:00 pm Vendor Room Open
9:00 am - 10:00 pm Mini-Reunions/TOCs
9:30 am - 11:30 am Quilters Shop Hop
9:30 am - 3:30 pm Frey Distillery & Winery Tour #2
10:00 am - 11:00 am Peppermill Geothermal Plant Tour #6
10:00 am - 4:00 pm Reno City Shuttle
10:00 am - 4:00 pm Reno Shuttle with Museum Pass
11:00 am - 1:00 pm Banquet Seating
1:00 pm - 4:00 pm Nevada State Railroad Museum in Carson City #2
1:30 pm - 5:30 pm Consolidated HQ Reg, Pre-Reg & T-Shirts
2:00 pm - 3:00 pm Peppermill Geothermal Plant Tour #7
3:00 pm - 4:30 pm Movie Night #2 - "Cathy at War"
4:30 pm - 10:30 pm Tahoe Dinner Cruise #2
6:00 pm - 9:00 pm Dinner at the National Auto Museum #2

Saturday – July 9

7:15 am - 12:00 pm Consolidated HQ Reg, Pre-Reg & T-Shirts
7:30 am - 8:45 am Pre-Memorial Breakfast w/ Speaker TBA
8:00 am - 4:00 pm Welcome Desk
9:00 am - 9:30 am Memorial Service
9:00 am - 10:00 pm Vendor Room Open
9:30 am - 12:30 pm Spouse/Guest Event (Picasso & Wine)
10:00 am - 12:30 pm Annual Business Meeting
12:00 pm - 4:00 pm Reno City Shuttle
12:00 pm - 4:00 pm Reno Shuttle with Museum Pass
12:30 pm - 11:00 pm O' Club Open
1:00 pm - 4:00 pm Consolidated Reg, Pre-Reg & T-Shirts
1:00 pm - 5:00 pm Mini-Reunions / TOCs
4:00 pm - 6:00 pm Banquet Seating
5:00 pm - 5:45 pm Studio Photos
5:45 pm - 10:30 pm Closing Banquet w/Entertainment - "Johnny Z and the Camaros"

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

Open 1:00pm -5:00pm July 5, Open 9:00am-5:00pm July 6 through July 8 and Open 9:00am-10:00pm July 9

THE O'CLUB

Open from 4:00pm-8:00pm on July 4, 11:00am-11:00pm on July 5 through July 8, open 12:30pm-11:00pm on July 9

Visit ...

www.vhpa.org

for current Reunion details

Click on Reunion Information

(second down on the list to the left on the Home Page)



QUILTERS SHOW & TELL

Even though the program is Quilter's Show and Tell, everyone is invited to attend and observe what we quilters love to do.

There is still plenty of time before the Reunion in Reno to complete your block(s) for our Quilts for Veterans, but as we all know time passes all too quickly and as usual blocks are needed for the 2017 quilts.

There will be a few changes in this year's program. On Thursday afternoon, July 7th, starting at 2:00 in the Roma 1 Room will be the presentation of the quilts to the Veterans. The show and tell of our blocks for 2017 and projects either completed or in progress to follow. Friday July 8th the quilters will go on an excursion to a local quilt shop, Windy Moon, which will have a demonstration for us. We will leave the hotel at 9:30 a.m. by shuttle provided for the reunion and arrive at the quilt shop a short time later. We will board the shuttle back to the hotel at 11:00 a.m. Quilters wishing to visit Windy Moon Quilt Shop will need to purchase a Reno shuttle ticket.

Another change, the 2016 Veterans Quilts will be on display in the vendor's room. Please check the vendor's room for the scheduled times.

The requirement for the blocks are the same as in the past.

For those who want to participate and are unfamiliar with the process the following is suggested:

1. Please pre-wash all fabrics as some of the dark blues and reds are over dyed and may bleed.
2. Color scheme: red, white and blue, you may use one, two or all three colors
3. The blocks must be 12 1/2" x 12 1/2" unfinished. Please use 1/4" seams in your assembly.
4. Block design is of your choice, there are many to choose from, Rail Fence, 9-patch, Grandmother's Flower Garden, Appliqué block, Robbing Peter to Pay Paul, Orange Peel, Bow Tie, just to name a few. They may be simple or as complex as you like.
5. Make one or more blocks as you wish, we will construct as many quilts as possible from the donated blocks at a later date and any blocks left over will be saved for the following year.
6. Please print your name and state on a slip of paper and pin to the back of your blocks.
7. Please bring your block(s) to the 2016 VHPA Reunion for Show and Tell.

If you are unable to attend you may send the block(s) to Kathleen Sherfey, [REDACTED] not later than September 30th. (email: [REDACTED])



VietnamHelicopters.org, a 501 (C)(3) "Flying Aviation Museum" www.vietnamhelicopters.org Concord, CA, is planning to bring this historic aircraft to the Reno/Stead Airport 5-9 July and be available to VHPA members during the tour scheduled at the Nevada Army National Guard AASF.

*By Mike Billow CWS (Ret.),
member Board of Directors Vietnam Helicopters. org*

Restored Vietnam 25th Inf. UH-1H
Flying In For VHPA Reno July 2016!

Letters to the Editor

The following letter arrived for David Adams after he passed on. His wife, Linda, felt it was worth noting and I agree. Tom Kirk

Letter to the Editor of the VHPA Aviator.

David, about a year and half ago I sent an inquiry to VHPA regarding my dad. Immediately following the publication of my letter, about 4 months later I began to get email responses from men who knew my dad, and from some who didn't but reached out to me anyway! I've stayed in close contact with several. One who worked closely with my dad came through Columbus with his wife last fall. We spent a day together and he visited my dad in the long term care facility where he now resides. My dad is in advanced stages of Parkinson's and has significant dementia but recognized his visitor. He was fairly engaged as we continued our visit. He returned a salute when our visit concluded, which brought all of us to tears. Another veteran who flew with my dad during the incursion into Cambodia sent me a DVD he's made, which included a recording he made of the actual mission. I could just hear my dad's voice as he commanded from above, and I haven't really heard that voice in a long time.

I should have emailed you sooner, to let you know the wonderful outcome and to thank you and VHPA! We're planning to attend a reunion in Indianapolis in 2017.

Thank you-it's meant the world!

Sally Johnson

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Dear Editor

I have been tasked to develop a historical narrative for CH-47D 90-00222, formerly CH-47C 67-18521, I was wondering if you had any history on this CH-47C, any members who may have flown or crewed her, or any units the tail number was assigned to in Vietnam? Any information would be appreciated. The Airframe is being retired and placed on Display at the 11th Aviation Command FT Knox, KY.

Thank You

SFC James Reeves
D 5-159th GSAB
FT Eustis, VA



VIETNAM WAR MEMORIAL - HEROES NEVER THANKED.

Gary Roush tells us CH-47 67-18521 was assigned to A/159 Pachyderms October 1968 to August 1971, then 62 AVN Co March 1972 to July 1972, and 180th Big Windy August 1972 to January 1973. SFC Reeves' immediate need was by late April, but it might be helpful long term for him to have more information from individuals.

Thank you - VHPA Aviator Editor

TANK HUNT IN CAMBODIA

By *Carl (Skip) Bell*

In March 1972, C Troop, 3/17 Air Cavalry, call sign Lighthorse, was attached to 7/1 Cavalry, flying out of Vinh Long Airfield in the Mekong Delta of South Vietnam. I was assigned to the gun platoon, call sign Crusaders. When we had missions in the western Mekong Delta, we staged out of an airfield at a place called Chi Lang about one kilometer from the Cambodian border near a prominent terrain feature called the Seven Sisters Mountains. Yes, there were mountains in the Delta, not many, but they were there.

Chi Lang was an interesting place. It was the headquarters for the 44th Special Tactical Zone; an organization whose mission I wasn't sure of, but I suspect had something to do with cross-border operations as their troops were ARVN Rangers and Special Forces units. Another organization at Chi Lang was the, at that time, New Zealand Army's contribution to the Vietnam War: a school for mid-level Vietnamese officers, roughly equivalent to our Command and General Staff School. There were a total of 50 people assigned to the school; 49 of them were New Zealand Army officers. The 50th member of the group was their cook. The sole enlisted man was an excellent cook; he had trained in civilian hotels and restaurants in New Zealand. We took our meals in their mess hall whenever the OPTEMPO would permit. In addition, he would bring us cookies and lemonade when we were on strip alert at the Chi Lang airfield. The New Zealanders are really great people, and it was a pleasure to get to know them.

One day when we were working out of Chi Lang, we were scrambled to go into Cambodia to look for a North Vietnamese tank reported by a South Vietnamese Air Force forward air controller. We had been hearing rumors Russian or Chinese-made PT-76 tanks had been seen in southern Cambodia, and we jumped at the chance to get one.

Operating policy at the time stated we could not take OH-6 scout aircraft into Cambodia. So we went with two Cobras, and a UH-1H acting as both Command & Control aircraft for the mission and as our scout. The Huey was flying low (20' AGL) and the two Cobras were high (at approximately 1,500' AGL). The SA-7 Strella, a shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missile, had not yet been introduced into South Vietnam-Cambodia so the guns still flew high; this would change later on. The lead gunship pilot did the

map reading and guided the UH-1 while it was flying low. The Air Mission Commander flying the UH-1 was the Gun Platoon Leader, CPT George Anderson. George was on his second tour of duty in Vietnam. His first had been as an infantry officer in the 101st Airborne Division where he was awarded the Silver Star. George was a good Platoon Leader; he led from the front, was cool under pressure, and his laconic Arkansas accent rarely reflected any sense of stress when he talked on the radio.

As we began to search the area where the tank had been reported, the UH-1 dropped out of the sky and began to fly low and fast. The terrain was a flood plain, flat and dotted with trees with long bare trunks and foliage on the top. The occasional piece of higher ground had scrub bushes in addition to the tall trees. To be as fleeting a target as possible, the UH-1 was jinking and alternating its airspeed between 20 knots and 80 knots and varying its direction of flight. The Cobras were flying a racetrack pattern over the UH-1, with the inbound aircraft ready to dive and cover him when/if he took fire.

Suddenly, we heard George's voice on the radio. He clearly was excited and concerned: "We just took a hit and I don't know what it was but it busted out the chin bubble!" We in the Cobras had not seen any indication of enemy fire: no flash, nor smoke, etc. The UH-1 continued to jink along the ground and after a few more seconds, George's voice came over the radio again: "There's blood all over the place!" The lead gunship pilot asked who was hit. After a few more seconds, George answered by saying they had a bird strike. He said there were blood and feathers all over inside the aircraft and his chin bubble had a big hole in it. He said we should call in one VC bee-one-are-dee KIA.

There was some discussion about aborting the mission and going back to Chi Lang when George reported seeing wide tracks heading into one of the bushy areas. He said he would check out the area where the tracks led and for the guns to be ready to cover him if he ran into anything. The UH-1 moved slowly toward the patch of jungle where the tracks disappeared. After a couple of minutes, George came back on the radio and said the tank was actually a large green John Deere tractor! Of course, nobody had a clue how it got there and there did not appear to be anyone around. We reported our find back to our Troop Operations section and were instructed to return to South Vietnam. We never found out how that tractor got to southern Cambodia.



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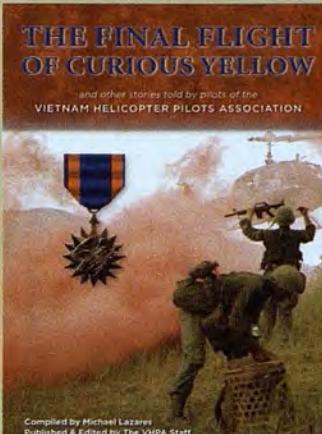


WEB SITES CONSOLIDATED

The VHPA web sites vhpamuseum.org and vhpaphoto.org have been consolidated into vhpa.org. They now appear at museum.vhpa.org and photo.vhpa.org respectively. Also, information previously stored at vhpadata.org is now on vhpa.org. This means any bookmarks for these sites no longer work. If you get a "404 error" while trying to access a bookmark with these old links, change vhpamuseum.org in the URL to museum.vhpa.org and change vhpaphoto.org to photo.vhpa.org while leaving the rest of the URL the same, it should take you to that page. You then would have to make a new bookmark and delete the old one.

BY GARY ROUSH
WEBMASTER@VHPA.ORG

COMING SOON



"VHPA Member and author Michael Lazares, who passed away recently, approached the VHPA late in 2015 with an idea to publish a collection of stories which had been submitted to the VHPA and placed on the VHPA website. This would be something entirely new and extraordinary for the VHPA: publishing an anthology of 30 stories written by 28 VHPA members under our own copyright.

This is an opportunity for the VHPA to tell the stories of the service and sacrifice of their members all those years ago, maintain the legacy of our service, and use the profits to support the VHPA Scholarship Fund."

~ John L. Penny

**Watch for it at: amazon.com
vhpa.org
Reunion 2016
July/August VHPA Aviator**

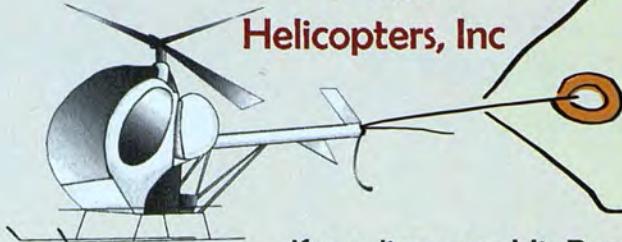
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WELCOME TO THE VHPA!

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, current city and state. Line 3, branch of service. Lines 4 to 6, flight class and Vietnam units and served with, if that info is available.

We welcome these 6 new Members to the VHPA!

All have joined our Association during the period from February 3, 2016 - March 27, 2016.

Barney David E 'Dave'
Butte Montana
Army
70-34
282 AHC in 70-71

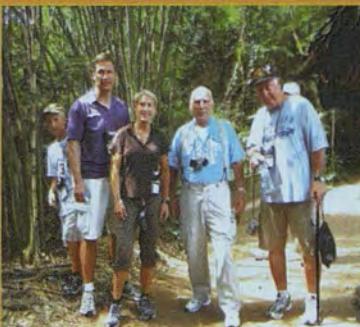
Dwyer Michael W. 'Mike'
Danville Pennsylvania
Army
69-21
195 AHC in 69-70; C/229 AVN 1
CAV in 70-71

Joplin Paul L **
Little Rock Arkansas
Army
64-2
242 ASHC in 70-71; 173 AHC in
66-67

Shelton Ronald G. **
Killeen Texas
Army
70-37
D/1/10 CAV in 70

Shy James D. 'Jim' **
Plano Texas
Air Force
65-C
38 ARRS in 68-69

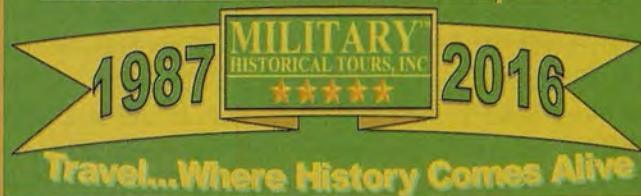
Spraggins James V. **
Kaneohe Hawaii
Army
69-21
A/1 AVN 1 INF in 69;
175 AHC in 70



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The Most Decorated Flight Crew in Vietnam: THE STORY OF CHERRY SIX

The most northerly air base in South Vietnam during the Vietnam War was Da Nang Air Base which was located only 85 miles south of the demilitarized zone (17th Parallel) that demarcated North and South Vietnam. Once a limited airfield inherited from the French, it wasn't until the early 1960s that the South Vietnamese expanded Da Nang into a modern military air base. The first US advisors with the Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG) arrived in 1961. Over the next three years as the US military presence ballooned, Da Nang AB became a vital base for close air support for the US Marine Corps operating in I Corps, the military operating area just south of the DMZ that was centered on Da Nang. When it became necessary to increase the USMC aviation presence in I Corps, Da Nang AB was practically over capacity and a second air base had to be built in 1965 about 56 miles to the southeast of Da Nang at a location called Chu Lai. Elements of Marine Air Group 12 (MAG-12) were

based at Chu Lai, including Marine Observation Squadron 6 (VMO-6) and their Bell UH-1E Iroquois Huey helicopters. During the Korean War, VMO-6 was the first Marine Corps helicopter squadron in history to enter combat - flying observation, reconnaissance, and escort missions at the Pusan Perimeter in 1950. VMO-6 had just converted to the Huey in 1964 and commenced operations at Chu Lai AB in September 1965.

It would be a four-man UH-1E flight crew from VMO-6 in 1967 that would become the most decorated flight crew of the Vietnam War. On 19 August 1967, an Army Boeing/Vertol CH-47 Chinook was enroute to Chu Lai AB with a load of injured soldiers. Twenty miles out, the Chinook came under heavy small arms fire from Viet Cong in the area. They set down on a beach where the



Emblem of VMO-6 "Tomcats"



The flight crew of CHERRY SIX: (L-R) Phelps, Pless, Fairfield, and Paulson
(Defense Department/Valor Remembered)

Song Tra Khuc River empties into the South China Sea to assess the damage. While several of the crew were outside of the helicopter examining the damage, Viet Cong troops in the area lying in wait opened fire on the helicopter. In a rush, the pilot took off, leaving four crewmen behind on the beach. He radioed immediately on the emergency guard channel that his aircraft was all shot up and he was trying to make for a safer location adding "I still have four men on the ground, the VC are trying to take them prisoner or kill them; God, can somebody help them?"

