



The VHPA AVIATOR

The Newsletter of The Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association



TIDE 6

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From the President of the VHPA

~ JOHN SHAFER ~



Veterans Day will have come and gone by the time you receive The VHPA Aviator and read this article. Happy Veterans Day to all you Veterans.

The Washington State Chapter Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association will have walked alongside a Huey in the Veterans Day Parade in Auburn, WA. We have been told it is the largest Veterans Day Parade west of the Mississippi with over two hundred entrants. As we walk along, we go to the crowd and shake the hands of veterans in the crowd who came before us, with us, and after us. The looks on their faces that we are coming to them and acknowledging and thanking them for their Service to Our Country really makes the day special. Thank a Veteran.

Our next reunion is in Indianapolis, IN, July 1 through July 6.



There will be good things to see and do. In December there will be more details on the VHPA website at Reunion Information; set the date aside and start planning now to attend. Hope to see you there.

The Endowment Fund at Texas Tech has been established; there has been \$7,400 donated by VHPA members as of this writing. Thank you to those who have donated to help maintain the legacy of Vietnam Helicopter Pilots.

As of this writing H.R. 4298, The Vietnam Helicopter Crew Memorial Act, has 66 co-sponsors, keep up the good work. Visit the website: <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/114/hr4298/details>, click on show to determine if your Representative is one of the 57. If not, call your Representative's Military Legislative Assistant and ask WHY NOT? In such case, ask WHEN ARE THEY GOING TO DO SO? We need as many co-sponsors as we can enlist. This is what every member can do to help the placement of the memorial in Arlington National Cemetery.

I hope everyone and your families will have a MERRY CHRISTMAS and a HAPPY NEW YEAR.

John Shafer, Scalaphunter 18

FROM THE VHPA STAFF AT HQ!

Thank you to the life members who have either called HQ, mailed your form with the updated info listed, updated their info via ODA, or have let HQ know the info we have on file for you is correct! This is a tremendous help in getting the VHPA database as current as possible.

The 2017 Calendar is still available through Acclaim Press. Visit their website at www.acclaimpress.com, call them toll free at 877-427-2665, or mail an order form to Acclaim with your payment. If you do not have an order form, give HQ a call & we will be happy to send one to you.

We now have the 1994-2016 Calendar CD available for the cost of \$8. If you would like to purchase one, call HQ to place your order.

We still have a couple of small, a couple of 2XL & several 3XL t-shirts from R2016 in Reno. We also have a small, a couple of medium, a couple of large & three XL t-shirts from R2015 in Washington. Give HQ a call if you would like to purchase one.

The 2016 directories have been mailed out. We are now taking pre-orders for the 2017 directories that will be mailed out in October 2017.

REMEMBER - 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

TIDE 6

Upon arriving in Vietnam to begin my second tour, I was informed by the 11th Group Commander of the First Air Cavalry Division I would take command of Charlie Company of the 228th Assault Support Helicopter Battalion. I was thrilled to get a command, but not so thrilled with Charlie Company's call sign, Crimson Tide. Being a member of the University of Illinois football squad from 1955 - 1960, I would have preferred a different call sign, perhaps Fighting Illini.

I may have been troubled by the call sign, but nobody else was. And why should they be? University of Alabama football teams had eight National Championships to their credit, the most recent in 1961, 1964, and 1965 under Coach Paul "Bear" Bryant. I admired Coach Bryant, not so much for his national titles, but more for his credo with respect to what he looked for in a football player. He was quoted as saying, "What matters is not the size of the dog in the fight, but the size of the fight in the dog." Being an undersized lineman, that was my kind of philosophy.

I decided early on since I was announcing to the world over FM and UHF radio waves I was head coach of the Crimson Tide in Vietnam, I might as well communicate with the head coach of the Crimson Tide back in Tuscaloosa, AL. So, with the help of First Sergeant Bob Bratton and Captain Rick Storm, we sat down and collectively drafted a letter for Coach Bryant to inform him there was, indeed, another Crimson Tide team on this planet. We told

him we were proud of our name and he and his team would likewise be proud of our achievements. The letter included some details about what we did for a living and how we went about doing it. We also included a company guidon and a couple of action photographs of our aircraft supporting 1st Cavalry soldiers in the field. About a month later, we received a letter from Coach Bryant along with a Crimson Tide football. One panel of the football was signed by Coach Bryant, his coaching staff, and the entire 1969 football squad. Because of Coach Bryant's popularity, Charley Company gained a little notoriety as his gesture was written up in the Stars and Stripes together with the photo below.

When I left the unit, about seven months later, the officers and men of Charlie Company signed the remaining two panels of the ball and gave it to me as a going away gift. Today that ball resides in my home as one of my most prized possessions. Ironically, the last of Coach Bryant's twenty-four straight bowl appearances would be against the Fighting Illini in the Liberty Bowl on December 29, 1982. It was Coach Bryant's last game, and its outcome would advance his win column from 322 to 323. While my loyalty remained with the Fighting Illini during the entire game, the disappointment of the final score was certainly diminished by my affiliation with the Crimson Tide of Vietnam. Like the rest of the world, and certainly all the Vietnam Crimson Tide, I was pleased Coach Bryant improved his winning percentage in the very last game he would coach. Hell, I just wish his last game hadn't been against the Illini. I grew to love that call sign, Tide 6. Everyone loves a winner.

Bob Lanzotti

Friends of Vinh Son Orphanages (FVSO), Vietnam

FVSO helps support 850 Montagnard children living at 7 orphanage sites in the Kontum and Pleiku area. Founded in 2005 by servicemen who served in the Central Highlands, we are a small organization and are proud that 100% of your donations go to the children and their caregivers.

FVSO Board members pay for all of the administrative expenses and any on-site visits. Our mission is to provide for basic needs (food, medicine, clothing and shelter) & education.



It takes \$12 per month to provide adequate nutrition for one child and \$80 per year to send a child to school (covering primary & secondary). Operated by the Catholic Sisters of the Miraculous Medal.



FVSO is a non-profit and all donations are tax deductible

For more information or to make a contribution, please see our contact info below. THANK-YOU for helping!

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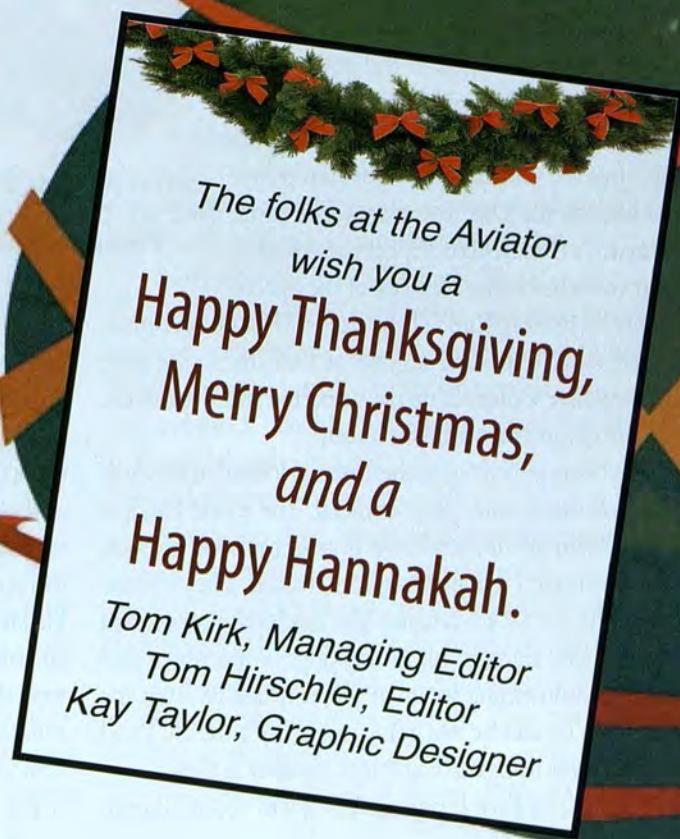
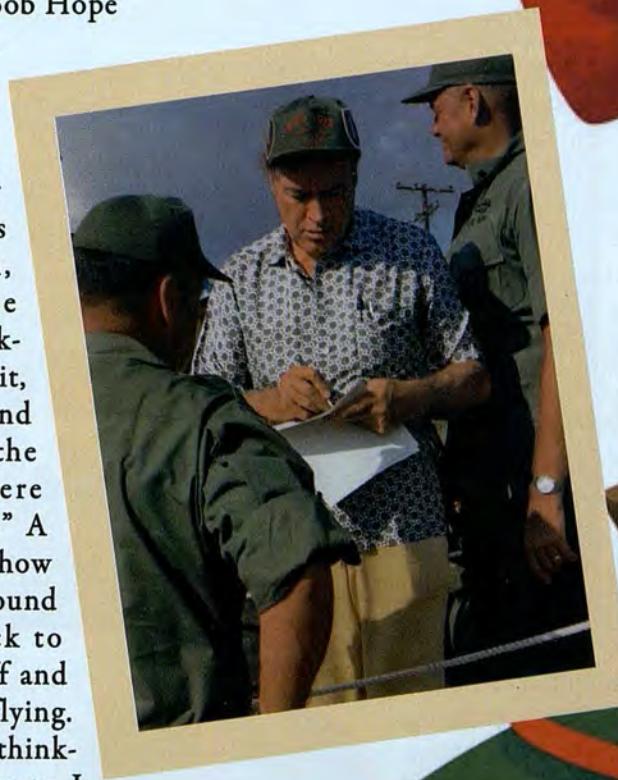