Captain Stephen Pless was flying an armed UH-1E with the call sign Cherry Six on a medevac escort mission when he received the transmission of Americans in immediate danger. Pless discussed the radio call with his copilot, Captain Rupert Fairfield and Pless decided their original mission, escorting the medevac of a single injured Korean Marine, didn't need their escort services and they flew to the location of the trapped men on the beach. Overflying the area, Pless noted the trapped men were under

heavy machine gun and mortar fire. Seeing three jets overhead as well as four Army Hueys orbiting offshore, Pless noted they were all reluctant to move in because of the heavy fire coming from the VC advancing on the beach. He then asked his crew "How do you feel about going in?" getting a thumbs up from Captain Fairfield and his two crew chiefs, Gunnery Sergeant Leroy Paulson and Lance Corporal John Phelps.

Stephen Pless was no ordinary Marine officer. He joined the officer corps from the enlisted ranks but he still had great affection for his enlisted men. He frequently socialized with the Marine enlisted at Chu Lai and it's said he spent more time in the enlisted quarters at the base than the officer quarters. He had several hundred missions under his belt already and some of the Marine crew chiefs

had flown secret missions with him into Laos. Pless knew his men would follow him down to that beach with no hesitation and anyone would have done it with Pless as their commanding officer.

On their initial approach to the trapped men, the first elements of the VC force of about 40 to 50 men were already upon the men, disarming them and hitting them while the rest of the VC moved out from the tree line onto the beach. Since the VC soldiers were too close to use their rockets, Gunnery Sergeant Paulson opened up with M60 machine gun, scattering the VC soldiers. As they ran back for the safety of the tree line, Pless fired white phosphorus-tipped rockets into the mass of fleeing VC. Wheeling the Huey around for several passes, Pless fired more rockets as well his side mounted guns into the tree line, taking heavy small arms fire in the process. On most of his attacks he was less than 50 feet above the ground, in some cases so low that mud thrown up from his own weapons splattered the Huey's windshield. With his rockets nearly expended, Pless then landed his Huey near the trapped men, facing the ocean using his helicopter as a shield between the VC and the trapped men.

As several VC tried to approach the helicopter, Lance Corporal Phelps fired his M60 from the left side while Gunnery Sergeant Paulson jumped out and ran to the trapped men- he was able to get the first man aboard as he was still able to walk; Paulson then ran back to the next man while under heavy fire. Captain Fairfield then exited the cockpit to help Paulson with the second man. As he jumped out, Fairfield saw three VC only 10 feet away. He quickly unhooked one of the M60 machine guns and killed all three with a short burst. He then ran to Paulson to help get the second man aboard while Lance Corporal Phelps provided cover fire with his M60. Getting the second man aboard, Fairfield and Paulson then ran for the third man, but he was heavier than the other two. Phelps gave his M60 to the first injured man, Staff Sergeant Lawrence Allen, who was propped up against the back of Pless's seat. He cradled the M60 with his injured arm and continued providing suppressive fire with his good arm. With Fairfield, Paulson, and Phelps carrying the third man to the Huey, a single VC with a hand grenade approached. Phelps dispatched that soldier from ten to fifteen feet away with six shots from his service pistol. Fairfield and Paulson also fired their service pistols as well as they carried the third man to the helicopter.

With the third man aboard, Fairfield and Paulson ran back for the fourth man but he was already dead. As they



Marine UH-1Es looked like this 1965 example at Chu Lai. By 1967, the yellow warning stripe was removed as well as the US insignia with "Marines" titles in black to reduce their visibility in combat.

jumped back into the Huey, Pless began to takeoff but the three extra men made his helicopter significantly overweight. With the only reasonable avenue of departure being over the ocean as the VC small arms fire intensified, Pless bounced off the waves repeatedly until the helicopter had enough airspeed to climb away from danger. He then had the crew jettison or throw overboard anything that wasn't needed to get to Chu Lai only 20 miles away. Enroute, Paulson and Phelps rendered medical aid to the three injured men.

Unbeknownst to the crew of Cherry Six, one of the Army Hueys Pless observed orbiting offshore made a run in to provide additional covering fire. Flown by Warrant Officer Ronald Redeker, he made multiple strafing runs with his door gunners until their ammunition was exhausted.

Seven days later, the commanding officer of VMO-6 wrote a letter that passed up through the chain of command to the Secretary of the Navy recommending Captain Stephen Pless for the Congressional Medal of Honor. In the same letter he also recommended Captain Fairfield, Gunnery Sergeant Leroy Paulson, and Lance Corporal John Phelps for the Navy Cross, the second highest award from bravery after the Medal of Honor. The awards were all approved- not only making Captain Stephen Pless the only Marine Corps aviator to earn the Medal of Honor in Vietnam, but also making the entire crew of Cherry Six the most decorated flight crew of the Vietnam War.

Sources: *Marine Air: The History of the Flying Leathernecks in Words and Photos* by Robert F. Dorr. Penguin Books, 2007.

Assault from the Sky: US Marine Corps Helicopter Operations in Vietnam by Dick Camp. Casemate Books, 2013.

Vietnamese-American still marvels at flying helicopter to freedom in 1975

On the last day of the Vietnam War, South Vietnamese armed forces were in disarray. Duc Huynh, a South Vietnamese helicopter pilot, flew to the capital city of Saigon, but “most of the higher up people, they’re not there,” he recalled recently.

“The tanks come close to Saigon already,” he said. “I didn’t know what I was supposed to do.”

Huynh, who still speaks with a heavy accent, wanted to stay and fight the communists, whom he hated. But then he heard from another pilot that the South Vietnamese president, Duong Van Minh, had surrendered to the North Vietnamese.

“That is survival,” he said of his next steps. “I have to do something with my family,” which was about 125 miles away.

“I didn’t have any plan. I just a lucky guy,” said Huynh, the owner of Pacific Auto Store in North Kelso.

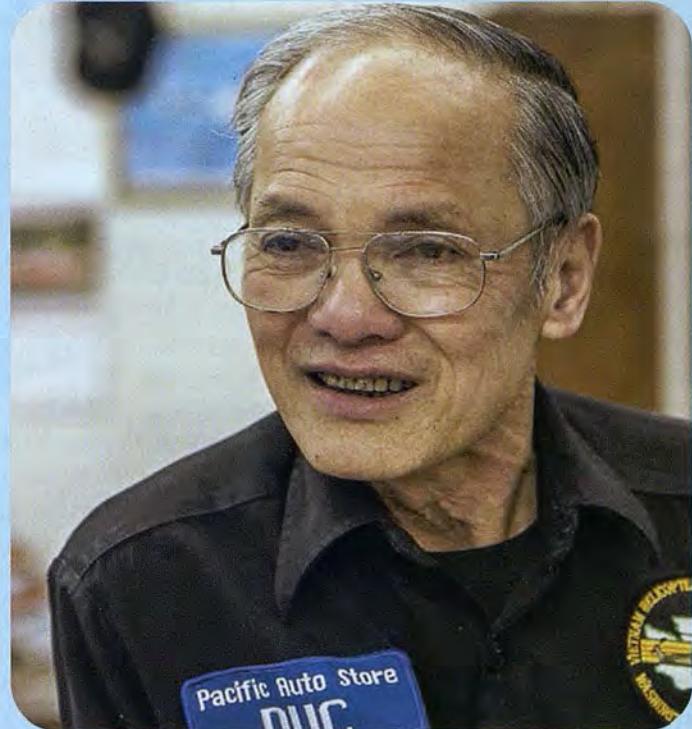
Huynh’s escape to an American aircraft carrier with most of his family on April 30, 1975, is etched in his mind as if it happened last week. He still marvels that his family escaped as easily as it did, and that he ended up settling in Kelso rather than spending years in “re-education camps,” which were actually prison camps where some inmates were tortured.

A customer of Huynh’s store suggested he tell his story for last fall’s Daily News series on Vietnam veterans, but Huynh didn’t want to be featured in a series about those who served in the United States’ military — a group he honors.

Shot down three times

In 1975, Huynh (his full name is pronounced “Duke Hwin”) was a captain in the South Vietnamese Air Force, piloting a UH-1 Huey gunship. He had spent 18 months in the United States completing flight and language training.

Asked if his chopper was ever shot down in Vietnam, he replied “only three times” with a grin. “It tended to be a dangerous job,” he said. “You had to get in first and (be) the last one to get out.” But because he flew in groups of



five to nine helicopters, there was always another one to pick him up when his chopper went down.

Huynh categorizes the last years of the Vietnam War by how much funding the U.S. Congress provided. “We got cut off by (President) Nixon,” he said. “That’s why the communists can win. They got support from Russia and China. We didn’t run away from the enemy. We ran out of supply and ammunition.”

Huynh has framed a photograph of a Huey like the one he piloted in his North Kelso auto shop.

In the last days of the war, Huynh was stationed at the Can Tho base in the southern part of South Vietnam but wasn’t flying regularly. “We don’t have enough fuel and rockets and bullets,” he said. “We had to save.”

After finding Saigon in chaos on the war’s final day, he found his family, which had been staying there. They didn’t know he was coming, and his wife, Glau Tran, wasn’t there.

Huynh’s co-pilot flew away to get his family of five and then returned. While he was gone, Huynh went to get his cousin and sister. The timing proved to be just right. By then, Tran and their three children — then 9, 5 and 4 — were all there.

"Something happened to my life," he said. "God set up just like that. I didn't plan to pick up my family. One thing happened after another thing."

Between the two families, about 20 people climbed on board the helicopter. He flew to Con Son, an island off the coast. Huynh landed there and tried to contact the American 7th Fleet, which he knew had ships in the area. On the island, Huynh couldn't turn down another five or six Vietnamese people who wanted to escape, bringing the total on the chopper to around 25.

He thought about returning to the mainland to rescue his brother, Bau, who was an Army officer, but didn't know where he was. "So he had to go to re-education camp for eight years," Huynh said. Bau eventually was allowed to leave Vietnam and now lives in Seattle.

"They say you can have 12 American people" in a Huey, Huynh said. But he figured that Vietnamese are smaller than Americans, and he didn't have the weight of rockets and bullets.

Huynh flew across the water to the aircraft USS Midway, which along with other American ships was involved in ferrying thousands of Vietnamese from the mainland.

Once he landed on the carrier, the Americans wouldn't let him back near the chopper. He doesn't know if it, like some, was pushed off the carrier's deck to make room for more to land.

"The people I pick up, they save my life," he said. If he had stayed and fought, he might have been killed or imprisoned.

Warm welcome in Longview

From the Midway (which is now a floating museum in San Diego), his family was transferred to a civilian ship, then to the Subic Bay base in the Philippines, and eventually to Arkansas.

Then another life-changing chance occurred. Another brother, Phuc Huu Huynh, had been able to get out of Saigon because his wife worked for the American Consulate. Phuc (pronounced "Fook") had been sponsored by Jim and Melody Parker of Longview — who welcomed Duc Huynh's extended family even though they had three children of their own. That brought the population in the Parkers' two-bedroom house near 32nd and Fir Street to 19, which rose to 20 when Huynh's sister-in-law, Ngoc-

Tuyet Van Huynh, had a baby named Lily. Word of the birth spread quickly after a Daily News article, and donations started arriving. "I still remember one old lady came over with some materials and gave her \$20," he said. "It's still unbelievable."

The next few years were an economic struggle for the Huynh family.

"My first job was picking cucumbers at Tsugawa's," Huynh said. He got a mill job, then worked at International Paper Co. until it closed in 1979. Huynh studied auto mechanics at LCC but said he couldn't get a job repairing cars. When what was then a gas station on North Pacific Avenue came up for sale in 1981, he bought it. Today, it's a repair business and parts store.

Huynh's three children — Thanh, Hai and Thahn Van — graduated from Kelso High School. Nearing 70, he's behind the counter of his parts store every day.

Huynh's a proud member of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association.

He wears a patch for the Vietnam Helicopter Association on his work clothes, and a grainy photo of him and his Huey crew in Vietnam is framed behind the counter, near racks of clutch and suspension parts. He's been back to Vietnam twice.

What would Huynh's life be like if he hadn't been able to gather his family up that dangerous day and fly out of his homeland? "I will come to America later after I graduate from relocation camp — if I'm still alive," he said.

Huynh agrees with many of those who fought in the U.S. military interviewed recently by The Daily News who said they wish this country had pursued the war longer. "If we stay maybe more people die but more people have freedom," he said.

He said history since then has shown the evils of communism. "If the communists so good how come only five countries left" with that form of government, he said.

"After they took over the whole country, the Vietnamese people know what the communists is," he said. "Up to 1975, Vietnam one of the best countries in Southeast Asia. Now Vietnam looks like the worst one."

*By Tom Paulu, Longview, WA, The Daily News
Photos by Bill Wagner, The Daily News*



UH-1D S/n XXXXXXX Sept. 1968

162nd AHC Dong Tam, RVN

Pilot: LT Little APO 96370

SF Radio callsign: The Vultures

When I arrived at the 214th Combat Aviation Battalion at Dong Tam in January 1969, I was just slightly better than your average "newbie". I knew from nothing. A pure newbie doesn't even suspect nothing! However, I was fortunate to meet a young Captain Little who was attached to the Battalion's Headquarters Company.

He now flew the Ash & Trash flights for battalion and on occasion would fly the C&C chopper. He'd had his turn in the 'barrel' as you will see from the following story. He wasn't terribly upset about not having to make troop insertions at the Ball Games anymore.

CPT Little was good enough to take the time to lead me around my new home away from home. We checked out supply for my new fatigue uniforms, jungle boots, flak vest, steel pot and the like. He gave me the grand tour of our part of the base which included the chow hall, BOQ, and our own little Officer's Club.

Next we sorted to the PX, located about a mile away, down by the river. The PX had just reopened after being closed since it had taken an 82 m/m mortar hit a couple of months before. I bought a box of King Edwards and some writing materials. There wasn't much in the store; most of the old inventory was lying in a big pile out back.

I left a couple of sets of my new fatigues at the Korean tailor shop to be fixed up like some I'd seen worn by the "strictly GI REMFs" in Saigon. I had to have the name tags, pencil pockets on the sleeve, my bogus organization tag (USCAF*), the Dyna company shoulder patch sewn on and creases sewn into the fatigue trousers. They were ready in a couple of days.

I was away from the base a lot for the next week or so. It was necessary for me to get to know as many of the Aviation companies stationed at various Army Air Fields in the Delta. Everyone received a copy of my orders explaining why I was there and what I was authorized to see (which was just about everything).

After a few weeks at Dong Tam, I was able to settle into the Army way of life and began to learn how to work things in my favor. It was after this shake-down period that Captain Little and I had a chance to spend more time together socializing, eating, drinking, and telling each other flying stories.

We had a lot of the same interests, so we got along well.

Later, we found a lot of the guys thought I was CPT Little's father. Little's father was a General and was in-country. Since I was the right age and now wore the tailored fatigues, cowboy hat and boots, everyone assumed I had to be high-up on the ladder to be in that kind of get up.

One of his stories that interested me happened early in his tour when he was still a Lieutenant and flying slicks for the 162nd Assault Helicopter Company.

The 9th Div had a Ball-game going 25 klicks north-east of Dong Tam. The LZ was along the Song Vam Co Tay river in Go Cong province southeast of Tan An. Almost anyplace in Go Cong was "Indian Country." A search and destroy/scout fire team had discovered a VC supply cache area along with bunkers built into the banks of the river on either side. This was obviously an important complex.

LT Little was flying the number three position in the Eagle Flight. A likely LZ had been picked near the river so the grunts could unass the choppers and get right to work. The trouble was this LZ was just too likely, and Chuck had it set up and was waiting for them.

By the time LT Little's aircraft began dropping into the LZ on short final, the VC gunners really had their range. His chopper was being severely raked fore and aft by automatic weapons fire.

LT Little caught a burst through the chin bubble from an AK47 and took five hits to his chicken-plate chest protector, plus one above it that cut through his neck. The aircraft had taken hits from the chin bubble to the tail stinger.

The Master Caution panel lit up like a Christmas tree. Everything had gone wrong, but everything was still turning, so LT Little pulled pitch and climbed out of there.

The transmission oil pressure went to zero and the transmission temperature went off the clock. To make things worse, Little's chest and neck hurt like hell.

LT Little advised the C&C he had been hit, and hit hard. The C&C called and asked Little what his intentions were. LT Little thought a second, knowing dammed well he wasn't going to set it down here. Then he said, "Sir, I'm going to fly this bird up this river to the fire base at Tan An, and crash and burn!" The C&C Backseater couldn't top that. Because this LZ was way too hot, C&C decided to reschedule the insertion and shepherded LT Little as he flew toward Tan An.

LT Little was still in control of everything, he had the wounded chopper flying nose down and tail high, making it as fast as it was aerodynamically possible.

He could hear things grinding up behind him, but he knew when everything's gone anyway, it's not the time to baby it. The rule is to crank all the power in and keep it turning. As he neared the fire base, the noise grew louder, then stopped with a bang! The rotor blades jerked to a halt and the Huey dropped into the rice paddy from about 50 feet.

The paddy had been recently drained, so it was mud to about two feet deep. The chopper hit hard on the toes of the skids and then its nose. LT Little and his Peter pilot flew out through the wind-shield, seats and all. They landed head first into the mud as the chopper bounced over them. The Huey bounced one more time, then fell over on its back and caught fire. By then the door gunners and all the grunts were out, scattered about in the mud all over the rice paddy. They had been thrown clear as the Huey did its dance. Fortunately, the gooey mud probably saved their lives.

The C&C aircraft had been circling overhead and the Colonel exclaimed, "My God! He did it, he did it!"

LT Little had been rendered unconscious when he had been driven head first into the rice paddy mud. When he came to, he couldn't see anything and thought, "Is this what it's like to be dead?"

Meanwhile the troops from the fire base came out through the wire to help pick up the pieces. LT Little felt his seat move, then roll over and he could see again. Eager hands began unstrapping the seat, taking off his helmet and chicken plate vest, and helping him to his feet. A medic from the fire base was running around giving first aid to the injured men who needed it most. As Little came out of his daze, he realized he wasn't hurt too bad at all. His chest was one big bruise and the bleeding from the wound in his neck had been controlled by a field bandage; somehow, that bullet hadn't hit anything vital. LT Little was now a confirmed believer in chicken plates. If he hadn't had that armored vest, they would have all been lost. The sky hadn't been falling, it was just "Chicken Little's Chopper". He came to be known to some as "Chicken Little". Back in the World, my people at Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD called my subsequent report, "The Chicken Little Affair". Other men who had been in that chopper hadn't been as lucky as LT Little. Almost everyone had been hurt by either the withering ground fire or in the horrific landing. One of the Grunts was KIA; it was as bad as it could get for him. When I think about it, all things considered, the rest of those on board were lucky. What if LT Little hadn't been wearing his chick-

en plate vest or the round through his neck had been a millimeter one way or another? Things could have been a lot worse.

In a few weeks, the lieutenant was returned to his company and the beat went on. His name was on the Captain's list for promotion and when it came through, he was moved to Battalion.

If CPT Little followed in his father's footsteps, he would now be General Little. I wonder where he is? He was a right sort of fellow.

*United States Confederate Air Force

Tony Spletstoser

James, 'Tony' Spletstoser was a civilian combat damage photographer assigned to the 214 CAB. He recorded aircraft damage for the Army and spent most of his time in the Delta. He is the author of many interesting and factual stories about the operation there during 1969-70.

Ed

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Contact [REDACTED]

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The pilots, crews, and members of A company 229th AHB are planning a reunion of those individuals associated with us from 1966 through 1968. The get together will be informal and centered around this year's Air Venture in Oshkosh, Wisconsin between **July 25th and the 28th**. Anyone interested can contact Chris Laskey at [REDACTED] for information.

191 AHC REUNION

September 8 - 11, 2016

Location: Las Vegas, Nevada

Reunion Webpage: <http://www.191ahc.org/reunion5h1.htm>

173 AHC REUNION

The 173rd AHC (Call signs Crossbows and Robin Hoods) are having a reunion in Nashville, TN from June 23 to 26, 2016, POC is Rich Johnson. Email is [REDACTED]

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We will be having our dinner on Thursday night the 15th at the U.S. Space & Rocket Center. The 2015 food and drink menus are examples of what to expect. The Biergarten is open to the public, but they will reserve a table area for our group.

The CH-47 Program Manager's Office will provide a briefing for us on the latest information for the Chinook (date to be determined). They have also offered to set up a CH-47F static display for us to tour. The aircraft will be at Redstone Army Airfield. For us to gain access to the installation will require those that do not have a Military/DoD ID to be pre-screened. This means that you and any other visitors provide the Reunion Host with the following information:

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Escape From Darkness

Ben Bentley, B Troop Guns, 7/1st Air Cavalry

From about two miles away at an altitude of 1,000 feet, I watched as the B-52 Arc Light strike began exactly on time. The initial flash fireball from each of the massive explosions quickly spread out in a gray-black smoke cloud of flying debris with a visible shock-wave force, destroying everything natural and man-made in its path. From 30,000 feet, each of the three giant B-52 Stratofortresses in the flight dropped approximately 27 tons of bombs, laying down an unbelievable path of total destruction. It was easy to understand why the Viet Cong referred to these strikes as "The Chain of Thunder." The VC had no possible defense against them except to run, but run to where? They never saw or heard the aircraft. Their world just suddenly exploded all around them.

I was a Cobra pilot in B Troop, 7/1st Air Cavalry serving in the Delta region of Vietnam, tactically known as IV Corps. In reality, it was our hunting ground. A place where we sought out the VC, reacted to intelligence reports and supported South Vietnamese soldiers with their Green Beret advisors. In many ways, the day-to-day routine became a mind numbing experience of simply staying alive.

This particular afternoon, we were near the edge of the U-Minh Forest, known to the Vietnamese as "The Forest of Darkness." Our mission was to conduct a bomb damage assessment for the B-52 strike. As soon as the bombs stopped exploding, the Scouts would swoop into the area to see what they could find. Scouts flew small OH-6 light observation helicopters at treetop level looking for signs of the enemy. All too often, the first indication of VC activity was the Scouts being shot at. With Scouts flying low, the Cobras circled protectively overhead, ready to dive and attack anything that challenged them. The Cobras were AH-1 gunships carrying 2.75-inch folding fin aerial rockets and 7.62mm mini-guns.

As the Scouts searched the bombed area, they spotted a camp near the outer edge of the strike zone. Wanting more detailed information about the camp, the C&C (Command and Control) radioed our Lift Platoon to crank up their UH-1 Hueys and bring in some ground forces to sweep through the area. Although deserted when the troops arrived, they reported it was a recently occupied POW compound, complete with food, cooking gear, clothing, and cages with locks. When the Arc Light strike began, the VC guards had grabbed their weapons and disappeared into the surrounding countryside along with their prisoners.

Any discussion of Vietnam POWs invariably centers on those who were captured and held in the camps of North Vietnam, the most infamous of which was the Hanoi Hilton. However, many of our soldiers were also held in widely dispersed, crude, small camps scattered throughout South Vietnam. The few POWs who made it home alive from these camps did not return to the same fanfare of those from

the North, but they too had suffered brutal treatment and endured.

The discovery of an active POW compound immediately changed our unit's mission priorities from search and destroy to POW recovery. We spent several days and countless hours systematically searching for prisoners. None were found. About a week after the B-52 strike, the POW search was cancelled and we went back to our routine mission of responding to intelligence and hunting VC.

The morning of December 31st began like so many others, a before-dawn takeoff for a long flight deep into the Delta. We were going back to the U-Minh Forest for a day of hunting. Although called a forest, the U-Minh was nothing like the triple canopy jungles of the northern highlands of Vietnam. It was a massive plain of dense scrub brush and trees, usually five to 20 feet high, crisscrossed by a seemingly endless array of small canals. B Troop deployed the typical two hunter-killer teams of two Cobras and two Scouts per team, the Lift platoon and a C&C helicopter. Our staging area was an empty field about 20 minutes flight time from the mission area where we would refuel and rearm from prepositioned portable fuel bladders and conex containers of ammunition.

Upon arrival at the staging area, the second hunter-killer team, the Lift platoon and the C&C all landed to top-off their fuel. My hunter-killer team continued directly into the U-Minh forest to start the day's search.

Almost immediately, the Scouts spotted a couple of long wooden boats called sampans, camouflaged and tied together in one of the small canals snaking throughout the U-Minh. They hovered around, using their rotor wash to blow away the camouflage, looking for any signs of VC. Within a couple of minutes, the lead Scout, piloted by 1LT Fred Young with gunner SP4 Abadella, started taking AK-47 automatic rifle fire from a nearby clump of brush. He broke away, calling "Taking Fire" and simultaneously popped a red smoke grenade. I responded immediately, rolling into a hard left bank, then simultaneously dropped the nose and put the rocket sight on the billowing red smoke. I called "Inbound Hot" and fired 2 pairs of rockets. As the rockets exploded, my front seat co-pilot/gunner sprayed the area with the turret mini-gun. At 4,000 rounds per



Author in Vietnam

minute, a mini-gun spit out a solid line of red tracers, looking much like a deadly water hose.

As soon as I started my break off the target, my wingman fired a pair of rockets to cover me. His co-pilot/gunner also sprayed the area with his mini-gun. Since we didn't receive hostile fire, I called "Going High and Dry," signaling the Scouts to go back and check the target area. They found three dead VC and their weapons but nothing else.

Shortly thereafter, the C&C helicopter, piloted by our Commander Major David Thompson and his co-pilot, Warrant Officer-1 Louis Schantz, arrived with our relief hunter-killer team. We reported the activity, turned the search over to them and then headed to the staging area to refuel. Since I hadn't fired much ordnance, I didn't need to shut the engine down and reload. Instead, my co-pilot/gunner refueled us while I remained in the cockpit, holding the controls at a flight idle while monitoring the radio traffic. We had just completed refueling when I heard the lead Scout, flown by Captain Jerry Free with gunner SP4 Richard Farinha, call that he had spotted someone trying to surrender. Major Thompson radioed they were going to land to pick up the surrendering VC.

Suspecting the surrendering VC might be bait in a trap, Major Thompson advised the Cobra team to keep him closely covered. If the C&C took any fire, the Cobras were to immediately kill the VC. Throughout the landing approach, the lead Cobra flew a loose formation with the C&C, positioned to put immediate covering fire under the C&C helicopter if needed. The Cobra gunner held his turret mini-gun sight on what appeared to be the surrendering VC. As the C&C descended to about fifty feet, Major Thompson transmit-

ted a radio call I'll never forget: "My God, it's an American!"

Although dressed like a VC in black pajamas and sandals, the C&C crew was now close enough to recognize that the individual was taller than the normal Vietnamese. He had a beard unlike most Vietnamese and the round eyes of a Caucasian.

When C&C touched down, the American ran toward the helicopter. He kept his hands high above his head until he was assured by the waving arm motions of the crew chief, SP/4 Michael Thompson and door gunner, SP/4 Breece Stevens, that he was not going to be shot. Once he was safely onboard, the C&C took off, climbing to a safe altitude above 1,500 feet.

The American identified himself as First Lieutenant James N. Rowe. The Scouts buzzed back into the area looking for any more POWs. Rowe indicated he was the only POW and there were only four surviving guards after the first Cobra strike. The four surviving VC were no longer important to us. Our priority shifted to getting 1LT Rowe back safely. Immediately after takeoff, Specialists Thompson and Stevens handed 1LT Rowe a canteen of water. They quickly opened several cans of C-Rations which the near-starving lieutenant eagerly devoured.

Major Thompson radioed for all B Troop helicopters to immediately join in formation on his helicopter to escort this hero on the first leg of his journey home. He radioed IV Corps Operations the code word indicating we had rescued a POW, followed by his phonetic initials, "Juliet November Romeo". The voice on the radio asked Major Thompson to stand by. A few moments later, a different voice came on the radio asking if the POW could be put on the radio. One



Author at present



A special "Thank You" goes out to SP4 Michael Thompson for this smiling picture of 1LT Rowe taken aboard the C&C helicopter minutes after his rescue, December 31, 1968. That other smiling face in the background belongs to SP4 Thompson!

of the crewmen gave 1LT Rowe a helmet and showed him the transmit control switch. The new voice said "Welcome Home, Roomy!" It was Lieutenants Rowe's roommate from West Point. We all had the privilege to monitor that heart-warming conversation.

First Lieutenant Nick Rowe was captured October 29, 1963 while serving as a Special Forces advisor and regained his freedom 5 years, 2 months and 2 days later, on December 31, 1968.

A few days later, B Troop received a short audio recording of some of the de-briefing of Lieutenant Rowe as he described exactly how he managed to get away from his guards.

Yes, he had been in the POW camp barely missed by the B-52 Arc Light strike. He and his seven guards had been living on the few small bags of rice they had carried from their camp. They added to their meager rations by eating bugs, grass and anything they could find since then. They had only a single cup of rice per day and everybody was getting very weak.

My initial Cobra strike killed three of his guards. As the survivors scrambled to get away from the Scouts and hide in the thick brush and trees, 1LT Rowe managed to get himself and one of the guards separated from the others. His guard had only two weapons, an old American M3 .45 caliber sub-machinegun, commonly called a grease-gun, and a single hand grenade. The M3 fires from an open bolt position, meaning a bullet is not carried in the chamber. When the trigger is pulled, the bolt slides forward, stripping a round from the magazine and shoves it into the chamber for firing. As they were going through some especially heavy brush, 1LT Rowe managed to bump into the guard and released the M3's magazine latch. The guard, not realizing this had happened, was left with an unloaded gun and one grenade. 1LT Rowe figured the guard was so weak he wouldn't dare throw the grenade at him for fear he would also kill himself. In 1LT Rowe's mind, the guard was now unarmed and the others were nowhere to be seen. When a Scout flew close by, he knocked the young guard down with a stick and ran into a small clearing, waving his white mosquito net and praying the Scouts or Cobras would not shoot him. On this day, his prayers were answered!

Several years later, I had the privilege of meeting Major Rowe. He had been awarded all of his missed promotions when he returned home. He came to our base on a speaking tour for Savings Bonds. Although I had only a couple of minutes to talk with him, it was a real pleasure to shake his hand and tell him I was flying one of the Cobras when he was rescued.

I consider myself lucky to have played a small part in the escape of this American hero. That single mission made my year in Vietnam worthwhile. I don't think this mission ever received much, if any, news coverage back home. But my fellow B Troop Dutch Masters know what we did on that day in 1968 and are proud of it. Personally, I think that all 7/1st Air Cavalry Black-hawks should take a great deal of pride in the fact our unit got one of the good guys back!

In 1971, Major Rowe's story of his POW experiences was published in his book titled "Five Years To Freedom". He retired from the Army in 1974. Lieutenant Colonel Rowe was recalled to active duty in 1981 and tasked to design and build a course

based on his POW experiences. That course, Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape (SERE) continues to be a requirement for graduation from the U.S. Army Special Forces Qualification Course. The other U.S. Military Services have similar courses based on his SERE school.

In 1987, Colonel Rowe was assigned to the Joint U.S. Military Advisory Group in the Philippines. Tragically, while serving in this assignment, he was assassinated by Communist guerrillas in April 1989.



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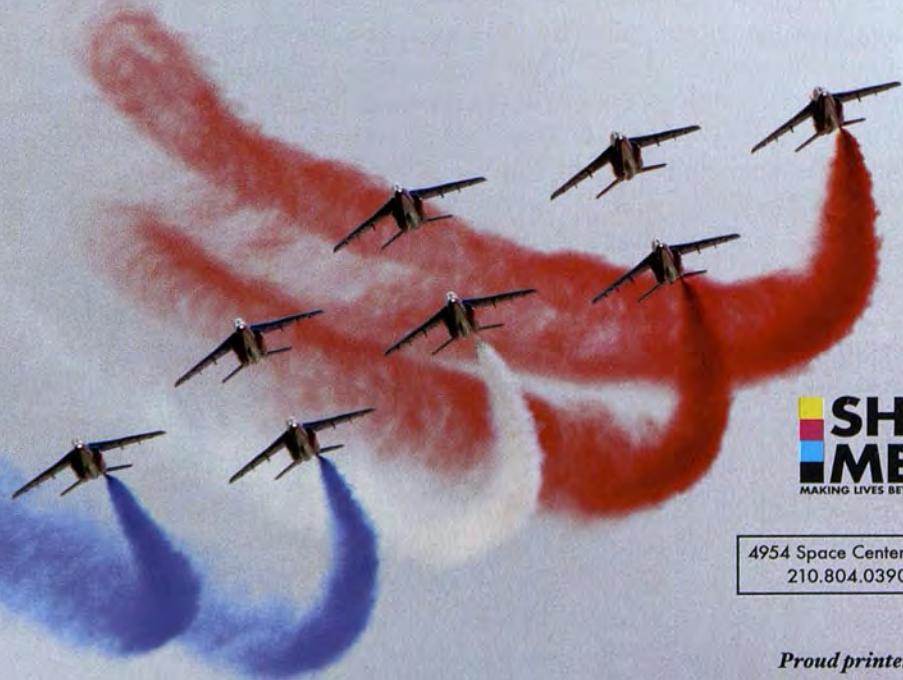
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Waxahachie, TX 75167
(972) 923-2624
ed@faughts.org

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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 Sorenson of the Chapter Liaison National Committee. John can be reached at 417-759-7487 or via E-Mail at: jsorenson7106@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

GEORGIA CHAPTER

Our bi-monthly breakfast meeting was conducted at our GA Chapter VHPA home base, the Rib Ranch (LZ Romeo Romeo) in Marietta, GA, on March 19, 2016.