Bob Hope Christmas Specials

As a child, I would watch the Bob Hope Christmas Show TV specials, and was always thrilled to see the servicemen laugh and have a good time. It seemed magical to me even as a child. So, when in December of 1968 I found out Bob Hope was going to perform at Long Binh, where I was stationed with the 120th AHC, The Deans, I was tickled pink. Well, as luck would have it, I was scheduled to fly that day and my childhood dreams of seeing the Bob Hope Show in person were dashed or should I say "Red Xed." A few days later, I don't remember how many, I was flying an Admiral around III Corps and was heading back to Hotel 3 in Saigon to drop him off and get some rest after a long day of flying. Now, wouldn't you know as I am thinking of how that cold beer is going taste, I get a radio call from Dean Forward and I am told of a mission change. Oh great, more time strapped in! Dean Forward tells me to drop the Admiral at Cu Chi and wait 'til he attends to his business, with no projected wait time. When I fly into Cu Chi and radio the code I have on board, they direct me to follow a vehicle for parking. Well, I'll tell you I never saw so many helicopters in one place. As it turned out, the Admiral I was flying around all day was Admiral McCain, Commander-in-Chief Pacific Command (CINCPAC), and he was there to present Bob Hope with an award and my crew and I were given seats in the second row, the seats were empty ammo boxes. So, I did get to have one of my childhood dreams come true and with much better seats than I would have had in Long Binh. By the way, Ann Margret left nothing to the imagination with her black, one-piece leotard! "Thanks for the memories" Bob and Ann Margret.

Lance Patten (CW4 ret), Dean 23

Photos courtesy of Daniel Dugan, Red Hat 6



The US Military Medical Evacuation System:

from the eyes of a participant; an adventure in and of itself; makes getting shot almost an afterthought

(2,600,000 members of the US Armed Forces were deployed to Vietnam; 200,000 received the Purple Heart; 115,000 were medically evacuated out of country 1965 - 1969. I was one of each)

October 25, 1969: there I was, at 1,500', somewhere over Laos, 23 mm pastel tracers by the hundreds streaming at me, punctuated with 57 mm air burst. ...But wait, that was the week before. Let's begin again...

October 31 (Halloween), 1969, around 11 AM: there I was, at 800', in the front seat of a Cobra climbing out of a rearm at Dak Pek in the Central Highlands of Vietnam when I heard a thud. I looked down. I felt nothing at first. My right foot was suspended in midair about a foot off the pedal; I could not lower it. I looked at it and wondered why. By then, I had kept my head lowered staring at my foot so long, maybe 30 seconds, the guy in the back seat transmitted to the other three Cobras in the team "taking fire; man in front is DEAD." That, and my visual recon of my right foot, brought me back to reality. There was what looked like an explosion in the heel of my boot; like someone had put an M80 firecracker in it. I acknowledged to the guy in the back seat I was not dead. Rather than the 23 mm and the 57 mm of the previous week, this was a single round of 7.62. The PIC put the Cobra into a right turn power dive to get us back to the Dak To runway. The 361st Aviation Company's (Escort) [ACE] primary mission was to support over-the-border missions of the Special Forces out of CCC in Kon Tum. There was an SF team on launch standby, so there was SF medical support at Dak To. As we were landing, the other three Cobras lit up the suspected area. I felt worse for the guy on the ground than I did for myself.

While I was being pulled out of the Cobra, I looked at the deck and the blood and saw a shiny piece of metal. The round had just enough force to penetrate the aircraft, the front of my boot, my foot, and the heel of my boot. I scooped it up. Still have it. They laid me out in a UH1 with an SF E6 Medic. The medevac process had begun. He rummaged through his kit looking for morphine and could not find any; something about an SF party at Kon Tum the night before? Then he said he was going to cut my boot off. I said no. It might be the only thing holding things together in there.

We were at the 71st Evac Hospital in Pleiku in about 30 min-



361st Avn Co, Escort
[A.C.E], Camp Holloway,
Pleiku, Vietnam.

utes. I protested when an Army LT Nurse started cutting off my Nomex flight suit pant leg. They were hard to come by in Pleiku. I told her I needed those pants. She said lie back and relax; my flying days were done for now. I was in surgery within 30 minutes. There was a big to-do over anesthesia: general or spinal. Something about classified SF mis-

sions and patients talking while under anesthesia. It was a spinal. I was very lucky. Clean through and through, albeit the length of my foot. No missing toes; just a dozen broken bones in the toes and arch. Sewn up with 13 cm of surgical stainless steel wire. On a trajectory to hit me somewhere between my groin and my face, the round hit a bolt in the aircraft frame and leveled off into my foot. You can see the bolt thread marks in the copper jacket; as well as the grooves from the rifle barrel.

By 3 PM I was in the recovery ward, lying in a bed with a cast up to my knee, my foot sticking out from under the sheets, toes exposed. Along comes a corpsman on his rounds with a clipboard...and lays it on my toes. Let the medevac process continue. Two other people stopped by. First, the Chaplain, to pin a Purple Heart on my pillow - the fastest award I ever received. The slowest award was delayed 40 years for the action "somewhere over Laos" the week prior to this event. Second was an American Red Cross Service Worker (hereafter referred to, most respectfully, as a Doughnut Dolly) to give me an OD drawstring ditty-bag with necessities. I still have that bag. It so happens Pleiku was an Air Force Base, with grass and tennis courts, and an air-conditioned officers' club. That's why the hospital and the nurses were there. The 361st were poor cousins living in hootches about 2 miles away in Camp Holloway. One of our resourceful Warrant Officers, after weeks of hard work, had arranged for several of the nurses to come over for a Halloween party at our unit "social club",

The Stickett Inn. Some of the guys from the unit came by to see me around 5 PM and to pick up the nurses...while I remained there. These same nurses stopped by to say goodnight to me when they returned from the party. After 5 days at the 71st in Pleiku I had stabilized enough to head on to the next phase of my medevac: a short, but eventful ambulance ride to the Pleiku airfield and a flight to Ton Son Nhut. They lifted me out onto a stretcher and took me outside to wait on the ground for the ambulance. When the ambulance arrived, the guy at the foot of the stretcher had his back to me, stooped down to grab the handles...and sat on my right foot. At whatever hospital they had me in at Tan Son Nhut, they decided I could not recover in Vietnam so they sent me to Camp Zama, Japan. Another air evac flight. Another opportunity for an adven-

I dated a girl from Zama. Anyway, more spinal, more surgery. By this time, I had not had a bath for 10 days. I told the nurse I wanted to take a shower. She said no. I had one of the walking wounded on the ward get me some tape, a plastic trash bag, and a wheel chair and then wheel me into the shower. It was great. The next afternoon I woke up and looked to my left. There was a guy sitting on the edge of the bed humming a song, swinging his left leg, really the stump of his left leg. He was an SF major who had lost part of his leg on a previous tour. It had gotten infected so they were shipping him back home. So, he was "healthy" and had pass privileges. Drunk at the club every night; roaring back to the ward afterwards. One day he said he would take me (push my wheel chair) to the PX. The chair had a piece of plywood that covered the seat and had a 3 foot extension upon which you could rest your leg. These were old Korean War hospitals with LONG connecting hall ways, with STEEP ramps at either end. So, there I am, happy to get off the ward, sitting in my wheel chair, my right foot sticking out, being pushed by a one legged SF major. What's to go wrong? He got me to the top of the first ramp and said "whee" and let go of the wheel chair. A couple of 360s and a nose dive onto my right foot later, he catches up and says "on to the PX."

The next afternoon, still at Zama, I woke up from yet another nap and looked to my right. On the bed next to me was a young-looking blond hair, blue-eyed guy with the biggest shit-eating grin. He was Denny Fluharty, a Warrant Officer from the 361st. He had been shot in the bicep; clean in and out, no bone damage. Denny ended up with a direct commission, 1LT Inf. Two years later he was a CPT and the student leader of an Infantry Officer Advanced Course (IOAC) of which I was the cadre CO. Two years after that he was the best man at my wedding.

The Zama crew had done all they could so now it was back to the US of A. On with the medevac process!

November 18, 1969: The flight from Zama was to Scott AFB, IL, with a stop in Anchorage where we arrived around 2 AM. The walking wounded got to go into the (warm) terminal. We litter-bound stayed on board, with the tail open, in November, in Alaska! Lo, and much behold, up the ramp comes a group of wives, with coffee and doughnuts...at 2 in the morning. They even had knit ski hats and a knit cap for my exposed toes. Still have it! God bless military wives. Got into Scott AFB mid-afternoon. In comes the VFW...with cold beer...right into the ward. The beer was quickly followed by a cart with a phone for us to call family. I had not notified my folks (I was single at the time) and had asked the military notification system to hold off until I got to CONUS, so my folks could see me and know I was alright. That evening, another group of wives came in and offered massages!