During the business portion of our meeting, discussion revolved around ways and means of how our Chapter might lend support to the Vietnam Helicopter Crew Memorial Act. We also discussed and supported a monetary request to provide funds for repairs to "The Walk of Heroes/Veterans War Memorial" in Conyers, GA. Finally, there was some discussion on the impending decision to conduct the 2018 VHPA's 35th Annual Reunion in Atlanta, GA. A new member to the GA VHPA, Chris Garbow, was heavily involved as a FL Chapter member for the 2007 VHPA Annual Reunion in Orlando, FL. Chris will undoubtedly be a real asset to our efforts in hosting the 2018 Reunion.

Our speaker for this meeting was Tom McIntosh. Tom's presentation entitled, "After the Fall, Vietnam 1975 to Present" focused on what happened to South Vietnam and its people following the US Congress 1975 decision to cut off funds to our former South Vietnamese allies. The terrible consequences of this action essentially became South Vietnam's Holocaust. Our guest speaker for our next meeting on May 21, 2016 will be one of our own members, Jim Tornert. Jim flew for the 281st Assault Helicopter Company which supported 5th Special Forces operations. Over the past few years, Jim has volunteered at local Metro Atlanta High Schools and colleges, lecturing about the Vietnam War.

Our next meeting will again be conducted at our home base, LZ Romeo Romeo, on May 21, 2016.

Former Vietnam helicopter pilots interested in joining our Chapter, please view our website at www.ga.vhpa.org for a schedule of future meeting dates. For questions regarding our organization and/or directions to our meeting location, please contact me at [REDACTED]

By Bob Lanzotti, President



MICHIGAN CHAPTER

The Michigan Chapter's spring meeting is at noon on May 14 at the Log Jam Restaurant, 110 W. Jefferson, Grand Ledge, MI. Members, spouses, significant others, and interested parties are welcome to attend.

Besides meeting new and old friends, this is always a great opportunity to tell stories, swap lies, and invent new ones. The business agenda will include discussing our participation in events during 2016. One is the Operation LZ Michigan Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans that will take place again in Oscoda, MI on July 8, 9, 10, 2016. The

American Huey 369 and Bob Hope USO Show by Lynn Roberts will also be present.

Plans for a guest speaker are pending at press time. Members will be updated by email. There will also be an election of chapter officers. Nominees, volunteers, draftees are being sought to fill all positions.

For any VHPA members living in Michigan (or nearby) who are not currently on our email list, please feel free to email me at [REDACTED] to be added. You do not have to be a chapter member to be listed as an interested party. Who knows, you might just want to join us at a function or two. Spouses, non-aviator crewmembers, and any interested parties are welcome.

By Rich Deer, President

OHIO RIVER CHAPTER

On August 31, the Ohio River LZ Chapter of the Vietnam Helicopter Association held its annual reunion at Clarksville, TN and it was a great success. It was again a chance to see old friends and fellow Helicopter Pilots. It is always good to both see members and share the experiences with the group. On Friday we had a Behind the Scenes Tour at the Grand Ole Opry, dinner then a show at the Opry, this was an all-day affair, beginning at 09:00 and lasting until 21:00. On Saturday, we took a trip to Fort Campbell for a tour of the museum. Both activities were enjoyable. The Saturday evening banquet in historic Clarksville, TN at the Hilton Garden Inn, was a great success; we particularly liked the food.

Not enough credit is given to the individuals who plan and devote endless hours for this event year after year. It is always a success. I will take this opportunity to give them thanks from myself and the other members.

If you know any fellow Vietnam Helicopter Pilots who are not members, please make an effort to have them visit and become members of our chapter. Please direct potential members to our web site at WWW.OHRIVLZ.ORG. If you or a potential member needs information, contact me (Bob Blair) at [REDACTED]. If I cannot assist you, I will put you in contact with someone who can.

By Robert Blair

OKLAHOMA CHAPTER

February

The Oklahoma Chapter met at Johnnies Charcoal Broiler in Edmond, OK with approximately eighteen attending at noon on Saturday, February 27th, 2016. Tom Payne, President, greeted everyone with "Happy New Year" and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer for our leaders and our country.

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

The opening question of who was planning to attend the VHPA annual reunion in Reno, NV yielded about three raised hands. Tom Payne stated he would be attending and hoped to see several more at the reunion. It was also noted it was the first Reno reunion in over 20 years (1991). There were several who mentioned the great line-up of tours and activities around the Reno area.

Tom Payne relayed the information he had received from a recent chapter conference call with past president Bob Hesselbein concerning the VHPA efforts to have an adequate and significant memorial commemoration of marble/granite honoring all the pilots and crewmembers who lost their lives which would be placed in Arlington National Cemetery. He told how the effort had begun as an offshoot of the memorial tree planted at Arlington during the last VHPA reunion in Washington, DC and what a success it was for those who attended. Copies of a letter from the Department of the Army were passed out to all present which gave the US Army's "official" position concerning the larger and more significant memorial to be placed in Arlington. He also passed out copies of the House of Representative Resolution (HR-4298) which has been introduced into the House of Representatives agenda by two Congressmen from Wisconsin. The purpose of this conference call was to request members of each VHPA Chapter to make personal phone calls to each Washington DC office of the Oklahoma Congressmen and Senators to explain what HR-4298 is all about. When they call, everyone should request to speak to the Military/Veterans Affairs staff person of the Congressman. They should also ask the Congressman to be a Co-Author of the resolution which would help to ensure its passage. The desire is to have at least 100 Co-Authors sign on to make it a success. Tom Payne also passed out a complete list of the Oklahoma Congressmen and Senators with addresses and phone numbers both in Washington, DC and in Oklahoma. Everyone was urged to TALK to the appropriate staffer to ensure likely action instead of sending letters. If that person could not be talked to, an example e-mail was also passed out for all to have. Finally, a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document was passed out for all to better understand the whole project. There was considerable interest and discussion about the need for the memorial.

Tom Payne announced to the members that Dave Adams, the Editor of the VHPA magazine, *The Aviator*, was deceased and the new and current Editor would be Tom Kirk who had been the Assistant Editor in the past couple of years.

New Business

John Gaines reported that again this coming April 30th the Chapter was invited to participate in the annual Medal of Honor Day in Tulsa. He said the Chapter had participated last year at Veterans Park in Tulsa and had signed up several new members. He requested volunteer help and the

more that volunteered, the shorter time everyone would have to spend at the table in the tents. Several agreed to help out this year including Tom Payne.

As a final agenda item, Tom Payne requested the members consider doing something besides meeting once every two months on the last Saturday of each even numbered month. He offered two possible ideas to consider for the Chapter to be involved in.

First, he suggested the Oklahoma Chapter of the VHPA initiate an annual scholarship within the VHPA scholarship program in the amount of \$1,000. He said the Chapter could offer the \$1,000 as an outright scholarship without having to endow the scholarship which would require about \$25,000. There was some discussion about the idea as long as the \$25,000 would not have to be raised. Tom Payne said that it could be a flat \$1,000 each year and if the Chapter didn't have the funds, it wouldn't be offered. He volunteered to contact the Army Aviation Association of America Scholarship Foundation, who would be managing the scholarship, to see if they were acceptable to the flat \$1,000 instead of the \$25,000 endowed figure.

A second idea for the Chapter was to donate \$1,500 each year for a water filtration system to be installed in a school or orphanage in Vietnam through the Foundation called Viet Dreams. Tom Payne explained the process and how he and his family had donated for one of the systems to be installed in a school about 40 miles south of Da Nang, Vietnam. He reported that Viet Dreams had installed more than 100 of the systems in about two years. He showed pictures of the family plaque and the system his family had provided and there was some discussion about the whom and what of the Viet Dreams Foundation. Finally, everyone seemed to be somewhat interested.

In the final discussions about the type of project to undertake, the VHPA scholarship seemed to be the most favored. No action was taken other than having Tom Payne check with the AAAA Foundation to see how they felt about a yearly \$1,000 scholarship instead of and endowed one.

There was no further business, so the meeting was adjourned. Tom Payne asked the members if they knew the "ancient" Boy Scout benediction. Several said they thought they did but couldn't remember it. Tom Payne closed the meeting with..."And now, may the Great Master of all Scouts be with us until we meet again."

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 13:00.

By Tom Payne, President

THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN CHAPTER AND THE HELICOPTER WAR MUSEUM (HWM)

We held our March meeting at the American Legion Post #1. Member Terry Olson addressed the group on his progress with the Wings over the Rockies Air & Space Museum (WOR). The

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

RMCVHPA and the WOR Air & Space Museum here in Denver, (<http://wingsmuseum.org/>), have been working on a joint project. The Wings museum was established in the 1950s in honor of Lowry Air Force base and the airmen it serves. To date, only Air Force and Navy fighters plus a B1 bomber, a few civilian fixed-wing and a space capsule from the Smithsonian are shown; lacking helicopters of any branch or vintage. The Wings Museum contacted the Rocky Mountain Chapter last year and asked that our chapter provide a liaison to represent them as a consultant to assist them in locating and bringing in Vietnam-era helicopters to broaden the Museum's historical reach. Terry Olson volunteered to head this project. Terry has been working on this project for the past several months and has made contact with several agencies and talked with many people in the US and Canada for assistance. We are primarily focusing on non-flyable aircraft for static display such as the UH-1 (any model), AH1-G Cobra, OH-6s and OH-58s. Many sources have had flyable aircraft for hundreds of thousands of dollars, but The Wings over the Rockies museum is a small museum chartered under 501c non-profit and can't afford that level of expense. They would prefer a donated aircraft. Terry was successful in finding a repossessed partially assembled Huey at a reasonable price, but before he could act on the information, it was sold. We are facing a challenge going forward.

We know that some of the VHPA chapters have been successful in restoring and displaying Hueys and other models at their events. Maybe those of you who have done so could offer some guidance on where to go and what to do to obtain a Vietnam era display in the Rocky Mountain area. If anyone out there has any contact information to obtain a Vietnam era helicopter, please contact us at the email address below.

Other Chapter and Upcoming Activities:

We are excited and looking forward to another full year of planned activities for the Helicopter War Museum. We continue our association with Honor Flight under Carl Cavalluzzi's leadership. We also have events planned for May at the Front Range Airport and in June at the Longmont-Vance Brand Airport.

Meeting Schedule and other Information:

We normally hold meetings once a month, on the third Saturday of the month, at 10:00 at the American Legion Post #1, I-25 and Yale Avenue. We occasionally change venues, so contact us at the address below to verify dates, times, and location. We do not meet in December or July, but normally have a holiday get-together in December. The Museum committee meets periodically to continue categorizing inventory and developing additional displays.

We continue to look for artifacts for the Museum; among these items is a chicken plate with the cloth holder our visitors can put on and see what it was like to wear a chicken plate. We are also looking for a Vietnam era, non-functioning AK-47. Please contact our Chapter President John Hargleroad or Dale House, Museum Curator, with anything you'd like to donate or loan to the museum. We can be contacted through our mailbox at: RMC.mailbox@yahoo.com

By Dale House

UPPER MIDWEST CHAPTER

The Upper Midwest Chapter of VHPA met on 3/22/16 at the VFW of Coon Rapids, MN. Nine members were present. Several discussions occurred pertaining to a chapter web site, opening up membership to all crew members, a possible future meeting at a Minnesota Historical Society workshop and tracking a Veterans' celebration in July. A committee was tasked with the job of website development for the organization. As we did last year, we are pursuing a social dinner cruise on the Mississippi River for July or August.

We currently have 22 members and are looking for pilots. If you are interested in joining, contact President Don Abrams at [REDACTED].

By Richard Anderson, Secretary

ALAMO CHAPTER



Dining at the Barn Door

Ladies of our pilots enjoyed their monthly luncheon at Earl Abel's on March 11th, and they plan to continue these gatherings, which are usually scheduled on the second Friday of each month. The pilots met for lunch on March 9th at the popular Alamo Café. Members should watch for e-mails and check our Chapter website www.vhpalaamo.org for details of future luncheons and other scheduled events.

Our quarterly evening meeting, with wives and guests, was at the Barn Door Restaurant on March 31st, and was well-attended, as usual. Our guest speaker was LTC (Ret)

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

Gerry Auerbach, who flew B-29s in WW II and then flew C-47s during the Berlin Airlift. He gave us some very personal and interesting insights into those missions.

The American Veterans Traveling Tribute (AVTT) Traveling Wall will be in New Braunfels, TX, from May 25th until June 5th, set up at and sponsored by the Tree of Life Church, 5513 IH 35 South. Our Alamo Chapter has volunteered to provide all locator volunteers on Friday, May 27th, and Saturday, May 28th. We will help visitors find names and make rubbings. Chuck Oualline has the duty roster, so please contact him if you wish to help. The opening ceremony for the Wall

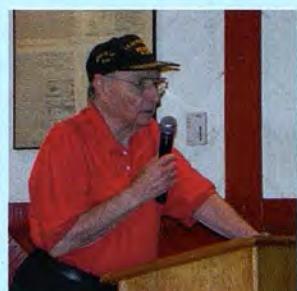
will be conducted on Friday, May 27th at 19:00. The church will have a barbecue to honor veterans on Memorial Day, Monday, May 30th from 12:00 to 14:00. This is free for all veterans and their families. Our Christmas party is scheduled for the evening of Friday, December 9th, 2016.



Dave Whitmey (L)
talking with guest
speaker LTC (Ret.)
Gerry Auerbach



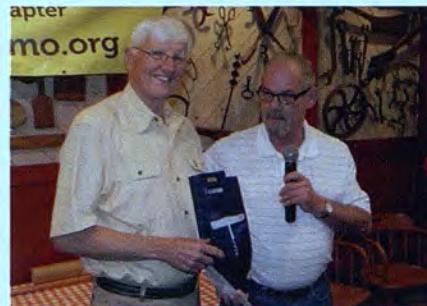
New member Eugene Beyer



Guest speaker LTC (Ret.)
Gerry Auerbach



Author Russ Jones



Ben Treadway, Chapter President
awards the Purple Heart bottle of wine
to a member



The purple Heart bottle of
wine

ALASKA CHAPTER

The Alaska Chapter was off to a roaring start as we gathered for nachos and beer at the start of the World Championship Fur Rondy Dog races. We had an unseasonably warm day, and again this year, very little snow. We thank all our stateside VHPA buddies who have taken our Alaska snow and cold to their houses again this year, we love it!

We had a surprise guest at our gathering, a Moutagnard, Pier "BRE" Phinaih who served us well over ten years as a teenager; joining our military forces after the VC killed his father and others in his village. He worked as an interrogator and driver for the ROK in Vietnam. He shared his incredible story and now as an American, he is a great addition to our organization. At this event, we were able to raise \$600 dollars for him as he will be traveling back to his village later this month and will use the money to put in a well for his village.

We are revving up the activities again as many our members are just getting back from their snow birding hideaways, and look forward to The Great Alaska Aviation Gathering which will be our next event the end of April.



And ...Our only Alaskan House Representative, Don Young is in support of our monument placing and has contacted the Secretary of the Army wanting further explanation on why it was rejected in the first place and will continue to press those involved to ensure Vietnam pilots and crewmembers are properly recognized. He plans to support H.R. 4298. We got our Rep on board!

By Lynn Kile, President

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

FLORIDA CHAPTER

On February 29th we participated in the 114th consecutive annual celebration of GeorgeFest, the second oldest festival celebrating George Washington's Birthday in the nation and the longest running festival of any kind in Florida. The parade is held annually in Eustis, Fl. This year we participated with our LOACH and small "kiddy ride" helicopter. The parade was very well attended, as usual, with people coming from many of the neighboring cities and towns.

From April 5th – 10th we participated in the annual SUN 'n FUN air-show that's mission is to preserve and enhance the future of flight through world-class events, inspiring and educating people of all ages. It was started in 1974 and has grown into the second largest event of its kind in the world and is Florida's largest annual convention. The six-day event on 2,200 acres has been recorded to have a \$64,000,000 direct and indirect economic impact on the I-4 corridor in Central Florida as media from around the world cover the event that offers; jet teams, aerospace related exhibits, educational forums, aircraft static displays, professional gatherings of aviation and economic development groups, daily and evening airshows that include adrenaline pumping aerobatics, a veterans plaza (where we park our LOACH), and women in aviation arenas. Light Sport aircraft flew above parking areas and many performers were seen on the grounds with vendors and students. Youth activities included; a new young pilot campground, International visitors' hospitality, evening entertainment, a women's pavilion, and sou-



Lined up in "staging area" ready to go.



"Ole George" came over to meet us during the parade and to thank us for our service.