The Evac officials asked each of us where we would like to end



Dak To SF Medic, with morphine??



Roses From Mom at NAS JAX; always a Panther, always a son

ture. The C 141 had racks to hold stretchers stacked 3 to 4 high. They put me on the top rack. When they had me half-way up, the litter slipped and I fell to the floor, on my right foot. All part of the process.

Camp Zama was an interesting stop. My father was a Navy Chief. We were stationed in Yokohama from '59 to '61 where I graduated from high school. Although we were bitter school rivals,

up. I said someplace near Jacksonville, FL. They said "how about NAS JAX?" I told my folks I would be there around 2 PM the next day. They both worked, but said they would be there for dinner. When I was rolled off the plane, a Doughnut Dolly handed me a dozen red roses, saying they were from my mother (a military wife, and very resourceful...plus she was thinking ahead about her single son...and maybe a Doughnut Dolly??).

By the time I got to NAS JAX I had had 5 surgeries and was really only there to recover and guard against infection...and to use crutches. Almost killed myself going down stairs the first time. My Dr. was a Navy LTC, Ortho. I was the only combat-wounded guy on the ward (20 beds 8 patients), and the only Army guy. The Dr. said he was shipping me to Ft Stewart, GA, as soon as he could arrange it. He did not like Army guys. He proved it a week later when he decided the stainless steel sutures, the length of the bottom of my foot, had been in my foot long enough (7 weeks). A walking wounded Marine PFC wheeled me into the exam room. The Dr. said he would "take out every other suture, and if it held, would take out the remaining." He took some Home Depot type dykes/wire cutters and started snipping. That was not too bad. Then he took some Home Depot type pliers and started pulling them out of my foot. My foot had become accustomed to the wire and did not want them to go...and let me know it...with shots of pain with each removed suture (no pain block). After the fifth one I mustered enough breath to say, between tightly clinched teeth "take them all out; I am not doing this again." And he did.

By now it is around December 21 and the Dr was still trying to get me shipped to Ft Stewart, four days before Christmas. My folks! I crutched my way to the comm center and talked to the comm chief (like my dad). I told him if transfer orders came in, "lose them" until after Christmas. Which they did, and which he did. While on Christmas leave I bought a used car, which for decades became my gold standard for cars...a '68 Pontiac Grand Prix...with a hood as long as a carrier deck...and it had some new device...called cruise control. Just what a guy with a cast in his right leg needed. The transfer orders were found. The Dr. was happy. I was leaving, but not to Ft Stewart. I managed to get them changed to Ft Benning, where I was stationed before flight school, and a subsequent trip to Vietnam. The Dr. said there was no transportation to Benning for another week. I said no problem, I would drive. He said I couldn't. I said I have cruise control. He said get out, and scribbled his name on the discharge papers.

December 31, 1969. I rolled into Martin Army Hospital around 5 PM. The ward was EMPTY. All on Christmas leave. But wait. The one-legged SF major lived at Ft Benning. I called. He picked me up. The nurse told him to get me back by 00:30, or

12:30 AM, or ...the real zero dark thirty. RIGHT! His wife was Australian...a one time (recently) Go-Go dancer. Don't get me started! Drinks and a good time were had by all. He got me back to ward around 4 AM. I was discharged by noon and reassigned to the Infantry School as an instructor, teaching officers and NCOs how to teach, the Benning way. The exact job I had when I received orders for flight school.

You would think this would end my medevac saga...but I am an Army aviator, and a Pink Panther. And now, as Paul Harvey used to say, here is the rest of the story.

January 10, 1970. I was not thrilled about being back in the same job at Benning. I motored on up to the Pentagon and asked to see my assignment officer. He said I had to stay at Benning and wait for my Advanced Course class scheduled for June. I told him that was still enough time to go back to my unit in Vietnam and finish my tour there. He said "we'll see about that; come with me to see the head of the section." He started double timing down the hallway and called me a gimp for not keeping up. By now I was one week on a cane, no cast. The department head had sympathy but told me the Army REALLY needed me at the Advanced Course!



LTC and Mrs Keeney, upon retirement, Director of Security, Presidio of San Francisco, Nov 1988

February 1970. Waiting for June. I reflected on Vietnam, the Pink Panthers, getting shot, and the medevac process. So, I got a wild hair and started writing thank you letters...to the Air Lift Command...to the National Director of the Red Cross. Another lo and behold moment. The Red Cross was having their annual convention in Chicago in April. Would I like to come and be a featured speaker at a luncheon...expense account on them? Of course, I had to write a speech and have the Infantry Center CG approve it.

April 1970. The convention was at the Palmer House Hotel. The Honorary Chairperson was Helen Hayes (Google it). When I checked in I was escorted to the back of the building on the 10th floor. It had what appeared to be a metal Army cot and a rust stained sink. I headed back to the front desk and told them I would pay for another room myself if this was the best the Red Cross could do for me. Boy was I feeling full of myself. So, off to the luncheon the next afternoon. I am sitting at the head table, with my OD ditty bag proudly displayed, with a fist full of one stars and two stars, wondering who the hell is this punk captain up here with us? Obviously it was tough to eat. But I put on a good show for the assembled Doughnut Dollies and Red Cross special services people and their chain of command. I went all the way back to my 2LT days in the DMZ of Korea in 1965 when a Red Cross field officer helped me get troops back to the States on emergency leave. And the time

we had "engine failure" and landed at Fire Base St George, finding a troupe of Doughnut Dollies there bringing some kindness to soldiers. After I finished, there was some mingling and polite thank yous. Then a hug from behind... the Red Cross worker from the DMZ! Can't get much better than that...right? After most of the people had cleared the room a kind of shy brunette approached and asked...wait for it... "why didn't you tell them you had run out of fuel, not engine failure (well, sort of) that day at Fire Base St George?" She had been there that day! "How about dinner tonight," I said. Alright. Dinner in the hotel was good. Then, a short walk back to the room...hers or mine? Hers,

with a polite "I had a great evening, now take your aviator ass back to your own room; I know how you guys like your desert."

Shot at and hit in Vietnam in October. Shot down in the hallway of the Palmer House in April. No oak leaf for my Purple Heart.

Thus endeth my medevac saga: 76 days in country; 72 days in the hospital. I did not get another gunshot wound, although I did crash, but not burn, in an OH 58, on top of Mauna Kea volcano in Hawaii (25th ID) in 1976 (only the good die young).

LTC R. Mark Keeney (ret)



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GOOD THINGS FROM BAD

I believe good things can come from bad things, and I try hard to maintain that outlook. Here I will relate one proven example. How I came to know about this was very unusual; it was a case of mistaken identity.

I came home from Vietnam for the last time in September 1968, after a very memorable tour with the Silver Spurs of A Troop, 3/17 Cavalry. Some of the bad memories include the events of July 23, 1968; I was overhead as we lost scout pilot Doug Chaney and three other good men. This has been one of the toughest events for me to get over, but now I deal with it well.

Fast forward to the VHPA Reunion in Denver in 2001. I was having the usual good time one of those afternoons, inside a mini-reunion room with my old buddies from the 119th Aviation Company. Air Cavalry events could not have been further from my thoughts. Then a pilot we did not know came inside from the hallway and asked if I was present. He said two ladies were asking for me outside. I found this very curious as I stepped into the hallway.

I found two very nice ladies there. I soon learned they were Rae Cheney and her daughter, Jerilyn Brusseau. They introduced themselves and asked if I was Chuck Oualline. I said "yes." Then came the bombshell.

Jerilyn said something like, "We understand you were there when my brother was killed, and that's why we have sought you." I was stunned. "What was his name?" "Daniel Cheney."

Right away I noticed the different first name, but for confirmation, I asked for the date they lost him. It was in January 1969. Now I could positively say I lost a different 1LT Chaney, one with a different first name and different spelling of the last name. For further confirmation, I told them I was in Germany in January of 1969.

Nevertheless, I was somewhat shaken at first, because I thought we were talking about Doug Chaney. We were not, but I felt compelled to explain what happened that day in 1968, when we tried and tried to save Doug and his observer. In fact, two of our men died trying to save them. This was the first time Jerilyn and her mother had attended a VHPA reunion; someone, somewhere, told them I had a connection to their 1LT Cheney. But he arrived a few months after I went home so I never met him. In fact, he had been with the unit only a few days when he went down in a Cobra on January 6, 1969 with Walt Kozloskey, whom I did know. All in one year's time, Rae Cheney had pinned lieutenant bars on her son's chest, likewise pinned his Army Aviator wings, and placed flowers on his grave. But she did not seem bitter.

Over the years, Jerilyn has been involved with Julie Kink and our Gold Star breakfasts. At another VHPA reunion a few years after our

first meeting, Jerilyn made admiring comments about my Cav hat. (Who could not admire one of those?) The Silver Spurs gave me this hat the night before I left them in 1968. Anyway, I removed my hat, removed the 3/17 Cavalry unit crest mounted thereon, and gave the crest to Jerilyn. As soon as I got home, I procured a new Cav hat, put Daniel Cheney's wings, 1LT bar, and crossed sabers on it, and sent it to Jerilyn. I told her it was the one her brother never received.

Now for the good from the bad. I did not know that day in 2001, but soon learned Jerilyn and Mrs. Cheney had co-founded PeaceTrees Vietnam in 1995, a non-profit organization based in Seattle. Jerilyn's husband, Danaan Parry, also was involved but has since passed away. PeaceTrees was the first non-governmental organization allowed to perform humanitarian de-mining work in Vietnam. They have removed over 93,000 pieces of dangerous unexploded mines, bombs, and rockets. They maintain a number of on-call teams to do this work. They plant trees after parcels of land are cleared. And they have built a number of schools, libraries, and even homes for the Vietnamese people. Rae Cheney and Jerilyn Brusseau, through their efforts and donors, strive to honor the war losses of both sides, and to build bridges of friendship and understanding. VHPA members who have visited some of the PeaceTrees sites confirm PeaceTrees is quite successful and very well-received. Some of the volunteer work is performed by veterans from both sides. PeaceTrees has even been honored in Congress for its humanitarian works. The Honorable Derek Kilmer of Washington State read a commendation into the Congressional Record upon the organization's 20th anniversary.



Jerilyn Brusseau and Chuck Oualline

Chuck Oualline



CONTACT: MIKE ANDERSON, 202.224.6727

NEWS RELEASE

CONTACT: BILL NEIDHARDT, 202.228.1774

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**September 30, 2016****Sullivan, Baldwin Introduce Bill
to Create Vietnam Helicopter Crew Memorial**

WASHINGTON, DC – Senator Dan Sullivan (R-AK) and Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) have introduced the Senate companion legislation of H.R. 4298, the Vietnam Helicopter Crew Memorial Act, which would direct the Secretary of the Army to approve a memorial in Arlington National Cemetery honoring the nearly 5,000 helicopter pilots and crewmembers killed during the Vietnam War. The legislation was first introduced in the House by Rep. Mark Amodei (R-NV).

“The brave helicopter pilots and crew of the Vietnam War were crucial to the fight against the North Vietnamese and communist forces, and to the eventual evacuation of thousands of Americans and Vietnamese from Saigon,” said Senator Sullivan. “A five-foot-by-one-foot memorial amid the more than 620-acre cemetery is not an unreasonable request to honor the sacrifices of thousands of fallen service members. With 40 years having passed since the end of the Vietnam War, it is time for family members of these fallen heroes to have a place in our nation’s cemetery to come and pay their respects.”

“Brave and courageous Vietnam war pilots made incredible

sacrifices and this bipartisan effort offers respect for their selfless service,” said Senator Baldwin. “Our Vietnam veterans and their families have earned this recognition and they deserve to be properly honored at Arlington National Cemetery.”

“Hailing from all branches of the Military, these pilots, crew members, and medics account for almost ten percent of all the casualties in what has come to be known as the ‘Helicopter War,’ said Rep. Amodei. “Vietnam pilots and crew members touched every aspect of the war’s efforts, serving as transportation for soldiers and civilians, and providing critical battlefield support, but the process has failed these veterans – denying them proper recognition for their joint sacrifice. A working standard that doesn’t allow a worthy application to make that grade is a working standard, quite frankly, that needs a little bit of help. While this legislation may not change the process, it would ensure that a group of veterans, who are more than worthy of a memorial, receive the recognition they deserve. I’m pleased to join Senators Sullivan and Baldwin in support of these true American heroes.”

The memorial proposal was submitted by the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association (VHPA). The VHPA has agreed to fund the construction and installation costs for the memorial.

The ANC Memorial Update: Autumn 2016.

The effort to place the Vietnam Helicopter Pilot and Crewmember Memorial continues to accelerate in Washington, DC. Through the efforts of individual VHPA members reaching out to their representatives, cosponsors to H.R. 4298, the Vietnam Crewmember Memorial Act, has grown from 16 in August to 68 as of October 3, 2016. This is phenomenal!

Equally important, Senators Sullivan (AK) and Baldwin (WI) (see press release in this issue) introduced a companion bill the last week of September. A senate companion bill is critical to passage and the success of our mission to honor the helicopter pilots and crewmembers who died in the Vietnam War. A companion bill encourages more congressmen to cosponsor HR 4298 because they recognize the bill has great potential for passing into law, and it gets the senate involved early in the legislative game. The senate companion bill is a valuable milestone.

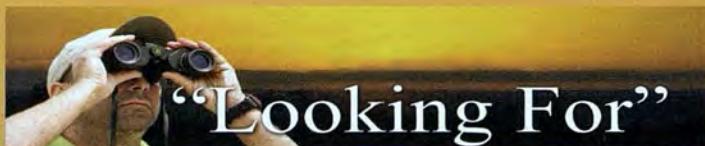
The velocity of movement can be attributed to a number of actions, the foremost being Representative Amodei’s and his staff’s diligent efforts to have HR 4298 heard by the

House Armed Services Military Personnel Subcommittee on September 8 (Note: the hearing can be viewed on YouTube, www.youtube.com/watch?v=X8L79uQTE-I). It is worth viewing.

Media attention is also a factor. On September 15, writer Mark Thompson of Time Magazine wrote on the effort to fight the Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) refusal to place the memorial. Some may disagree with Thompson’s opinions of the war, but he identifies the valor of helicopter crews deserves recognition within ANC (link: <http://time.com/4495714/vietnam-war-helicopter-memorial/>).

Although on a successful path, there is no guarantee of achieving this worthy goal without continued pressure on elected representatives in both the House and Senate to support H.R. 4298. Continue to email AND call your representatives to ensure their support. At this time, during the 50th Commemoration of the Vietnam War, it is time to finish the task of honoring our rotary-wing brothers who gave the last full measure of devotion.

By Bob Hesselbein



Dear Editor

I was referred to you as someone who might help me. I am the sole survivor of a Ranger team that was shot down just north of Alpha 4 on September 20, 1970. Looking for the Charley Horse pilot of the C&C chopper above us which was carrying our CO and XO and who brought the chopper down to rescue me. My XO said it was a Charley Horse pilot. Thank you for whatever help you can give me. I would like to thank him.

Thank You David Sloane [REDACTED]

Looking For a colleague

I am trying to locate a fellow soldier of Thomas Rogers Stansbury who was from Dimmitt, TX. After Tom's death, this man called me because Tom had asked him to call and to give me messages and to give me some momentos. That was in 1971. I've been trying to locate him since. All I know is that he was part of Tom's flight crew and he was from Dimmitt. Any help is appreciated.

Dianna Davis-Forest [REDACTED]

Request from: David Porter

I witnessed a Huey explode and crash near Duc Pho on LZ Bronco the Fall of 1967. As the aircraft passed over we heard noise like a gun shot. We watched as the aircraft lowered to the helipad, exploded, crashed and burned on the pad. There was one survivor I believe. They had just picked up personnel from a nearby OP. Can you tell me what aircraft it was and the reason for crash? I was with the 1/14 Artillery 198th LIB. Americal Div.

Looking For Helicopter Names/Nose Art

Gentlemen; Just like in WWII, one of the very important parts of our history and legacy of flying helicopters in Vietnam is the documentation of the "names" and nose art that was painted on our birds. We all know it wasn't "Authorized" but it was allowed and tolerated by the Brass for esprit de corps. John Brennan, who served as an EM in one of the Delta Aviation units, has produced Vol 2 of his research on this subject. John did a fantastic job with Vol 1 and says he will finish up the project with Vol 3.

I have invited him to the VHPA reunions several times, but he has been unable to come due to work, etc. John is a first rate guy who would appreciate your help.

From [REDACTED]

Regarding Taps for Les Valouche

I served with Les in C/16. I met him at a reunion in Atlanta ten years ago; we corresponded a bit, but his old address and email stopped working last year. I would like to contact Marilyn or one of his children to pass on my thoughts about an incredible leader and friend.

Steve Bunting: [REDACTED]

Serendipity

On May 18, I attended a West Point Association of the District of Columbia luncheon at Fort Belvoir concerning the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency. The DPAA is the recently-modernized post World War II organization initiated to find and return missing military service members to their families.

During the question period, Lieutenant Colonel Kevin Rue, USA Retired, reported there had been two searches for Captain Rocky Versace. He asked two questions: 1. What do we know about Rocky Versace? and 2. When will we find him?

October 29, 1963: Special Forces CPT Humber Roque "Rocky" Versace, 1LT James Nicholas "Nick" Rowe and medic SFC Dan Pitzer were captured while advising a Civilian Irregular Defense Group company during a large Viet Cong battle and ambush. They were reported to have been held prisoners, mostly in the large and swampy U-Minh Forest area of Vietnam adjacent to the Gulf of Thailand. Rocky refused to submit to the will of the VC captors in the prison camps and when paraded in local villages. Witnesses verified he calmly rebuked the charges of the VC with his fluent Vietnamese and French language skills. After two years, he was removed from the camp. Soon after, Nick Rowe was taken by his captors to listen to a North Vietnamese radio broadcast which reported Rocky had been executed. The location of Rocky's grave is unknown. We were told the search has a high priority, but searching times are limited to the dryer seasons and the Vietnamese are willing to support a limited number of searches a year.