The VHPAF Sales Tent during the April 2016 Sun 'n Fun annual air-show in Lakeland, Florida



The "world famous" VHPAF LOACH at the April 2016 Sun 'n Fun annual air-show in Lakeland, Florida

North Alabama Chapter March 25, 2016



The North Alabama Chapter (NAVHPA) has begun our usual hectic pace of activities this spring. The leadership is always amazed at the dedication, engagement and spirit of our more than 60 members and their spouses.

We met in February and March in our usual restaurant and VHPA hangout, the Schnitzel Ranch in Huntsville. These gatherings have been very successful in allowing our members to have a good meal, hang out with their brothers and allow the spouses to socialize; in addition many good war stories were told. Two of them were remarkable. Member Ben Bentley related being pressured to



NAVHPA members and spouses at the Schnitzel Ranch.



John Lowe's OH-23 with 100 ft. of tow cable wrapped around the skids



NAVHPA display Buc 3 for the Women in Aviation



NAVHPA President Les Haas explains Buc 3 in Birmingham.

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

impress a group of visiting congressmen by firing all 76 rockets from a cobra simultaneously. Not ripple fire, at the same instant. With predictable and hilarious results that he was lucky to survive. Those are the best war stories.

Another story, related by member John Lowe, told of an experience flying OH-23Gs for the 25th division in Vietnam. In his words, "I was shut down late one afternoon when the call came in to the Bn TOC that a platoon of APCs was stuck in a large mud hole a few miles away. The lead track was out but they needed a long (about 100 ft.) tow cable to get the other three out and it was getting late in the afternoon. It looked like they would have to evacuate the troops and blow the APCs in place if they couldn't get them unstuck before dark."

"I asked what the cable weighed. The answer was 'about 200 lbs.' (that turned out later to be true, plus or minus 150 lbs). I knew I could lift that much, but never thought about what the skid retaining bolts would hold, so I told them to take one end of the cable, tie it to the skids, then start walking around the aircraft with the cable until they had it wrapped around the skids, then tie it off. After I cranked, the rather well-fed Bn Cdr ran over and jumped in. I slid it down a dirt road and got it airborne. When we landed the grateful platoon leader couldn't quite believe what he was seeing, but I'm pretty sure that if I was a girl, he would have kissed me."

Since the last report, the NAVHPA has finished setting up our UH-1C Buc 3 for the display season that is upon us. Our spring workdays were dedicated to repairing some nagging Circle Red X conditions in the electrical systems. Our Restoration Officer, Bernie Parr, even got his daughter Katie to climb under Buc 3. He told her that this was because "She was the smallest." We think she was just a

good sport.

Our first display of the season was for a Women in Aviation Fly-in at the Huntsville Executive Airport, where Buc 3 is housed. Many female pilots for both fixed wing and helicopters got to see our Vietnam veteran up close and personal.

In early March we took Buc 3 about 100 miles south to the Birmingham (AL) Gun and Military Show at the Jefferson County Convention Center. Several thousand gun and militaria buffs and their families were able to climb around a real Vietnam helicopter and talk to veterans about their experiences. The children and RVN veterans really seemed to enjoy the experience. We believe that these events allow our members to bring the Vietnam experience to life for folks for whom our war is increasingly distant history. This is one of our core missions.

The late spring and early summer will be busy. The dates below show our activities through the VHPA Reunion in Reno, NV:

- 30-31 March – Redstone JROTC Day
- 23 April – VVA Welcome Home Display - HSV
- 6-7 May – Brewfest - HSV
- 13 May – University Elem. Display - HSV
- 16 May – New Market Elem. Display
- 21 May – Altoona Day Display
- 4 June – MDQ Open House Display
- 5-10 July – VHPA Reunion - Reno

If you live in the North Alabama and Middle Tennessee area, we want you to join our chapter. You can find out more about us at <http://www.navhpa.org>. You can contact us at navhpa@gmail.com. Come on out!! We'll give you a chance to get all those good old war stories out of your system.

By Ralph Weber

NORTH CAROLINA CHAPTER

Twenty members assembled at the Vietnam Memorial on the grounds of the North Carolina State Capitol for our annual participation in the POW/MIA ceremony. Members of our Association read the 39 names of the North Carolinians still missing in action.

President Larry Pigg presented a memorial wreath in honor of our 2015 fallen members and family members. After the ceremony, the members convened at a local restaurant in Raleigh for lunch and our Annual Business meeting.



Our NCVHPA members attending this year's ceremony and annual meeting. L to R, front row, Jim Breznay from South Carolina, Allan Hoffman, Phil Keith, Larry Pigg, President, David Samuels, Walt Emery. Second row, Sam McLamb, Robert Inglis, Don Clarke, Bill Doran, Sid Chambers, Mik Mikulan, Brock Nicholson. Back row, Steve Eyman, Jerry Seago, Edmund Hughes, Victor Rose, Jim Baker, and Ted Bachman.

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

2015 Year in Review

- Feb 27 – Mar 1, UH-1H & OH6 at Air Force Navy Baseball, Kinston, NC.
- May 5 – 13, UH-1, C & H, OH-6 & 58 Moving Viet Wall, Conyers, GA.
- May 13 – 17, 2 helicopters (OH-58, UH1-C), Myrtle Beach, SC.
- May 16 – 17, 2 helicopters (UH-1M, UH-1H), Seymour Johnson AFB.
- May 21 – 29, AH-1, UH-1,C & H & M, OH-6 & 58, jeep & Mule, M. B. SC.
- Aug 24 – 30, UH-1,C & H, VHPA National Reunion, Washington, DC.
- Sept 9 – 12, UH-1, C & H, OH-6 & 58, Moving Viet Wall. Ashville, NC.
- Oct 10 – 12, UH-1, C & H, OH-6 & 58, Mum Fest New Bern NC.
- Nov 6, UH-1H, 48th AHC Monument, Ft. Rucker, AL.
- Nov 9, UH-1C, OH-58, Jeep, Mule, Graham NC Veterans Day Parade.

We also participated in a dozen shorter programs at schools, groups, stores and restaurants, all of which promoted events for veterans.

Pentagon project

After acquiring two UH-1 Bodies from PA, NCVHPA proposed in 2014 to install Dustoff and Gunship Huey Cabins at the Vietnam War Exhibit as a turnkey job. We stipulated January 31, 2015 as a final acceptance date. Much discussion occurred but when the Pentagon wanted to change the exhibit, we felt they were not ready to accept a final arrangement. We then offered to complete our task of preparing the Huey shells for installation and deliver of the parts to a warehouse of the Pentagon's choice. "Hacksaw

Reynolds" has nothing on Brock and Jerry. Both sawed a Huey in half, then down the middle! Both being tuckered out, VP. Edmund Hughes took the parts to D.C. and received payment. That is the end of our interaction with the Pentagon.

Tentative 2016 event schedule

- February 20, School display Gibsonville Eastern Gilford middle school (one helicopter).
- April 2 – 3, VVA event at Museum of History-one or two helicopters.
- April 17, Boy Scouts. Chapel Hill Touch a Truck- one helicopter.
- April 29 - May 1, Cherry Point MCAS -six helicopters, jeep & mule.
- May 20 – 23, Shaw AFB.
- June 16 – 19, Timonium, MD, Maryland State Fair Grounds -six helicopters, jeep & mule.
- June ?, Pennsylvania veterans event. Brock to decide if we should attend.
- October 6 – 9, Mum Festival Newburn-five helicopters, jeep & mule.
- November 11, Warsaw Veterans Day.

This schedule will be up dated as information is available. We would like to add a moving wall event.

2016 Election of Officers

The following positions were decided: Larry Pigg, President; Ed Hughes, Vice President; Carl Seager, Treasurer; Bob Inglis, Secretary and Jerry Seago, Operations. Motion to elect was made, seconded and approved.

By Larry Pigg and Jerry Seago

CALIFORNIA CHAPTER NORTH

Our first event of the year was Presidents Day 15 Feb 2016. We participated in "American Heritage Day" in Fair Oaks, CA. Somehow, Dave Anderson, Jim Cunningham (Congrats on your recent retirement), Al Doucette (Great job driving the Huey through heavy traffic), Greg Hutson, Ken Lake, Ed Morris, Jim Stein, and Mike Whitten, pulled this off without our leader Ken Fritz (who fractured a few ribs skiing the day before) and Curt Knapp (who was up in the snow). We also found out that morning that we were losing our hangar and would have to move very soon. The event was well attended and



Our UH-1C



Infantry Troop



Artillery Support

we even had vintage infantry and artillery support on site.

For whatever reason the VA declared March 29, 2016 as the 50th

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

Anniversary of the Vietnam War and held a Welcome ceremony to all Vietnam veterans. We proudly displayed our Huey at the Mather VA hospital for this event. The hospital also was celebrating the opening of their new Emergency Room facility.

Congressman Ami Berra was the keynote speaker and ABC Channel 10 news covered the event. Curt Knapp seems to have a knack for getting on camera! Jim Stein even met his old crew chief from Vietnam at the event...a surprise reunion for both of them. Thanks to Dave Anderson, Ken Fritz, Tom



UH1-C at Mather VA Hospital

Inks, Curt Knapp, Ed Morris, Jim Stein, and Mike Whitten for helping out.

See this link for the video coverage: <http://www.abc10.com/news/honoring-vietnam-veterans/109074299> More about the event at this site: www.vietnamwar50th.com.

We are planning at least 4 more events before the Annual Reunion in July. We are actively looking for new covered hangar space in the Sacramento area and will schedule some maintenance days to get

ready for the reunion as soon as we find a new storage space. In the meantime, we are storing the MOC and Huey outside at the Western Trucking School in West Sacramento, CA.

By Dave Anderson, VHPA-CCN webmaster



Curt Knapp makes the Evening News!

VIRGINIA CHAPTER UP COMING EVENTS

OLD DOMINION CHAPTER

Virginia



April, 22
2016 10:45
(past)
50 year
Dedication

Ceremony of First Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Charlottesville, VA 22901 @#465 Hwy 250 Bypass with Richard Severin. Friday lunch was at the American Legion 3025 Louisa Road Keswick, VA 22947. 16:00 – 18:00: Happy Hour and Hors D'oeuvres at John (Jim Burger's son) and Leah Burger's Home at 2073 Ambrose Commons Drive Charlottesville (just off 5th Street) Motel overnight at Holiday Inn 1200 Fifth Street & I -64 Charlottesville, Tel: 434-977-5100. Use Reservation Code VHP for \$172.00 Rate.
April 22, 2016 10:00 (past)

Meet at Vietnam War Foundation Museum 6265 Spring Hill Rd Ruckersville, VA 22968.

12:30 Luncheon Meeting Blue Ridge Café 8315 Seminole Trail (RTE29) Ruckersville, VA 22968

After the Meeting we will visit wineries in the Crozet, VA area
30 April 2016

Virginia Aeronautical Historical Society Al Orgain Annual Spring Party and Fundraising Auction at Virginia Aviation Museum 05:30 PM to 9:00 PM Tickets just \$35.00 each - "The Best Aviation Party of the Year!" Call 804-222-8690 to Register.



March 5th 2016 meeting at the County Grill Restaurant in Yorktown, VA.

April 30, 2016

07:45 Cosby High School 10th Annual Tribute to Veterans Must RSVP to anne_canipe@ccpsnet.net before May 1st if you plan to march in with the Chapter.

May 30, 2016

Dedication Ceremony of our two Bricks at the National D-Day Memorial in Bedford, VA

July 5-10, 2016

33rd Annual VHPA Reunion Peppermill Resort Reno, NV. Please note that our new website is: www.vhpavirginia.org

By Don Agren, President

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

Our SoCal Chapter had our annual St Patty's meeting and BBQ at Wings and Rotors Museum. Over 40 of our members, family and kids attended. One of our members, August Swanson again brought his non-profit charity Serve-One with several volunteers and provided our BBQ meal. Serve-one has served thousands of meals to veterans and homeless this year alone. They were grateful for being included with us. We thank them so much for feeding us and supporting our veterans.

One of the photos is a current picture of the progress of the Fisher House SoCal being built at the Long Beach VA. Ground breaking was last October and it's coming along great.

When completed in late summer, family members will be able to stay for free while visiting injured and sick veterans at the VA Hospital. It is a great honor for our chapter to be part of this Fisher House with our fund-raising.

Dick McCaig recently passed away. Our Chapter was able to give his family a personalized flag case with our chapter logo. As our members fly west, our plan is have these available to give to the families.

By Sven Akeeson



Members at the Wings and Rotors Museum



Fisher House under construction in Long Beach



Memorial flag case for the family of CW4 Dick McCaig

SOUTH MISSOURI CHAPTER

The South Missouri chapter of VHPA, in deference to winter weather in the central Midwest, which features too much ice, some snow, and some positively cold rain, not to mention the closely positioned holidays from Thanksgiving through New Year's, generally holds chapter activities to a minimum during this time. In spite of a relatively mild winter, this year's schedule was no exception. But with the coming of spring, both planning and activities are picking up.

The first-quarter meeting of the chapter was held on March 25, 2016. Its highlight was a tour of Whiteman Air Force Base presented by the public affairs office of the 509th Bomb Wing. The tour included a base mission briefing regarding units on the base, a static display of the B-2 Spirit bomber, and a tour of the base. The scheduled visit to the 442nd Fighter Wing (A-10 Thunderbolt) had to be cancelled due to operational conflicts, but a tour and briefing by pilots of the AH-64 Apache unit assigned to the base was substituted which was very satisfactory to all of us. Some even got a "try the cockpit on for size" opportunity. It was an excellent tour overall. Lunch followed the tour at the Royal Oaks Golf Course clubhouse. A brief chapter meeting followed lunch.

Subjects discussed included: The College of the Ozarks in Southwest Missouri, in addition to taking a leading role in the establishment of the State of Missouri Vietnam Veterans Memorial, in 2009 established a Patriotic Education Program. A part of



The B-2 Bomber on an approach



AH-64 Apache in flight



Bill Thompson and Len Rutledge in Can Tho.

this program is the Patriotic Education Travel Program, which pairs students, selected through a competitive process, with veterans selected for a trip to the areas in which they fought. Several chapter members have participated in trips to Vietnam, and two members, Bill Thompson and Len Rutledge, are currently in Vietnam with the college tour. The tour is scheduled to return on Sunday, March 27, arriving at the Springfield-Branson National Airport at 12:39 PM, on United flight 5259. Russ Emory has put out an email about the arrival, inviting anyone in the area who wishes to greet them on their return to come out and do so.

The second quarter meeting is being planned for the St. Louis area the second Saturday in June. A speaker is planned, but it has not been finalized. The third quarter meeting is expected to be held in central Missouri; subject TBA. The fourth quarter meeting is planned for November 5 at the Keeter Center at the College of the Ozarks.

As we progress through the year, we will use both e-mail and the vhpasmo.org website to pass along information. Thank you all for all your support. See you at the next meeting.

By John Wilkinson, President

TAPS

Adams, Peter B. USA Flight Class: 67-16, RVN: 67-68 B/7/1 CAV, 68-69 C/3/17 CAV, Callsigns: Dutchmaster 14, Charlie Horse 16, Kamikaze 16, and Charlie Horse 3

Peter Boylston Adams 73, of Wimauma, FL and Scituate, MA, a direct descendant of Presidents John and John Quincy Adams, died on Friday, March 4, 2016. A graduate of Norwich and Boston Universities and a veteran of the Vietnam War, he served as a helicopter pilot and earned numerous medals, including the Bronze Star, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Purple Heart, and the Air Medal with 30 oak leaf clusters. A good landing, he was fond of saying, was one you could crawl away from. A great one meant you could use the helicopter again; which he would wryly point out, he was unable to do on seven occasions.

After the military, Peter had a successful commercial banking career. An avid historian with a dynamic personality, he was often asked to speak on behalf of the Adams family. He served in prominent roles in many organizations, including the Boston Veterans Homeless Shelter. After his cancer diagnosis, which was attributed to Agent Orange, Peter became a vocal advocate for other disabled veterans. Peter is survived by his wife, three sons, and six grandchildren.

Memorial donations may be made to the Disabled Veterans of America.

Belanger, Delbert C. USA MAJ (Ret.) Flight Class: 70-8, RVN: 62-64 999 SIG CO, 68 1/28 INF 1 INF, 70-71 540 TC CO



Delbert "Del" Clarence Belanger age 75, of Plano, Texas, passed away on February 4, 2016. He was born June 5, 1940, in Caribou, ME to Albert and Laura (Banville) Belanger. Del served as a CH-47 Chinook and UH-1 Huey helicopter pilot in the United States Army. He retired after twenty-one years of service with three and a half of those years spent in Vietnam.

He is survived by wife, Carolyn Belanger of Plano, TX; two sons, one daughter, three grandchildren, five brothers and a sister.

Del is preceded in death by his parents, Albert and Laura Belanger; brother, Richard Belanger; son, Dean Belanger; and "Mom", Azilda Banville-Belanger.