Upon returning home, I found the May/June issue of the VHPA Aviator with Ben Benley's article Escape from Darkness article, which described the rescue of 1LT Nick Rowe: After five years of high priorities to gain intelligence to launch rescue operations for the American prisoners, B troop of the 1st of the 7th Air Cavalry discovered a freshly deserted prison camp while examining the results of a recent B-52 bomber strike. An expanded search was launched immediately. On December 31, 1968, the Cobra and Scout helicopter teams found three hidden sampans, received enemy fire and attacked. Three of the VC guards were killed and the others scattered. Nick was then able to move into the open for a pick up by the command and control helicopter of the B Troop Dutch Masters.

Because the Escape From Darkness article contained new information not mentioned in Nick Rowe's book, the USMA Class of 1959 group seeks to find more information about the Rowe/Versace history in hope that will lead to the discovery of Rocky's remains. This group helped research the recommendation forwarded in behalf of COL Nick Rowe that led to the award of the Medal of Honor to CPT Rocky Versace. The group hopes to obtain a copy of the SP4 Thompson picture of 1LT Nick Rowe taken shortly after his recovery in a UH-1, and to obtain permission for use of the picture by the Captain Rocky Versace Memorial Fund, Alexandria Commission for the Arts, 1605 Cameron Street, Virginia 22314-2704 in their memorial and search activities. They do not have a copy of the picture other than my May/June VHPA Aviator.

I look forward to learning more about the Rowe/Versace captivity history from you and our fellow members.

Best wishes

Curt Herrick [REDACTED]

Letters to the Editor

Letters to the Editor

To the Editor of the Aviator

I found a Huey (with no engine that has been being used as a parade float, I think) on a website and wanted to make VHPA aware that it is for sale, should anyone be interested.

The Website is: www.govdeals.com. Once there, click on "Holiday/seasonal items" and that's where it is listed. (I don't get it either???)

Member, John Simpers M03746

To the Editor of the Aviator

The GAR [sic] and the Spanish American War Vets are both now just a part of history - mostly forgotten. Unless we change our name to include ALL military helicopter pilots, we too will end up in history's 'dead file'.

Please consider a name change.

Thank you,
Earl Hensley 116 AHC 1971

Earl,

The development of the helicopter's role in Vietnam and subsequent impact on all operations is one reason our membership clings to that very identification of VHPA. Any other group may elect to form an association dealing with later vets as they are motivated. The Executive Council has been finalizing plans for our archives to be stored/displayed at the University of Texas for future generations for the reason of your concern.

Tom Kirk, Managing Editor

Dear Mr. Kirk:

As a life member of our association let me start by thanking you for all you do to help our VHPA grow and prosper; Bravo!!

In your fine current issue, I note that "Taps" utilizes eight pages of our magazine. We have a fine website that we can use to save our valuable printed pages for VHPA related stories etc.

The "VVA" lists the names of the departed in one small column in their newsletter and then one can go to their website to read the obituaries.

As we age, "Taps" is going to take up more and

more space in our fine newsletter and it makes sense to use our website for the details of our fellow pilots' deaths.

With best regards,

H.H. (Rick) Roll
Wyoming, DE

Rick,

Firstly on behalf of our Editor Tom Hirschler and myself thank you for your compliments.

The reason we even have a newsletter (magazine) in print format at this point in a rapidly developing digital culture is in consideration of the fact we have many members who are not comfortable with virtual content. Most never used it in their careers and are hesitant to make the shift at this point. The newsletter is available on the website, yet photo clarity is reduced due to file size. As you note, the death notices will increase; clearly underscoring we have an aging group. We do edit the submissions to conserve space, but there are many to print. Given the fact we have many members who prefer the print version of the Aviator we will continue to include the section. As is true in all processes, there may come a time when we need to revisit our procedure and format for the Taps section. We are not there yet.

Tom Kirk, Managing Editor

To the Editor of the Aviator:

Military Vehicle Preservation Assoc. MVPA convoys

On odd years, the MVPA has accomplished four convoys. Averaging about 3000 miles, the convoys included an average of 57 historic military vehicles. On some segments of the convoys, we had over 70 military vehicles.

In September 2017, we will traverse, where possible, the entire original Route 66 from Chicago to Santa Monica, CA over a period of 29 days.

Last year on the Bankhead Hwy convoy we stopped at Ft Wolters where the museum gave us a very nice welcome reception and lunch. We drew many visitors from the surrounding area to see the static display. There are some good clips of the Ft Wolters visit to see if you Google: MVPA convoys; Bankhead / yellow fire truck.

If you would like more information about this event and how it may benefit the VHPA (apart from having a good time) please give me a call at mobile

Paul B. Fellencer, Sr

VA and/or Medicare? It is an important decision

In January 2016, I was diagnosed by the Fresno VA Hospital with Inoperable Small Cell Lung Cancer. It was later to be determined to be Stage 4. When I became eligible for VA healthcare a very good friend of mine suggested I also enroll in Medicare Part A, Part B and Part D. That advice saved my life.

After the diagnosis, I decided to seek care at Sansom Clinic in Santa Barbara CA, which is outside the VA realm of influence, and use Medicare Part B. The Oncologist saw me within 1 week of the VA's diagnosis and gave me less than a year to live. He wanted to begin treating me immediately with chemotherapy but I declined since it would only extend my life for an additional few months. He then decided to request a cancer tissue sample from the VA and have it further analyzed for a very rare mutated gene. Only 1% of Small Cell Lung Cancer patients have it and I did. Physer has an experimental drug (now FDA approved) called Xalkori and at \$14,000/month would, in many cases, put the cancer in remission. My Medicare Part D carrier and a non-profit agreed to pay for it. It is now August 2016 and a recent PetScan shows the cancer completely gone. However, I must continue taking the drug indefinitely.

Would the VA Oncologist have tested me for the mutated gene? I do not know, but the VA did refuse to pay my co-pay for the further testing. If you or a friend has Small Cell Lung Cancer, advise them to seek a Cancer Clinic that is on the cutting edge.

Oh... many thanks to Our Lord and His Mother, Mary. Miracles come in interesting ways.

*Gary Potter
Dustoff 15 (RVN 67-68 & 69-70)*

insect imitations fish cannot resist. Furthermore, the Reno/Tahoe region provides up to 50 fishing lake and stream opportunities within a 60 minute radius. The Reno area includes the famous Pyramid Lake Lahotan Cutthroat trout with sizes ranging up to 30 pounds, with an estimated six inches per year growth rate.

Our group provided some of the best fly tying instructors in the region for 4 to 6 hours per day at the reunion. In addition, some of the best fly fishing casting instructors from California and Nevada including Cabela's Reno Fly Shop Manager, Bob Sappenfield, as well as CA Trout Unlimited's David Lass as well as Truckee Trout Unlimited's Sam Sedillo conducted three free 90 minute casting clinics during the week long Reunion.

All of our dozen volunteers had memorable, lasting and meaningful conversations with the participating attendees and much laughter was shared by all. We appreciate the opportunity to have served you and thank Mike Law in particular for including us in your event.

Best wishes,

*John F. Imsdahl
Reno/Tahoe Veterans First Fly Fishing
Truckee River Fly Fishers
4th WOC, Class 69-17*



Letter to the editor

VHPA Reno Reunion:

As the program leader for the Reno/Tahoe Veterans First Fly Fishing we wish to thank the members and family members who participated in our week long fly-tying instructions and fly rod casting clinics at "The 33rd Reunion in Reno."

We are volunteers, a non-compensated, group of veterans who wish to share the tranquility and enjoyment of stream and lake fly fishing, and tying

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TSGt, USAF, Ret

USAFSS Intelligence Analyst 1964-74

USAF Admin Supervisor 1974-83

Tours of Duty:

1963-64 Basic Lackland AFB, Tx

1964-68 RAF Chicksands, England

1968-71 NSA Ft. Meade, Md.

1971-74 Osan AB, ROK

1974-83 Vandenberg AFB, Ca

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VIETNAM HELICOPTER PILOTS
ASSOCIATION SATISFIED CLIENTS

- Dan Fox	- Bruce Brattain
- John Shafer	- James Tinney
- John Penny	- Bill Medsker
- Lenny Julian	- Pete Rzeminski
- Terry Opdahl	- James Oden
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Joe Kline Aviation Art



GCA “Slightly left of course and correcting”

I was in an email conversation with Tom Hirschler, the VHPA Aviator magazine editor, when he mentioned he was looking for a different twist on the aviation stories. The following is about as different as you can get and still be related to Vietnam helicopter aviation.

I was the Operations Officer for B/159th Assault Support Helicopter Battalion (Chinooks) from the time I got to the 101st Airborne Division in November 1970 until the March 25, 1971 conclusion of the ill-fated invasion of Laos, Lam Son 719. I could write volumes about the disastrous loss of life and injury suffered by the aviation units, but others already have. My story begins at its conclusion.

I was a Signal Corp (SC) officer and the SC branch assignments office was always very prompt about letting me know at least six months in advance where my next assignment would be. My assignment was going to be the career course at Ft. Monmouth.