Caldwell, Harold E. USA CW4 (Ret.) Flight Classes: 67-1/67-3, RVN: 68-69 B/2/20 ARA 1 CAV, 70-71 B/2/20 ARA 1 CAV, 71 F/77 ARA, Callsign: Blue Max

Harold Edwin Caldwell, 76, of Manhattan, passed away at the Good Shepherd Hospice House. Harold was born in Hot Springs, AR on January 20, 1940, the son of the late Mildred Lucille (Matthews) and Ras Harold Caldwell. On July 27, 1962 in Big Springs, TX Hal was united in marriage to Virginia Lee Carpenter. Hal attended and graduated from Manhattan Vo-Tech and Embry-Riddle University in Ft. Rucker, AL. He joined and served in the U.S. Marines from 1958-62. Hal joined and retired from the U.S Army as a helicopter pilot after 24 years of service. He served two tours flying Cobras during the Vietnam War. During his service he was awarded the National Defense Service Metal, Army Aviator Badge, Vietnam Service Metal with one Silver and one Bronze Star, just to name a few. After his retirement, he owned Hal's Plumbing Manhattan, from 1997-2003. Hal was a member of the VFW Post #1786, Pearce-Keller Post # 17 American Legion both of Manhattan, ARA (Aerial Rocket Artillery), and the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association.

Survivors include his wife, Virginia, two daughters, two sisters, a brother, five grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents, a brother, and a sister. Burial was conducted at the Kansas Veterans Cemetery with Military Honors provided by the Ft. Riley Honor Guard.

The family requests donations be directed to Angels Care Home Health, 311 Fort Riley Blvd, Manhattan, KS 66502, Via Christi Hospital Cancer Center or the Good Shepherd Hospice House, 3801 Vanesta Dr, Manhattan, KS.

Coates, Calvin E. USA/USMC Flight Class: 69-41, RVN: 66-67 7 MARINE, 70-71 2 SIG GP, Callsign: Satellite 25



Calvin Coates, of Evansville, left us on March 30, 2016 to join his fellow fallen brothers in arms from the 101st Airborne Division.

Born March 4, 1946 Calvin lived life at full volume. Upon graduating from high school, Calvin spent many years serving his

country in the Marines and the Army. Calvin proudly served two tours in Vietnam as a helicopter pilot from 66-71. His valiant efforts and brave spirit earned him numerous awards and upon completion of his service received an Honorable Discharge. Upon leaving the military, he graduated from Purdue University with a degree in Mechanical Engineering and worked as an engineer at Whirlpool until his retirement. He was a proud member of the NRA, Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association, John Purdue Club, and the WSSC.

Calvin leaves behind four sons, six grandchildren; a brother, and two former wives Nancy and Serena. Calvin will be buried in Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, VA.

Corliss, Gregory A. USMC MajGen (Ret.) RVN: 66-68 HMM-262, Callsign: Chat-terbox 5 and 6, Mohair 6

Gregory Corliss passed on December 23, 2015. He was born on April 14, 1930. My Dad was one of three children raised by their parents A.H. Corliss, an Army Calvary doctor, and Mary Jones Corliss his wife. The family traveled extensively all over the world.

Dad graduated from Whitman College in Walla Walla, WA in 1952. He then married Carolyn Angel, and was also commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the USMC. Dad's Marine Corps career spanned over 33 years with retirement from active duty in 1985. As a Marine pilot, he served worldwide in numerous Marine Corps aircraft, and postings including Korea and Vietnam.

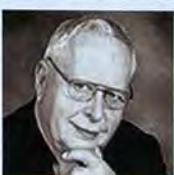
After retirement, he discovered Shepherdstown, WV. He and Mom built two farms from 1988 to 2000 with our final residence at "Finally" in Shenandoah Junction. His many interests included an active herd of Black Angus, a producing vineyard, his shooting group, Trinity Church, and two terms as County Commissioner.

He is survived by his second wife, Pearl Perkins Corliss, a son, a daughter, three grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Dad was never one to be idle, enjoying all he did with passion and a drive for excellence. Though he did not hesitate to let you know where he stood on an issue, he possessed the ability to bring people together, to work for the good of the community. Doing the right thing and service were the hallmarks of his life. He was always actively engaged in everything he did, and will be sorely missed.

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Cupp, Charles W. USA
CPT (Ret.) Flight
Class: 70-20, RVN: 68-
69 E/723 MNT
AMERICAL, CALL-
SIGN: 6



Charles "Chuck" William Cupp aged 77, died from ALS on February 3, 2016, in Selma, TX. Chuck is survived by his two daughters, two sons, 12 grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren, and his brother and sister. He is preceded in death by his wife Martha Cupp, parents Ursel and Anna Mae Cupp, three sisters, a brother, and a great granddaughter.

Chuck was born on January 1, 1939 in Dayton, OH. He graduated from Patterson Cooperative in Dayton, OH in 1957. He joined the Army Reserves in 1956 and later went active duty, going on to retire in 1977. He was a decorated Korean and Vietnam Veteran. He earned two bachelor's degrees in business, and logistics and transportation from Wright State University. He earned multiple certifications in various military training programs. He served his country with honor as a helicopter pilot, company commander, instructor, mechanic, mentor and patriot. After his retirement, he served as a civil servant at Kelly AFB, San Antonio, TX. Chuck was a member of the Universal City Methodist Church, Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association, West Point Parent Association, Fiesta Campers, Newmar Kountry Klub, Trailblazers Camping Club, and National Campers and Hikers Association. Chuck was a man of faith, a loving father, grandparent, and devoted husband. He was a social, active man who was passionate about camping, traveling, wounded veterans, and spending time with family and friends. He was especially delighted in 2015 to swear in his grandson, 2LT Colton Cupp, as a US Army officer at the United States Military Academy, West Point. Burial service was conducted at Fort Sam National Cemetery. Donations to the ALS Association @ <http://www.alsa.org/> or Wounded Warrior Project @ <https://support.woundedwarriorproject.org/> will be received with gratitude

DeKay, Gary E. USA COL (Ret.) Flight Classes: 66-19/66-21, RVN: 67-68 B/227 AVN 1 CAV, 70 114 AHC, 70-71 335 AHC, Callsigns: Gunslinger 42/Cobra 33/Cowboy 26.



Gary E. DeKay passed away on March 25, 2016 in Palm Coast, FL. Born in Utica, NY, November 11, 1946. COL DeKay served his country for 46 1/2 years including over 35 years as a member of the US Army and subsequently as a civilian working for the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He served two tours of duty in Vietnam. While with the 227th, and after just four months in country and with no prior maintenance experience, he was tasked by the Company Commander to command the Aviation Maintenance Platoon and become the Company Test Pilot. During the two and a half months he served as Maintenance Officer, while awaiting a school-trained AMO, then WO1 DeKay oversaw the transition of B Company from the UH-1D to the UH-1H Huey. Following his first tour of duty in Vietnam, CW2 DeKay was selected for and commissioned a 1st LT in 1969. He returned to RVN in 1970. He left active duty in 1973 where he served in a variety of aviation assignments in the Alabama National Guard and Army Reserve and as an Instrument Instructor, Instrument Flight Examiner, Standardization Instructor Pilot, and Night Vision Goggle Instructor Pilot. In 1995 he was promoted to the rank of Colonel, and was assigned as the Crisis Action Center Director, US Southern Command.

He retired in April 2001 with over 35 years service. He served an additional 11 years for the Joint Chiefs of Staff with duty at US Southern Command retiring again in 2012. Gary had accumulated nearly 9,000 flying hours. His awards and decorations include: Master Aviator Badge, Air Medal w/23 OLCs, Bronze Star w/1 OLC, Meritorious Service Medal and the Defense Superior Service Medal.

Duncan, Waldron W. RVN: 66-67 15 TC 1 CAV.

"Walt" Duncan, 77, passed away Tuesday, January 19, 2016, in Fort Worth after a brief illness and one heck of a life. Memorials: In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorials

are made to Humane Society of North Texas, American Cancer Society, the USO or a charity of choice. Walt was born October 11, 1938, in Kensington, PA. He was raised in Kittanning, PA., by his mother, Sara Zimmerman, and stepfather, Earl Zimmerman. Walt graduated from Thiel College in Greenville, PA., with a Bachelor of Science degree in chemistry in 1960. During his college years, he was the director of entertainment as a member of Sigma Phi Epsilon. This position served him well in his later role in life. On March 6, 1961, Walt enlisted in the United States Army, where he rose to the rank of captain. He served as a fixed-wing pilot in Korea as well as a helicopter pilot in Vietnam. During his military career, he received the following medals and commendations: Army Aviator Badge, Vietnam Service Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Commendation Medal, Air Medal with two oak leaf clusters, Bronze Star and two Overseas Bars. Walt was honorably discharged from the Army on May 12, 1968. Upon completion of his military service, he settled in Fort Worth, becoming a legendary nightclub and gentlemen's cabaret proprietor. His many ventures included Phase III, I Gotcha, Speak Easy, Rawhide, Quickdraw I and II, Bumpers, Dynasty, Camp Bowie Cruising Club, Cowtown Country, Wrangler's, Oasis, Big Dogs, Underground, Illusions Cabaret, Pin Ups Cabaret, BT's Cabaret, Gizmos Disco, The Score Sports Bar, Blind Horse Saloon and Stars Cabaret.

Walt was a great man who loved a good conversation and a good laugh and had a wicked sense of humor and unmatched loyalty. He is now and will forever be missed by those who knew and loved him. He was preceded in death by his parents, Sara and Earl Zimmerman, and his loving companion, Edna Lacey. Survivors: Sheldon Scott, Cheril Lacey Thomas and Wendy Lacey.

Dyer David S. Dr. Flight Classes: 70-11/70-7, RVN: 70-71 128 AHC, Callsigns: Tomahawk 19/Nighthawk 19

Dr. David Stanley Dyer (67) of Punta Gorda, FL passed on 30 December 2015. He was born in Green Cove Springs, FL, on May 20, 1948.

David was a Vietnam Veteran in the US Army as an aircraft commander. He was awarded the Air Medal for Heroism,

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Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star and the Purple Heart.

David spent 30 years in the health industry and became a Licensed Massage Therapist, Licensed Colon Therapist and Cancer Coach. He obtained a Doctorate in both Naturopathy and Science. Later, Dr. Dyer became an experienced public presenter and appeared in television, videos and radio, and traveled throughout the United States, Europe and the Far East. He was the author of the book: *Cellfood Vital Nutrition for the New Millennium*, which is published in five languages.

David enjoyed sky diving, scuba diving, fire arms and racing to name a few. He lived life to the fullest and will be greatly missed by his wife Ramona (Fulton-Enger), his daughter and brother as well as many other relatives, friends and his LifeVantage family.

Folstadt, Robert H. Jr. USA Flight Class: 70-35, RVN: 71 A/377 ARTY 101 ABN, Callsign: Gunner 88.

Robert Hobart Folstadt Jr. of Garland, TX, was born on November 21, 1947 and, on June 9, 2015, he passed on to Heaven. Bob graduated from Garland High School in 1966, enlisted in the Army, and became a Warrant Officer Aviator. While in flight school, Bob Folstadt earned the nickname of Big Bob and was admired by his classmates. He became a scout pilot, flew the OH-6 helicopter and served honorably in Vietnam. After his return home, he became the owner of an independent manufacturing company and a lifetime resident of Garland, TX. He was a world traveler, adventurer, and outdoorsman. He was predeceased by his loving wife, Gail Lester Folstadt, and parents Robert Sr. and Vida Folstadt. He is survived by his son and a sister. Bob was a giant of a man who was fond of a quote by General George Patton: "It is foolish and wrong to mourn the death of men who have died. Rather we should thank God that such men lived." May Bob forever rest in peace.

Harris, John D. USAF MAJ (Ret.) Flight Class: 68F, RVN: 71 40 ARRS Callsign: Jolly Green.

John Daniel Harris passed away Saturday, February 13, 2016 at Parkland Hospital, Dallas, TX. He had lived in Euless, TX since 1983.



He was born on August 19, 1940 to John Paul and Irene (Moore) Harris in Winchester, IN. He graduated from Winchester High School and Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. John served as an officer in the United States Air Force. As an HH53 helicopter pilot, he flew with an elite group of pilots known as the Jolly Green Giant Rescue Crew. Their motto, "So that others may live."

John began his service in the United States Air Force on January 8, 1960. He was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant on December 13, 1960 at Harlingen AFB, TX and went on to B-52 air crew training. He was a navigator & radar navigator from March 1962 to March 1967 while in the B-52H Strategic Air Command (SAC) Unit at Kincheloe AFB, MI. After pilot training, he became a B-52H co-pilot at Wurtsmith AFB, MI in September 1968. In 1970, he completed basic & advanced helicopter training at Shepard AFB, Wichita Falls, TX and Eglin AFB, Ft. Walton Beach, FL before continuing his service as an HH-53 co-pilot and aircraft commander with the 40th ARRS (Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron) at Udorn and Nakhon Phanom (NKP) Air Bases, Thailand. From June 1973, until his retirement on August 31, 1982, John served as an aircraft commander at Hamilton AFB, CA, Eglin AFB, FL and Kirtland AFB, NM. After 22 years, 7 months and 23 days of military service, John spent five years at Flight Safety International and 19 years as a flight instructor for American Airlines.

Upon his second retirement, John and his wife Linda, who were high school sweethearts, traveled the world together with friends and family. He loved the military, his family, conservatism, hunting, and his many friends.

John is preceded in death by his parents, John and Irene Harris, a granddaughter, a niece and a nephew. He is survived by his wife; Linda Hunsucker-Harris, three daughters, six grandchildren and a sister.

His final resting place will be Fountain Park Cemetery, Winchester, IN (internment at a future date). Memorials to John D. Harris can be made to: First United Methodist Church of Grapevine TX - Benevolent Fund or the charity of your choice.

Hutchinson, William A. USA Flight Class: 67-11, RVN: 67-69 334 AHC, 72-73 TF GARRY OWEN 1 CAV, 72-73 AFAT 3, Callsign: Dragon 39



William R. Hutchinson was born in Wheatland, NM on March 16, 1933, passed away on March 12, 2016, at 82 years.

He was preceded in death by his infant son, Charles R Hutchinson who was only 2 days old; parents Charles Hutchinson and Florence Murdick Hutchinson; sisters Viola H Thomas and Pauline H Smith; brothers Charles, James & Albert Hutchinson.

He is survived by his wife, Carol Blankenship Hutchinson after being married 59 years and two sons. He will be laid to rest at the Grady Cemetery, located near his childhood home.

William was the youngest of six children and grew up on a wheat farm in NM. He may have been the little brother, but he was very much a giant in many people's lives. After he met his wonderful wife Carol, he pursued his dream and took his family with him to wherever the job was. William's first job as a pilot had him flying a helicopter to lay cable up Sandia Peak for the tramway. His next job was for Air America which resulted in him taking the family to live in Thailand for nine years. He flew rescue and covert missions in Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam. He worked closely with the CIA with mission planning and coordinating for the war effort. He had many, many close calls in which his aircraft was hit multiple times by gunfire and he survived crash landings. He received commendation from the Air Force for finding and rescuing two of their F-4 fighter pilots who had been shot down.

His bravery performing his job would save lives and serve his country. Most people would be surprised that William lived and worked in so many places from New Mexico to Alabama, Florida, Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, Saudi Arabia, Panama, Venezuela, Surinam, China, The Bahamas, Kwajalein in the Marshall Islands and Nome, Alaska. He commented how beautiful the Northern Lights

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were dancing overhead while he was flying at about 10,000 feet and 40 degrees below zero...incredible. Whenever asked, the children were always so proud to say "My Dad's a Pilot". William could never truly appreciate how much he enriched their lives with his experience, intelligence, wit and drive. They saw him as FEARLESS!

Jayne, David G. USA LTC (Ret.) Flight Class: 54-D 67-68 117 AHC 68 214 CAB Callsign: BEACH BUM 6



David G. Jayne was an ordinary man who lived an extraordinary life. He was born in Painesville, OH on July 5, 1929 and died on October 16, 2015. He had an idyllic childhood growing up on the shores of Lake Erie surrounded by several generations of family. He graduated from Mentor High in Mentor, OH and is recognized in their alumni Hall of Fame. David went to Kent State University and graduated with a degree in Business Administration in 1952. While there, he met the love of his life, Jane Miller. They married August 18, 1951. Shortly thereafter, he was drafted into the military and learned to fly. As a pilot, he was assigned to the Inter-American Geodetic Survey (IAGS) where he went to the Canal Zone in Panama and Guatemala City to map the remote regions of those countries. On Valentine's Day in 1959, his helicopter crashed while taking off. After two weeks in the hospital in Guatemala and riddled with gangrene, he was stable enough to be transported to Brook Army Medical Center (BAMC) Burn Ward for treatment of his injuries. After 3 and 1/2 years and 28 operations to rebuild his facial features and hands, he was determined to go back to flying for the Army. The wisdom of his doctor to save his middle finger on his fused right hand gave him hope. While many said he could not do it, he was not going to be told no. David had to prove to himself and others that he would not succumb to his disabilities. He was required to pass the rigorous Astronaut Training Exam and additional pilot training before being reinstated as a pilot. That was just the beginning of David's continued career. He was stationed in Caracas, Venezuela to continue his work with the IAGS mapping the countryside around the Amazon. In 1967, David volunteered for Vietnam as a company commander and was

promoted to battalion commander while there. In 1970, he retired as a Lieutenant Colonel. He pursued a 2nd career by attending law school at St. Mary's University. He interned and worked at Tinsman & Houser law firm. While there, David became a Christian and found a passion for helping others. As a plaintiff attorney, he was able to assist victims of burn accidents as well as estate planning.

Both Jane and David volunteered at the Burn Ward at BAMC. Recognizing the need to help burn victims as well as their families they started the Texas Burn Survivors Society (TBSS). They were not only dedicated to helping others who were burned, but were inspirational to many who had given up on life. He said, "If I could bottle determination and sell it, I would be a millionaire. The outlook you have is so important - much more important than your physical condition."

One way David rehabilitated his hands was by making mosaic tables. In association with the Wounded Warriors and the Burn Ward, David and Jane began a center for patients and their families to make mosaic tables.

While David was in the hospital, the Alamo Heights United Methodist Church Outreach (AHUMC) supported and cared for the Jayne family. Through this kindness David and Jane became members of AHUMC and were actively involved for 46 years. They were dedicated members with many beloved friends. Since they centered their lives at church, they will be buried together at the columbarium.

David was preceded in death by his wife of 63 years, Jane Jayne. He is survived by three children, five grandchildren, six great-grandchildren and a brother. David shared of himself to those in need. He will be missed, but never forgotten.

Donations, if desired can be sent to Texas Burn Survivors Society, 8531 N. New Braunfels, San Antonio, TX 78217.

Laughlin, Virgil M. Jr. USA Flight Class: 68-1, RVN: 68-69 A/1/9 CAV 1 CAV, Callsign: Apache 23



Virgil M. Laughlin Jr., a proud American, passed away Sunday, September 6, 2015. Virgil was born July 26, 1944, to Virgil and Betty Laughlin Sr. in Sweetwater. He was a graduate of L.D.

Bell High School and served in the Vietnam War as a helicopter pilot. During his time Virgil received the National Defense Service Medal, Good Conduct Medal, Army Aviator Badge, Vietnam Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal, Purple Heart, the Bronze Star Medal, two O/S bars and 50-plus Air Medals for his admirable actions. Virgil was a former member of AMBUCS, lifetime member of the Arlington Chamber of Commerce, a lifetime member of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association and served on the board of the Fort Wolters Chapter of the VHPA. He loved traveling, history and most of all being a devoted husband, dad, grandpa and friend. He was preceded in death by his father, Virgil Laughlin Sr., and son, Kevin Laughlin. He is survived by his beloved wife of 23 years, Mary Sue Dunson Laughlin, two daughters, one son, a sister, mother - Betty Laughlin and nine grandchildren.

Interment was in Dallas-Fort Worth National Cemetery with military honors. Memorials: Contributions may be made to the American Heart Association or Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association scholarship fund, www.vhp.org.

Lazares, Michael D. USA CW5 (Ret.), Flight Classes: 66-17, 66-19, RVN: 67-68 E/82 ARTY 1 CAV, C/2/20 ARA 1 CAV, 69-70 196 ASHC, Callsigns: Red Baron/Flipper/Woodpecker



Beloved husband and father Michael D. Lazares, 70, passed away on March 21, 2016 in Arizona after a long battle with cancer. He is survived by his wife Heleen, mother LaDonna, four children, two grandsons, two brothers, and two sisters. He is preceded by his father Louie.

Michael served two tours in Vietnam as a combat helicopter pilot. He earned the Distinguished Flying Cross, two Bronze Stars, the Purple Heart, and 17 Air Metals. His 28 year career led him to be one of the first CW-5s in the military. He spent 30 years in law enforcement, including serving in the Tacoma Police Department where he retired as a detective in the homicide unit. In later life, Michael became a published author. He wrote six books on his military and police careers, with all the proceeds being

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donated to various charities. Several months before he was placed in hospice care, he began work on a seventh book. This was done in conjunction with the VHPA staff. The book has not been released, but he had completed all of the preparation for publishing before he passed. After retirement, Michael and Heleen moved to Arizona where he continued to write, ride his Harley Davidson, drive his Corvette, walk Moosie, and play golf with his wonderful group of friends. A Military Funeral Honors ceremony will be held at a later date. Please consider a donation to the Fisher House Foundation. He will be loved and missed every day!

McCaig, Richard D. USA
CW4 (Ret.) Flight Classes:
68-9/68-11, RVN: 68-69
A/123 AVN 23 INF



Richard D. McCaig passed away on the night of 19 February from complications of a helicopter accident in April 2014. Richard was born 16 July 1946. He joined the Army in 1967. While serving in Vietnam as a combat pilot he took a direct commission achieving the rank of Captain, earning the Distinguished Flying Cross, and numerous Air medals. He then returned to Ft. Wolters where he became a flight instructor and then a standardization instructor pilot. After active duty he flew for a while in Arizona where he met and married the love of his life, Donna. He then moved to San Diego and joined the Sheriff's department, then the Marshal's office, and finally retired from the Sheriff's department in March of 2002. During that period he joined the Army Reserve at Los Alamitos reverting back to Warrant Officer and becoming the unit's SIP. Having served in the unit over 23 years he retired as a CW4 in 1996.

His passions included restoring and racing several Shelby Mustangs, the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association (not missing a reunion in 30 years), the United Scottish Society, Golfing, and traveling all over the country with his wife in their motor home. He also became a docent for a museum and was flying for them when the accident happened. He will be greatly missed by his many friends. He is survived by his wife Donna, His father who was a POW in WWII, two sisters and one brother. Burial was conducted at Miramar National Cemetery.

Mitchell, Clifford J. USA
Flight Class: 64-7W, RVN:
65-66 121 AVN, Callsign:
Viking 23



The family of Clifford John Mitchell is sad to announce his passing on January 1, 2016. He passed peacefully at his home on Cortes Island, British Columbia, Canada. If desired, the family has asked that a donation be made to your favorite Veterans charity.

Cliff was a Chief Warrant Officer 2 in the US Army where he served as a helicopter pilot and was awarded a Purple Heart & Bronze Star for his service in Vietnam.

After returning from Vietnam he started his own business in Ft. Worth, TX and was a resident of Azle, TX. He spent a lifetime in the aviation industry as a helicopter pilot, flight instructor and Director of Safety. He retired in 2003 and moved to Cortes Island to care for his parents. He became a Canadian citizen on December 4, 2015.

Cliff was preceded in death by his father Charles Henry Mitchell and his mother Hazel June Mitchell. Survivors include his spouse, Era Jo Mitchell, three daughters, one son and a sister.

Morrison, Kenneth E. USA
Flight Classes: 68-23/68-513,
RVN: 68-69 57 AHC, Callsign:
Gladiator 26



Kenneth E. Morrison, 67, of Portales, NM, formerly of Downington, New Mexico, passed away on Thursday, March 10, 2016 at Covenant Medical Center in Lubbock, TX. He was the beloved husband of Nancy J. (Harrington) Morrison, with whom he shared 38 years of marriage. Born in Detroit, MI, Ken was the son of Kenneth E. Morrison of Sun-Lakes, AZ and the late Charlotte (Williams) Morrison. Upon graduating from Ridley High School in 1966, Ken enlisted in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War. Achieving the rank of Chief Warrant Officer, he flew helicopter missions with the 57th Assault Helicopter Company. In his 48 year career, he flew: BH206 and 212, SK76, BK105, Hughes 300 and 500 Helicopters. He was released from active duty in 1972 and served in the Army Reserve until 1979.

After his time in the service, he was first employed as a pilot for the Keystone Helicopter Company. Most recently, he was a pilot for Careflight in Bullhead City, AZ. He also flew for PNB and Girard Banks, Power Line Patrol, AOL and RPR Corporate, and EMS for Brandywine, Pottstown, Sayre and Lehighton. Ken enjoyed hunting and fishing. He had a passion for military history and flying Taylorcraft Piper Cubs.

In addition to his wife and father, Mr. Morrison is survived by his sister.

Kenneth was interred in St. Joseph Cemetery, Downingtown PA.

Mossman, Craig D. USA
Flight Classes: 69-45/69-49,
RVN: 70-71 128 AHC



Craig Darryl Mossman, age 67, passed away peacefully at home, surrounded by his family on February 18th, after a courageous 4-month battle with cancer. Craig is survived by his wife of 27 years Kimberly, two daughters, a son, and a brother.

During his high school years, Craig became an expert marksman and a certified shotgun instructor. Following graduation, Craig worked for the US Forest Service, and proudly served his country in the Vietnam War as an Army Warrant Officer. Craig worked as a Fire Fighter, a helicopter pilot for off shore oil, EMS, DEA, and Cal Fire. After 15 years with the Modesto Fire Department, Craig retired as a Fire Prevention Inspector.

Craig was laid to rest in Lakewood Memorial Park in Hughson, CA. Remembrances in Craig's name may be sent to the Widows and Orphans Fund at MFD: MCFFA, PO Box 95353, Modesto, CA 95353.

Nichols, Alfred G. III USA
LTC (Ret.) Flight Class: 66-22,
RVN: 67-68 82 MED DET,
77 571 MED DET,
Callsign: Dustoff 82



Alfred Nichols passed away peacefully at Hildebrand Care Center in Canon City on February 14, 2016. Born in Greenwood, FL, on December 8, 1937, to Virginia N. Nichols and Alfred G. Nichols, Jr., he held degrees from the University of South Florida and the University of Colorado. He began his 23-year Army career

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in the 82nd Airborne. He followed that with two tours in Vietnam as a Special Forces (Green Beret) A-Team Commander and a medevac helicopter pilot, where he carried over 2,000 wounded. He was awarded the Silver Star, Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star for Valor, Army Commendation for Valor, three Air Medals for Valor, and the Purple Heart, among many other medals.

After moving to Colorado, he commanded a helicopter rescue unit (MAST) at Fort Carson, taught JROTC at Canon City High School, was an adjunct professor of Criminal Justice at Pueblo Community College, and served on the Canon City Police Reserve. He was also an active member of Christ Episcopal Church. He is survived by his first wife of thirteen years, Sarah R. Nichols of Indialantic, FL, a daughter, a son, and his second wife of 23 years, Elizabeth A. Nichols Manzanares (Patricia), of Canon City and their son. He was preceded in death by his parents and only sister, Joanna Nichols Morgan (Thomas), of Poway, CA. Memorial service, with full military honors, was be held on Saturday, February 20, Christ Episcopal Church, in Canon City. Remembrances, if intended, are suggested for the Wounded Warrior Project, 1 S. Nevada Ave, Colorado Springs, CO 80903.

Niebuhr, Larry W. USA (Ret.) Flight Class: 70-42, RVN: 71-72 48 AHC, 72 C/196 INF as FO



Larry Niebuhr, age 67, died Wednesday, February 3, 2016 at Sanford Canton-Inwood Medical Center.

Larry was born July 20, 1948 at Primghar, IA to Wesley and LaVerne (Meyer) Niebuhr. He graduated from Paullina (IA) High School in 1967. Larry served in the US Army from 1968 to 1973. He was a helicopter pilot in Vietnam for a year.

Larry married Elaine Simunek August 15, 1970 at Bethany Lutheran Church in Fairview, SD. They moved from Clarksville, TN to Canton in 1974, when Larry started a custom hay stacking business. He joined the Nebraska Army National Guard Medevac in 1981. He was employed by Omnidflight and was instru-

mental in setting up Careflight program at Avera Hospital. His National Guard unit was deployed to Saudi Arabia during Desert Storm. In 1994, he left the Nebraska Guard and was designated as Inactive Ready Reserve (IRR). He then worked for Eastern Farmers and Nordlie Organ Builders. In 2002, he joined the Army Reserve in South Dakota and was activated during Iraqi Freedom training troops to go overseas in 2003. He retired in 2005 after 20 years of service. He then drove semi for Paul Evanson and retired in 2011. After retirement, he enjoyed helping friends with their harvesting of crops.

Larry was an active member of Redeemer Free Lutheran Church, Canton VFW, Hudson American Legion, and the Sky Hawks Flying Club. He enjoyed getting to know people, tending to his farm ground, hunting with his brother and son, working on his home, and camping and spending time with friends. He especially enjoyed spending time with his granddaughter, Zoe.

Larry is survived by his wife of 45 years, Elaine, his son, a granddaughter, mother, (LaVerne Niebuhr), and a sister. He was preceded in death by his father, Wesley, brother, David, and sister, Diane Fonder.

Potratz, Lee N. USA Flight Class: 70-47, RVN: 71 35 ENG GRP, 71-72 61 AHC



Lee Norman Potratz, age 64, of Belleville passed away on Friday, February 5, 2016 at St. Mary's Hospital in Madison. He was born June 8, 1951 in Fond du Lac, WI to his parents Eldon and Carol (O'Neil) Potratz. Lee served as a helicopter pilot in the United States Army in Vietnam. On March 20, 1976, he was united in marriage to Luann Kohls in Fond du Lac. Lee was an avid motorcycle enthusiast with a special interest for the British models. He had spent many years learning about the various makes to become an often consulted expert. Lee was an intelligent and caring man who in 2001 received the gift of life from his sister, Fern.

Lee is survived by his wife Luann Potratz, his daughter and three sisters. He was preceded in death by his parents and a brother Roy. He was buried in the Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery.

Roalofs, Raymond J. Jr. USA Flight Classes: 67-9/66-21, RVN: 67 155 AHC, 67-68 57 AHC, 68 B/4 AVN 4 INF, 70 HHC 17 CAG, Callsign: Gambler 9



Raymond John Roalofs, Jr., born January 16, 1940, died on February 22, 2016. Born to Raymond J. Roalofs, Sr. and mother, Mildred (Sanders) Roalofs, he graduated from St. Ignatius High School, Cleveland, OH, 1958. He entered the U.S. Army in 1961, spending five years in the Special Forces, and fifteen years as a helicopter pilot. He retired in 1982. Raymond spent ten years as a technical writer for Allied Signal, Turbine engines. He married Rita L. Siebenaler in 1970. He was preceded in death by his daughter Susan K. Reisig. He leaves a son and five grandchildren. He died with a smile on his face, knowing he served his country honorably and raised two fabulous children. He will rest in peace, knowing his merits.

He was buried in the National Memorial Cemetery of AZ, 23029 N. Cave Creek Rd, Phoenix, AZ. Donations can be sent to Poor Clare Nuns Annunciation Monastery, 6200 E. Minooka, IL 60447-9058 www.almoore-grimshaw.com.

Self, Larry W. USA Flight Classes: 68-14/68-18, RVN: 69-70 178 ASHC, Callsign Boxcar 16



Larry Wayne Self, 73, husband of Susan Hawkins Self, died Wednesday, March 2, 2016.

He was born in Liberty, MO, on December 25, 1942 to the late Charles Delyod and Lucille Vermillion Self.

Mr. Self served in the U. S. Army as a helicopter pilot. He continued his career as a pilot for thirty years. He was a member of Augusta Heights Baptist Church where he was a lifelong, very active and dedicated member. He was a deacon, sang in the choir, led Sunday school, and was a member of the BALL club.

Surviving, in addition to his wife, are three daughters, two grandchildren and two sisters. He was predeceased by a son, Joshua Scott Bryant.

Memorials may be made to Augusta Heights Baptist Church, 3018 Augusta Street, Greenville, SC 29605.

TAPS

Stengel, Louis C. III USMC
LTC (Ret.), RVN: 69-69
HMH-361, 69-70 HMH-462,
Callsign: Space



Louis Charles Stengel III, 74, of Stafford County, passed away on Saturday, February 13, 2016 in Daytona Beach Shores, FL. Lou was born in Paterson, NJ on September 13, 1941, the son of the late Louis C. Stengel Jr. and Ann Beversluis Stengel.

He was a 1964 graduate of Villanova University, and was commissioned as a Second Lt. in the United States Marine Corps upon graduation, where he served until his retirement as a Lt. Colonel in 1986. Lou loved the Marine Corps, and most of all, he loved being a Naval Aviator. After retirement, he worked as a commercial pilot and a government contractor.

Lou's favorite leisure activities centered on the water, whether he was piloting the Irish Mist II, cruising with Royal Caribbean or looking for dolphins at Emerald Isle. He was a long-time member of the Aquia Harbour Yacht Club, a charter member of the Mid-Potomac Power Squadron, and a member of the VFW.

Survivors include his wife of 50 years, Ann Welty Stengel; two children, Brian, two granddaughters and a sister. Burial will be at a later date in Quantico National Cemetery.