While stationed at Phu Bai with B/159, I ran into an old OCS buddy, Dick Pierce. What I mean by old is Dick was the oldest guy in our OCS class and long term Signal Corps enlisted man prior to school. When he heard I had been in aviation my whole career, he shuddered. He knew the war was over, and I needed SC branch time if I were to go anywhere in the Army. Dick was the airfield communications officer for the Phu Bai airfield, and helped find me a position as the 101st air traffic control officer (ATC).

When I transferred, I found the position was for a platoon leader; not an actual SC slot; I was taking over from an aviation warrant officer. After surviving Lam Son 719, this position could have been the cushy strap-hanger job for someone waiting to go home. I could have been sitting around the air conditioned Aviation Group O'club all day. The air traffic control tower and GCA (ground control approach, i.e., radar-assisted landing) site was a mile or so away from 101st Aviation Group HQ; besides, what did I know about ATC? What did I know about this unique set of men whose GT scores had to be higher than to be a helicopter pilot? Why were these men different from any other tower operator or controller?

With the exception of the 101st, every ATC site in Vietnam (towers, GCAs, flight following) came under the direct control and support of the 165th Aviation Group. The 165th had unlimited support and resources. As an independent tactical division, air traffic control was incorporated within the 101st structure. Since their inception, ATC within the division was without the herculean support of the 165th Aviation Group. This platoon started with the division in the Central Highlands and took care of the division assets (you) during tactical field operations.

While pilots and crews were flying back to their secure beds from missions in the A Shau Valley, Khe Sanh, and Laos these men stayed behind in the artillery box bunkers to provide the GCAs and flight control tower operation.

I remember a magazine cover photo and article during Lam Son 719 which stated the Khe Sanh airfield was the busiest airfield in the world. The ATC platoon was responsible for its GCA and tower operations. Think about it: how many sorties came and went during the day at Khe Sanh? Downwind, crosswind approaches, take offs, emergency landings, rocket and mortars, and Air Force cargo planes mixed in with thousands of helicopter movements. They were amazing. They kept us separated. They kept Khe Sanh's resupply movements coordinated. Above all, they kept us safe.

For all of their heroics, after Lam Son 719 was over these men were essentially forgotten. When I first toured the platoon surroundings, I was appalled. Everything was in a state of disrepair. Khe Sanh had taken its toll both on equipment and personnel. The platoon morale had hit rock bottom. The 93Hs (tower operators) and 93Js (GCA radar controllers) were now back working in an environment nothing like they were promised/taught at Ft. Rucker. This was a common 101st operation getting ready to stand down. Nothing is too good for the troops, and that is exactly what they got...nothing. On the other hand, I didn't know what I had gotten into. This was not going to be good, and I was not hopeful.

I knew no one. The only thing I knew about ATC was as a



GCA setup at Khe Sanh

a pilot talking to the control tower operators and shooting GCA approaches. But, I did know you can't run a platoon from the O'club, so rather than live in the relative posh of group HQs' air conditioned BOQs. I moved a cot to the back of the stuffy ATC office at the base of Eagle tower and moved in. I am pretty sure that sent shock waves through the platoon. These guys were intelligent and self-sufficient. Having "da Man" there was going to cramp their style.

After a few days of pulling inventory with the outgoing platoon leader - sign here so I can DEROs (go back to the States), I found there were NO serviceable GCA units. Though one was technically up and running at the refueling pad, it had been pieced together by cannibalizing other units; the feed horns antennas had been switched from other non-functional radar equipment. For those unaware, radar feed horns and dishes are electronically matched. If they are mismatched, you as a pilot could be hundreds of feet or more away from the intended approach glide path. While lateral deviation may be inconvenient and dangerous, vertical deviation can be deadly.

To expedite the repair process, we worked evening hours in the elevated roof maintenance tent. The standard 60-watt string lighting was not bright enough for late-night work. Since there was a myriad of burned out fluorescent light ballasts due to the excessive Vietnam humidity, there were zillions of usable fluorescent tubes lying around. Fill a horizontal GCA AZ/EL dish with thirty or forty tubes and turn on the microwave GCA. Voilà! Daylight! This didn't last very long. ATC towers are seldom at the bottom of a hill. Counter-mortar radar called and requested we turn off the VC aiming stake.

Still fraught with how to fix things only one week into this assignment, I got a call to report to the new Assistant Division Commander General James Hamlet's office, immediately. General Hamlet was a Senior Aviator long before he was a general, and he had just shot a radar-assisted approach into the refuel pad. He was NOT happy! Censorship prevents me from repeating his tirade, but an ass-chewing should be inferred. He always was known as a pee-bring'n SOB. Somewhere in all of his screaming and carrying on, he gave me the opportunity to speak. I requested that he accompany me on a tour of the facility. To my surprise, we jumped in his Jeep and made the tour.

If you had ever wanted to see a black general turn white, it happened that day. In typical fashion for a general, he did not apologize (nor did I expect him to). He did, however, give me an order, "I

want this fixed and I want it working before the monsoon season gets here." He followed with the directive that he didn't care how I did it, and if I encountered any problems to come to him directly.

While writing this article I collaborated with Bernard Williams, an air traffic controller for 28 years and former platoon member, to clear out the cobwebs obscuring the events, names, and nomenclatures. He shared an anecdote which reinforced what I had experienced first-hand: General Hamlet's caring side.

During the General's ATC tour, he wanted to see the tower operations. Our tower was 80 feet tall, and with the number of missing steps on the stairwells it was not an easy task to get to the top. General Hamlet went anyway. From Bernard's email: "By the way, when the Old Man came to tour our area he asked how we got

up to the tower since the steps were blown off at different points and the ladder was slimy from monsoon mold and moss. I showed him how we climbed up each shift with our gear and how we got down. He said; 'I would never ask a man to do something I wouldn't do myself' and indicated he would not climb up and down it. Shortly later the Engineers rebuilt the steps." Knowing General Hamlet, my guess is that was the next day.

About then, I got in a new and knowledgeable platoon sergeant, Sgt Sherril (sp?). With the

help of Group S-4 MAJ Schuster, we rewrote the MTOE (modified table of equipment), got first pick in country of any MOS (military operations specialty) we needed, and ordered new (matched) TPN-18s with factory tech support to properly set them up.

The first thing the techs pointed out was POL was absolutely the worst place on Camp Eagle to put a GCA. It needed to be at the top of the hill.... The big green landing pad at the general HQs. I knew that would be a challenge, but true to form, General Hamlet got it done. Division Commander Thomas M. Tarpley wasn't too happy about it, but he finally signed off.

I got in two crackerjack generator mechanics to clean up the twin trailer-mounted 10kw 400 CPS generators. These generators were designed for short-term field operations. Never designed for continuous duty, they blew out the electronics at the GCA sites every time they malfunctioned - which was often. We needed generators designed for continuous operation.

Lam Son was over and the war was winding down; equipment was going home. MAJ Schuster found seven 45 kw 400 CPS generators spread among various depots in Vietnam. All seven were still in depot packs and had never been uncrated. Though this was serious electrical overkill, they were what was available. I requested two



GCA crew at Khe Sanh

of the three stored at the 1st Avn Bde depot at Long Binh. I flew to Long Binh to retrieve the generators, but the Bde S-4 told me he didn't have them. Unconvinced, I drove to the storage site and found the three still crated. When I confronted the Bde S-4, he still denied having them and then requested I leave. I informed him I would be back, and I tried warning him he would not be happy with the outcome of my return trip.

I got on the U-21 and went directly to General Hamlet's office. Up to this point in the rebuilding process, I had not needed his assistance. Cinc Pac had given the 180 day temporary MTOE approval. The only thing preventing us from going hot was the lack of stable power from those 45kw generators.

As expected, General Hamlet was not pleased with my report from Long Binh, and he scheduled us to return to 1st Avn Bde the next morning. Upon arrival, rather than going to the S-4's office, we met with the 1st Avn Bde Commander (I think it was General McKinnon). Once I retold my story to the Bde commander, the two generals went to see the S-4 while I was told to have coffee at Bde. I wasn't going to be needed for that conversation. With the help from the two generals, the S-4 found his inventory reading glasses. The generators arrived four days later and were mounted near the 101st Division HQs.

The only thing left was testing and certifying. Division HQs did not have a runway, but since landings would be used only by helicopters the techs designed a helicopter-only eight-degree glide path. Remember, this is a standard approach for a helicopter instead of the two to three-degree radar assisted glide paths for a fixed wing aircraft.

It took one or two practice approaches to get used to not meandering around on an extended fixed wing approach, but once mastered, it was fantastic. Once you started the approach, you were at minimums before you had a chance to screw up. The GCA was working, and the final step was certification.

The factory techs coordinated with the Air Force out of Clark

AFB in the Philippines to fly their Lockheed C-140 Jetstar specially equipped with navigation testing equipment to measure the accuracy of the glide path. By this time, it was late October or early November, and monsoon storms were starting to roll in. Certification was done over two days due to inclement weather.