Memorials may be made to his favorite charity, St. Jude's Children's Hospital, Memorial and Honor Program, 501 St. Jude Pl., Memphis, TN 38105.

Tivnan, John M. USMC MAJ
(Ret.) Flight Class: 58-10,
RVN: 67-68 HMM-265



John Michael (Mike) Tivnan, born on April 12, 1935 of Woodbridge, VA was surrounded by his family when he passed away at home under the care of Heartland Hospice on October 31, 2015. Mike was predeceased by his parents, John Francis and Ruth Evelyn Tivnan of Salem, MA. He is survived by his wife, Barbara; four children, seven grandchildren, one great-grandson and seven siblings.

Mike was a retired US Marine Corps aviator. While stationed with HMX-1 Quantico, he was a presidential helicopter pilot for President Lyndon Johnson. In June 1964, he delivered the first H-46 helicopter to the Marines in New River, NC. His personal decorations include the Bronze Star Medal

with Combat "V", Air Medal and Viet Nam Service medal with 3 stars. After retirement from The Marine Corps, he was a consultant to the Naval Air Systems Command. Mike was active in many Irish American organizations. He was the founding President of the Lt. Col John A Dowd USMC Woodbridge Division of the Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH).

Mike will be remembered as a humble man who was justly proud of his Irish Catholic heritage, the Boston Red Sox, and the United States Marine Corps. Suggested donations are to Marine Corps Heritage Foundation 3800 Fettler Dr., Suite 104, Dumfries, VA 22025 info@marineheritage.org. Interment was conducted at Quantico National Cemetery.

Thompson, Frank W. USA
Flight Class: 54-F, RVN: 65
B/15 TC 1 CAV, 69 333
TC DET, 69 B/2/17 CAV
101 ABN, Callsigns: Banshee/Wrecker 1



Wayne Thompson, born July 28, 1929, in Abilene to parents Frank and Irene Thompson, passed away on Jan. 28, 2016, in Hico, TX.

Mr. Thompson was a retired veteran of the U.S. Army who served as a helicopter pilot in three wars: WWII, Korea and Vietnam. His hobbies included whittling and woodcarving, and he was known for the canes he handcrafted. Mr. Thompson is preceded in death by his parents and first wife, Mary Dell Thompson.

Burial was conducted in the Hico cemetery.

Vadelnieks, George I. USA
Flight Class: 66-21, RVN:
67 57 MED DET



George Igor Vadelnieks was born on March 8, 1946, in Innsbruck, Austria, to Nick and Austra Vadelnieks. George and his parents came to the US in January 1950 through the Port of New Orleans and then briefly lived in Berkeley, CA, for two months before relocating to Fort Bragg.

George went through the Fort Bragg school system and graduated in 1964. He attended SRJC until he was inducted into the US Army in January 1966. He attained

the rank of Chief Warrant Officer and next flew in Vietnam in the 57th Medical Detachment Helicopter Ambulance. He was wounded in 1967 and received major medical injuries, many which plagued him for the rest of his life. He was awarded The Purple Heart, Distinguished Flying Cross and the Silver Star. He was discharged in December 1969.

He worked for the American Sportsman Club for a number of years and then with his brother in the timber industry. Above all George loved to hunt and fish. To say he was a "character" is an understatement. He passed away on December 23, 2015.

George is survived by his wife, Kasey and a brother.

Watkins, Jack R. USA

MAJ (Ret.) Flight Class:
63-8, RVN: 64 121 AVN,
64-65 I CORPS AVN CO,
67 D/227 AVN 1 CAV,
67-68 HHC/227 AVN 1
CAV, Callsign: Viking 24



Jack R. Watkins the second of seven children born to Paul and Elma Watkins of Fruita, CO, died on September 26, 2015. Jack was raised in Fruita, CO, and graduated from Fruita High School in 1955. He attended Mesa Junior College in Grand Junction before enlisting in the US Army. Jack became a medic and was stationed in Germany for four years; there he met and married his wife, Leonore "Lore" Umhofer, on May 22, 1959, in Guenzburg, Germany. Jack and Lore were the proud parents of four children.

Jack graduated from the Army Officer Candidate School and received his commission as a second lieutenant. He was then assigned as a recruiting officer in Milwaukee, WI. Jack was accepted into the Army helicopter flight school. Jack was a survivor of two tours of duty in Vietnam as a helicopter pilot, earning six Purple Heart medals and the Vietnam Medal of Valor. He was later a helicopter flight instructor and a flight safety inspector.

After retirement from the Army, Jack flew helicopters for Petroleum Helicopters to off-shore well sites in the Gulf of Mexico, flying out of Lake Charles, LA. Following this retirement he flew helicopters for radio and television stations covering the Dallas/Fort Worth, TX area.

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When they really retired, he and Lore traveled around the country, trying to find a place to set roots. They finally ended up in Sierra Vista, AZ, where he lost his battle with cancer twelve years later.

Surviving Jack is his wife of 56 years, Lore, a son, three daughters, five grandsons, five granddaughters, eight great-grandchildren, two brothers and two sisters.

Jack was preceded in death by his grandparents, James and Cordelia Watkins and James and Lilly Nicholls; parents; and brother, Larry.

Young, Keith A. USA CW4 (Ret.) Flight Classes: 67-1/66-23, RVN: 67-68 195 AHC, 70-71 174 AHC, Callsign: Sky Chief 13



VHPA Life Member

Keith Avery Young, age 70, of Bloomsburg, PA died on December 18, 2014 at Geisinger Medical Center in Danville, PA. Committal services with full Military Honors occurred at Columbia Hill Cemetery, West Hemlock Township.

Keith is survived by his wife of 48 years, Gloria DeSantis Young, a daughter, a son, and two grandchildren. Keith was devoted to his church, where he had been elected a Trustee, active with the Columbia County Veterans Association and enjoyed speaking locally to high school students about the military and his pride in serving. He had also served 12 years as a Director on the Bloomsburg School Board.

Keith was born October 8, 1944 in Bloomsburg, PA and grew up on a farm in the Washingtonville area. He graduated from Danville Area Senior High School in 1962 and attended Bloomsburg State College for three years until he learned the Army was recruiting helicopter pilots for the Vietnam War. Drawn by the call, he dropped out of college in favor of Army flight school. Upon graduation as a Warrant Officer, he served his first of two tours in Vietnam. He was wounded eight months into his first tour and medevac'd to the States. Upon recovery he was assigned as an instrument flight instructor at Hunter Army Airfield in Savannah, Georgia, accepting a direct commission

in the Army Transportation Corps. He subsequently returned to Viet Nam for a second tour as a captain, serving as an aircraft maintenance and flight platoon leader.

Keith later returned to college while still on active duty and graduated from Texas Christian University with a B.S. in math and physics, and later from The College of William and Mary, with an MS in Education Administration. In 1978 he was selected to be a contract officer with the US Military Assistance Command to administer a contract for helicopter mechanic training between Bell Helicopter International and the Shah of Iran's 1st Aviation Brigade. When the Shah was forced from power in 1979, Keith was instrumental in the safe evacuation of all Bell Helicopter personnel from Iran.

Upon leaving active duty in September 1979, Keith served two years in the Army Reserves as an Aeronautical Engineer. Resigning his commission in October 1981, he transferred to the Virginia Army National Guard as a CW2 helicopter pilot. In 1983, the family returned to Bloomsburg where Keith joined the staff of Susquehanna Steam and Electric Station teaching nuclear and math sciences, ultimately retiring from the Engineering section in 2005.

Keith transferred into the PA Army National Guard at Ft. Indiantown Gap upon returning to Pennsylvania, where his duties included serving as a Unit Trainer specializing in night vision goggle and air crew coordination training. In 1999, he was assigned as Company Aviation Safety Officer. In 2003, when the PA National Guard was called to provide an aviation HQ element to support U.N. peacekeeping operations in Kosovo, Keith volunteered for a year-long assignment as the Aviation Safety Officer of the HQ for the U.S. aviation task force of the Multi-National Brigade.

Keith retired from the Guard in October of 2004 at age 60 with 38 years of continuous military service. He was truly a jack of all trades and master of them all. In retirement, he was never idle. He was continuously creating new projects on his farm in Buckhorn, hunting, fishing on Lake Champlain every

June, involved with his grandkids, hiking 41 of the 50 highpoints across America with Gloria, carving wood, designing stained glass creations, and many other activities too numerous to name. With all of that, he was never too busy to help anyone with whatever they needed.

Those who knew Keith knew that from his perspective the glass was always at least half-full, and on those rare occasions when life dealt him lemons, lemonade was too simple - he made lemon meringue pie of it instead. He will be sorely missed by his loving family, his neighbors and his many friends.

Zec, Ronald D. USA MAJ (Ret.) Flight Class: 67-17/67-15, RVN: 68-69 191 AHC, 72-73 147 ASHC, Callsign: Wingnut 4/Super Shaft 6



Ronald D. Zec 71, of Harrisburg, PA, passed away Sunday, March 20, 2016 at the Tremont Health and Rehabilitation Center, Tremont, PA. He was the son of the late David Zec and Loretta (Gosch) Zec, born November 2, 1944 in New York, NY. He was the loving and devoted husband of 50 years to Ida A. (Polla) Zec to whom he married in 1966.

Ronald graduated from Dewitt Clinton High School, Bronx, NY in the class of 1962. He obtained a Bachelor's of Science Degree in Business Administration from Penn State University, Middletown, PA.

Ronald entered the United States Army in 1964, serving during the Vietnam War; he later retired and was Honorably Discharged as a helicopter pilot with 20 years of service. His courage and commitment was exemplified by earning multiple honors to include the Legion of Merit and Bronze Star Medal.

Ronald was a member of St. Margaret Mary Catholic Church Harrisburg. He enjoyed teaching at the Central PA Literacy Council, Harrisburg and volunteering at the Disabled American Veterans, Camp Hill, PA.

Along with his parents, Ronald was preceded in death by a sister, Nancy Rowe who died in 2009. He is buried in the Indiantown Gap National Cemetery.

Records of the recent deaths of the following twenty-five 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 or by calling 1-800-505-VHPA. If any of our members have more information, please report it to: HQ@VHPA.org or call 1-800-505- VHPA (8472).

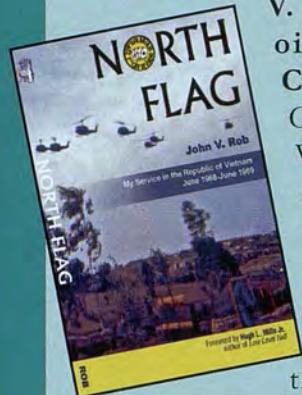
Aldred, Billy J. USA (Ret.) Flight Classes: 66-21, 66-23 died on September 30, 2015 (no other data).	Mason, Eddie USA CW3 (Ret.) Flight Classes 71-7, 71-9 died on January 31, 2016 (no other data).
Baker, Edward W. USA Flight Classes: 63-4, 63-4W died on January 31, 2015 (no other data).	McGovern Paul V. USMC died on January 20, 2016 (no other data).
Barsby, Robert S. USA Flight Class: 51-A died on December 3, 2015 (no other data).	Miller, Larry G. USA LTC (Ret.) died on March 17, 2016 (no other data).
Busby, Orlando L. USMC LTC (Ret.) died on October 30, 2015 (no other data).	Rigsby, Paul H. USA died on January 31, 2016 (no other data).
Cherry, Jack M. USA (Ret.) Flight Class: 63-5W died on March 14, 2014 (no other data).	Roberson, John C. USMC died December 17, 2015 (no other data).
Clark, Edward E. Reverend USA LTC (Ret.) Flight Class 66-11, RVN: year? 176 AVN died on October 2, 2015.	Rosenthal, Eugene W. USN LCM (Ret.) RVN: 67-68 HA (L) -3 DET 3, Callsign: Seawolf died on March 15, 2016.
Clark, Harold G. USA Flight Classes: 68-14, 68-510 died on March 3, 2016 (no other data).	Saunders, Nicholas E. USMC died on February 2, 2016 (no other data).
Cline, Gary K. USA Flight Class 62-1W died on November 30, 2015 (no other data).	Shelby, Jerry L. USA LTC (Ret.) died on November 30, 2015 (no other data).
Donaldson, Orlow B. III USA LTG (Ret.) died on March 6, 2016 (no other data).	Simon, Robert P. USA Flight Class: 69-17 died on October 22, 2015 (no other data).
Dorland, Peter G. USA Flight Class: 70-50 died on November 4, 2015 (no other data).	Tallman, Alfred B. III USA Flight Classes: 69-31, 69-37 died on November 30, 2015 (no other data).
Friel, Michael J. USMC died on January 1, 2016 (no other data).	Urquart, John C. USA LTC (Ret.) died on January 24, 2016 (no other data).
Guilmartin John F. USAF LTC (Ret.) died on March 10, 2016 (no other data).	Van Liew, Dennis S. USMC MAJ (Ret.) RVN: 65-66 HMM-362, 69 - HMM 362 died on September 16, 2015.
Hamer, Breeden P. USAF LTC (Ret.) died February 17, 2016 (no other data).	Villarreal, Richard USA Flight Class: 67-8, 67-9, RVN: 68 B/101 AHB 101 ABN, Callsign: Black Angel died on November 28, 2015.
Johnson, Delmar W. USA Flight Class: 70-19 died on March 3, 2016 (no other data).	Whalen, Rodney N. USN LCDR (Ret.) RVN: 71-72 HA (L) -3 DET 9, Callsign: Seawolf died February 23, 2016.
MacWillie, Donald M. USA LTC (Ret.) died on January 25, 2016 (no other data).	

BOOK REVIEWS

By VHPA Life Member: JOHN PENNY



NORTH FLAG by VHPA Life Member John V. Rob



V. Rob is an exceptional memoir of his time in RVN with C/299 AVN, 1 CAV, in 1968. Completing training at Ft. Wolters and Ft. Rucker Rob arrived in Cam Ranh Bay. At Cam Ranh Bay he and his fellow aviators encountered the usual Army "hurry up and wait." After some misdirection, they were shuffled north to Camp Evans and LZ Sharon - a small base 13 kilometers south of the DMZ.

LZ Sharon was essentially a wasteland with plenty of work for all hands due to the 1st CAV policy of no Vietnamese on base. The newbies found themselves with several extra duties including maintenance of the perimeter, Officer of the Guard, sandbagging bunkers, and "improving" the spartan living area. Additionally, Rob and the other pilots were checked out in the Huey, familiarized with the AO and flying

combat missions.

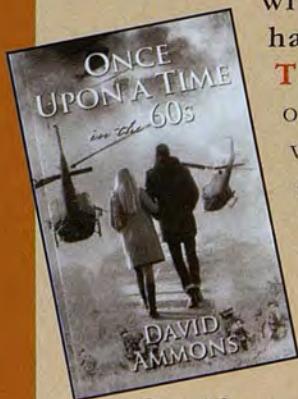
Soon the unit was ordered to pack up, leave their "improvements" and head south to Tay Ninh in III Corps. There, the VC welcomed C/299 with a mortar barrage. C/299's new AO included the French rubber plantations and the area west to the Cambodian border. There were numerous dangerous flying missions.

Rob has done an excellent job writing with that certain wit Army Aviators are known for along with concise narratives detailing the dangerous missions he and his fellow aviators flew on a daily basis. His detailed writing flows and will take you back to those days when we were much younger, flying missions, and looking out for each other and those who depended on us.

North Flag: My Service in the Republic of Vietnam, June 1968-June 1969 (472 pages, \$18.00 paperback, photos) John V. Rob, ISBN: 978-1934285251 is available by order from your local book store, Amazon, or other book suppliers.

VHPA member David Ammons, who served with the 178 ASHC in 66-67, has written **ONCE UPON A TIME IN THE 60s**, a novel of love lost and regained and a very personal redemption for a troubled Vietnam Veteran.

Whit and Claire, were in love when a college prank gone awry separates them. Subsequently, Whit receives an option from his university



President, county sheriff, and an Army recruiter. Under the circumstances, flying a helicopter in Vietnam seemed a reasonable choice.

Vietnam proved to be an intense experience.

The shattering loss of a fellow pilot and best friend at the hands of a French plantation owner and narcotics smuggler leaves Whit with invisible scars. Despite a great job in New York City, Whit is unable to cope with life "back in the world." Needing a break, Whit vacations in France and comes face to face with his old enemy!

Ammons spins a good story with great character development. You will have a hard time putting it down.

Once Upon A Time in the 60s (138 pages, \$10.95 paperback, \$3.95 Kindle) David Ammons, ISBN: 978-1495807619 is available by order from your local book store, Amazon, or other book suppliers.

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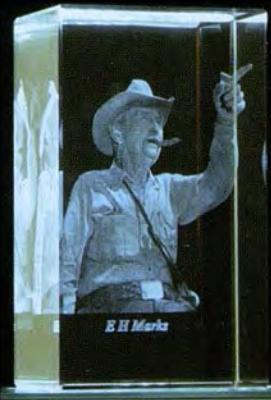
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