I got to fly the jump seat during the certification process. While I don't remember exactly how many approaches the Air Force pilots shot, I suspect they made more runs than necessary. Every time the pilots made a run, they were laughing and carrying on. The techs would make the electronic adjustments, then I'd hear, "No! It's my turn!" I am sure they thought they were dive bomber pilots shooting 8 degrees at 165 knots. They were having fun, and so was I.

After six months of teamwork by a huge number of dedicated men (and enough anecdotes to fill a book), we were ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization) approved and on the international aviation charts... take that, 165th!

As proud as I was of our group achievements, the Screaming Eagle feather in my cap came at my 101st Aviation Group Hail and Farewell party. These events were routinely attended by new and departing majors, colonels, etc., but General Hamlet had never attended. He came to mine. I really miss the old guy; he was instrumental in my development as a man, supervisor, and mentor. I had a short conversation with him a year or so before he died. When Ron Timberlake reintroduced us, I couldn't believe he still remembered me and this event.

TINS: I tried to join the Vietnam Air Traffic Control website a few years ago. They thought I was a "poser." Apparently the site is run by the same bunch of guys who thought Reagan was kidding.

Also, I want to thank Bernard Williams for helping clear the cobwebs, and a special thanks to my daughter (my editor) who has to keep reminding me not everyone who reads my articles was a pilot, flight crew, or even in the armed services.

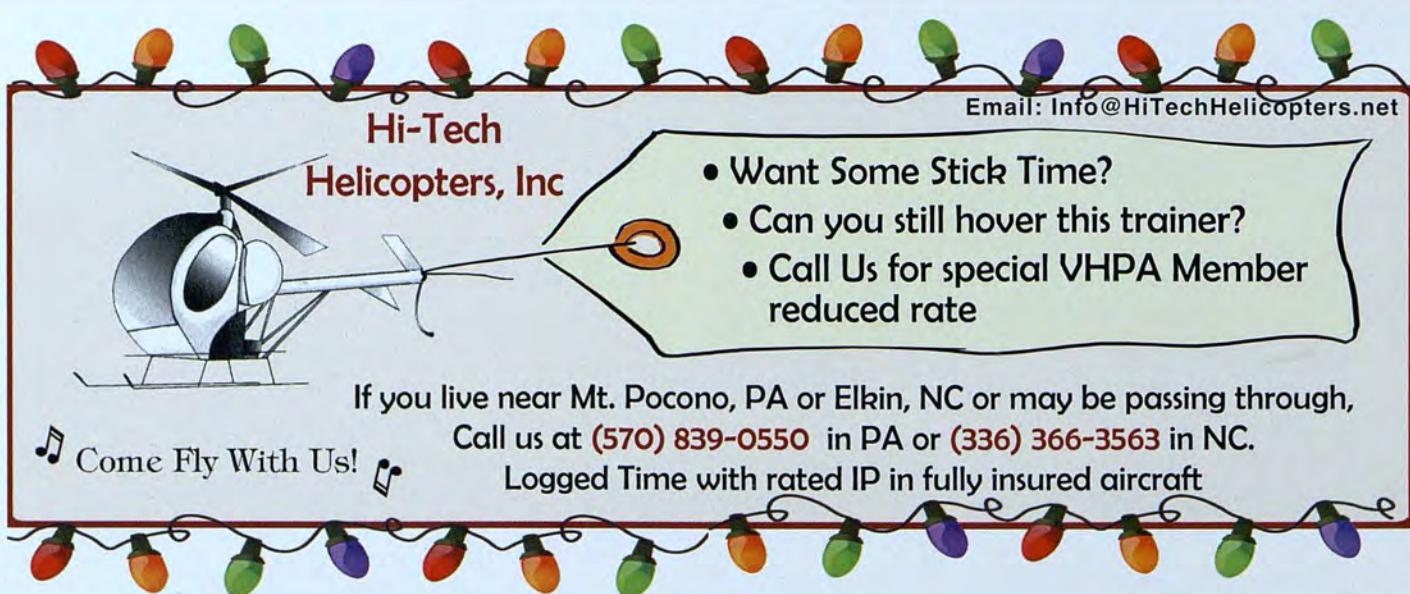
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Selections from Past Newsletters

This issue's column is from Winter 1991

HOST MEETS SAVIOR

One hot, humid May 1969 afternoon we got a hurry-up call to insert a LRRP radio team on top of Hill 1362. We were supposed to hover on top of the hill, and they were to climb down rope ladders. We had about 3/4 of a full fuel load, 4 crew members and I think seven pax.

As we were hovering with two LRRPs on the rope ladders, the compressor section blew. Wyatt, who was flying the H model 67-17158 kicked in right pedal and tried to simply crash it into the side of the mountain. Well, we found a huge tree to crash into. The tree caved in the front end of the aircraft. The instrument panel and console wrapped themselves around my left leg, breaking the knee and chewing up skin, muscle, ligament, into a mess. On top of that, the windshield shattered, and a knife-like piece embedded into my chest protector.

As my luck would have it, my cockpit door would not open due to tree branches pinning it shut. I could not get out the other side because of the way the console had my way panned in. Wyatt of course simply opened

his door and walked away; he was always lucky.

Anyway, as I sat there penned in and thought I might die, i.e. fire, starvation, VC bullet, etc. the team leader of the LRRPs crawled over the tree branches and started to rip the door out of the aircraft with his bare hands. With him pulling and me pushing, we finally had



Blue Ghost Lift Platoon March 1969

(L-R, Back) CPT John Wyatt, 1LT Ricard Sebastian, WO1 Mick "Duck" McDonald, WO1 Bryan "London" England, WO1 Archie Ott, WO1 Chuck Madden, 1LT Earl Uptegraff.

Enlisted Crew Member names not available.

an opening wide enough at the top of the door for me to wiggle out of.

Once clear of the aircraft, we made our way to the top of that damn hill. The LRRPs patched me up as best they could. We called in a Chinook to get us out. The CH-47 had to hover over us and lower his winch line and bring us up one by one as night was falling. They took us to the hospital at Chu Lai and I was later Medevaced to Japan. The two LRRPs on the ropes were not hurt much, mainly cuts and bruises. The aircraft was not recoverable and blown in place.

That's pretty much the end of that story except Mike McDonald found that LRRP leader in New Orleans and surprised the hell out of me when he introduced us. As we met and talked, I was surprised at myself that all the emotions I felt were as strong and powerful as they were. I had spent a lot of years trying to downplay, minimize and forget all my experiences and people I met. I even cried, which is something I rarely ever do. I guess what I'm trying to say is thank you to VHPA for the reunion that allowed me to release that emotion and specifically to Mike McDonald for remembering and being a friend.

Richard Sebastian
Blue Ghost, F/8 Cav

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Running for VHPA Office

The VHPA Executive Council will begin accepting applications for candidates for the election to be held at the next reunion's Membership Meeting. If you are considering a run, please seriously consider the commitment required, and compile a short preview of your qualifications and your vision for the future of the VHPA. Forward to Art Price, Junior Member at Large, at arp.red22@gmail.com. The VHPA's primary goals are to promote a continuation of the relationships forged in combat in Vietnam and to ensure the legacy of those who flew helicopters in Vietnam is preserved for generations.

Art Price, Junior Member at Large

MINI-REUNIONS

Shortly after the VHPA Annual Reunion, C Company 227 AHB / 1 CAV met on September 13, in North Redington Beach FL.

While there, old friendships were renewed; new comrades were met. The attendees served in Charlie Co. from between 1967 to 1972. In attendance were three of the unit Commanders.

The next reunion will be 2018 in Georgia

By Mike Rudd Ghostrider 41



Three former Commanders attended L to R
Kirby Lawson, Pete BRADLEY, Charlie Phipps, 1969-1970



UPCOMING REUNIONS

10th Annual Blue Star Reunion

November 9th – 13th, 2016

Charleston, South Carolina

Holiday Inn, Charleston-Mt. Pleasant

250 Johnnie Dodds Blvd., Mt. Pleasant, SC 29464

Phone: 843-884-6000 Reservation Phone: 877-355-7693

Reunion Code: AHC

Reunion Room Rate: \$114 plus tax, includes breakfast each morning (Breakfast on Thursday through Sunday will be in our own private dining area).

The 48th Assault Helicopter Company and all of their attached and supporting units will hold their 10th Annual Reunion

November 9th – 13th, 2016.

The 48th will establish a TOC on the ground floor, there will be complimentary on-site parking, business center, fitness room, full service restaurant and lounge, outdoor pool and complimentary wireless internet throughout the hotel. The guest rooms feature coffee maker with coffee, complimentary weekday paper, hair dryer, iron and full-size ironing board. To make reservations call 877-355-7693 and use our Group Code, AHC. Make sure you identify yourself as a member of the 48th AHC to receive the group rate of \$114 plus tax. **MAKE RESERVATIONS EARLY.** Rooms are limited but if we fill them all early enough, they will add more to our group block. Cancellations must be made 24 hours prior to your arrival date to avoid the first night charge.

If a handicapped accessible room is needed, please make sure you let them know your specific needs when you make your reservations.

If you should have any questions or problems, please contact:

Ben or Janet Gay at

Carl Cortez

Additional/updated reunion information and registration form on our website at: www.48ahc.org

A/2/17 Reunion

Unit: A Troop, 2nd Squadron, 17th Cavalry,
101st Airborne Division Alumni Association

Date: May 3-6, 2017

Location: Crowne Plaza (Airport), 4831 Tanger Outlet Blvd,
N., Charleston, SC 29418 - \$129/night

Contact Military Reunion Planners account manager Leanne Casey at 817 251 3551 (casey@MilitaryReunionPlanners.com) or Alpha Troop Alumni Chairman Doug Doerr at 904 509 2814 (ddoer4uf@aol.com) for details and reservations. Or call the Crowne Plaza desk and mention the reunion for the appropriate discount (843 744 4422). More details on www.AlphaTroopAlumni.com

The 50th Anniversary Reunion of W.O.C. Flight Classes 66-23/67-1

"Class Blast 2017" A really big deal...be there!

When: April 27th – April 30th (out on the 1st of May) 2017

Location: Embassy Suites Hotel, Kansas City, MO

Contact: Tom Pearcy,

Email @

Want to see your Reunion listed here?

Send details to: Aviator@VHPA.org

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See the Mar-Apr 2016 Aviator for an illustrated guide to these features.

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2nd				
3rd				
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Information about you: Helicopters flown, medals/awards, talents, hobbies, and anything else:

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

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Full details and booking information are available on our website:

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Or call us at: 209-962-0403
(land line) to book.



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 4 new Members to the VHPA!

All have joined our Association during the period from August 12, 2016 - September 21, 2016.

Baker David L.
Sun City Center Florida
Army
64-8
121 AHC in 65; A/101 AHB 101
ABN in 66; HHC 159 AVN 101
ABN in 69-70

Purvis William R. 'Bill'
Tustin California
Marine Corps
HMM-261 in 63

Shuler Joe D
Salado Texas
Army
68-19, 68-511
240 AHC in 68-69, 57 AHC in 72,
604 TC CO in 72-73

Ulsher John D.
Anchorage Alaska
Army
65-17W; 114 AHC in 62-63; 56
TC CO in 66-67

VHPA Memorial Scholarship Fund Offers a Solid Legacy



When the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association began in 1983, little thought was given to establishing a scholarship program for children and grand children of VHPA members. We were so young!! However, over the years, donations began to mount as individuals and units challenged each other to match their giving. In 1999 the amount of accumulated funds neared \$10,000. President Tom Payne and the Executive Council decided something needed to be done. Several different ideas were evaluated to determine how the funds could be managed and invested so that someday a sufficient principle would exist to yield an annual scholarship. In addition, procedures necessary to solicit and select a scholarship recipient were discussed. Ultimately, it was determined that (1) not enough money to yield a significant scholarship was available and (2) the process of application and selection needed to be done in such a way that would be in keeping with very high standards and procedure.

The VHPA Executive Council sought and evaluated several organizations companies and foundations capable of investing and administering the VHPA Memorial Scholarship Program. The Army Aviation Association of America Scholarship Foundation was ultimately deemed the very best choice. An added bonus for the VHPA was that through the AAAA Heritage Program, AAAA would match the initial \$10,000 of the VHPA. By 2005 the combined total amounted to \$30,000+ which immediately funded the first \$1,000 VHPA Memorial Scholarship. Additional large donations at the 2006 Annual Reunion from the 361st ACE/AWC, "Pink Panthers" made a second scholarship possible beginning in 2007. For 2008 a third \$1,000 scholarship was added due to donations from the membership and the fourth scholarship came in 2010. VHPA applicants are also eligible for most of the other AAAA scholarships as an added bonus. The scholarship partnership is a win-win situation for the VHPA and AAAA.

The AAAA Foundation awards individual scholarships and grants each year, ranging from \$1,000 to \$15,000 given out as one, two or four year scholarships. Interest-free loans of up to \$4,000 (\$1,000 a year) are also available. Any VHPA applicant or their father or grandfather must be a member of AAAA, at time of application. To apply, request a Scholarship Grant/Loan Application from the AAAA Scholarship Foundation, Inc., 593 Main Street, Monroe, CT 06468-2806, telephone: 203- 268-2450 EMAIL: aaaa@quad-a.org and return it to the AAAA Scholarship Foundation, Inc., on or before May 1 of the year of college entry. The postmark will govern. The applicant will be requested to provide additional supporting data. All scholarships are awarded on merit.

2016 Awards--The AAAA received more than 400 applications and made 286 awards totaling \$476,000. The VHPA again awarded five (5) \$3,000 Memorial Scholarships in 2016. This year's recipients of the VHPA Heritage Scholarships of \$3,000 for one year were Carolina Chauffe, Grandchild of Mr. Gerald Meador, Gulfport MS, attending Univ. Louisiana at Lafayette; Vincent M. Bencomo, Grandchild of LTC Donald Long, Murphy NC attending Univ. S. FL; Lucie A. Goodman, Grandchild of LTC Wm Klim, Rifle CO, attending CO State Univ.; and Hunter C. Sheuerman, Grand Prairie, TX, Child of Michael Sheuerman, attending Univ. of Texas. Selected for the VHPA Memorial Scholarship (honoring the 361st Avn Co. "Pink Panthers") was Caroline T. Hills, Grandchild of LTC Frank Hills, Camp Hill, PA, attending Univ. of Notre Dame. An additional 35 VHPA related applicants also received additional AAAA Foundation Scholarships.

AN LOC, SOME MORE OF THE REST OF THE STORY

(abridged version)

The article "Tales of the Blue Max A.R.A. and the Battle of An Loc" in the first 2009 edition of "The VHPA Aviator" brought back memories of the Easter Offensive which started on April 1, 1972. The high intensity warfare began when the North Vietnamese came south with Chinese and Russian supplied tanks, APCs, and anti-aircraft weapons the likes of which we had not seen. The NVA's initial objective was to capture the provincial capital of An Loc. An estimated 8,000 rounds a day fell on An Loc, and the once beautiful city was reduced to rubble with a one kilometer perimeter. The Vietnamese Airborne Brigade and the 5th ARVN Division fought valiantly, sometimes with enemy tanks inside the perimeter. B-52s, TAC-AIR and our Cobras killed thousands of the enemy. Air Force C-130s air-dropped supplies. After losing three low-altitude C-130s, air drops from high altitude resulted in many bundles off target to the delight of the NVA. Through all this the ARVN held on. While still surrounded with rounds continuing to fall on An Loc, on July 7th the 229th Assault Helicopter Battalion had the honor of escorting President Thieu into An Loc for a short visit with his people. This was handled in such complete secrecy, very few people ever heard of the mission.

By April 1972, the U.S. presence in Vietnam had been reduced to a few units whose main mission was to support the South Vietnamese Army. The 1st Cavalry Division (airmobile) had been reduced to its 3rd Brigade (separate). The Brigade was stationed at Bien Hoa and commanded by B.G. James Hamlet, a man who was greatly admired. A major part of the brigade, the 229th Assault Helicopter Battalion had 1,850 people and 142 aircraft. The Brigade and the 229th continued to reduce strength through April and May; in early June the 3rd Brigade became Task Force Gary Owen under the command of Col. John Brandenburg (later LTG Brandenburg and Commander of the USA 3rd Corps, Fort Lewis, WA).

Around mid-June 1972, the Vietnamese Army sent their Airborne Division north to assist the forces in the 1st and 2nd Corps areas. The Third Regional Assistance Command (TRAC) commanded by MG Hollingsworth was requested to provide helicopter support to pull out the Airborne Brigade and insert a brigade from another division into An Loc. All this while An Loc was still surrounded by a very active NVA Force that exercised their extensive anti aircraft systems at every opportunity. The mission was given to the 229th. The only unit

with enough assets to do the mission, the 229th had a lot of experience hauling ARVN troops into An Loc. For the An Loc operation the 229th was to be assisted by ten UH-1s from the Vietnamese Air Force (VNAF) supported by Huey gunships the USAF had given the VNAF. They did not like the Huey gunships and wanted our Cobra support. The day before the lift was to begin, the Vietnamese decided to have the Airborne Brigade move south to clear QL-13. Clearing QL-13 proved to be a major obstacle. The 21st ARVN Division had been stalled for some time trying to clear QL-13 from the south. The NVA was in bunkers mainly on the west side of QL-13 and air power was unsuccessful in dislodging them. Before this mission began, I insisted that Col. Le Quong Tuong, the Airborne Brigade Commander, one of the finest ARVN officers, and his U.S. advisor be on my C&C so we could coordinate the operation. We could not start the lift operation until the road was cleared and in spite of all efforts the NVA still controlled the road. Under great pressure I turned to the ARVN commander and said: "What are you going to do now?" CPT Clarence Donaldson, the advisor, passed me a note from the

Brigade Commander with two words, "we charge". The charge was bloody, but dislodged the NVA. One of the specific actions I will always remember was the heroics of a U.S. advisor we were communicating with. In a B-52 shell crater close to the enemy he was calling in air strikes. We had hopes of rescuing him but it was not to be. He fought to the bitter end.

By the time the ARVN had cleared the road, it was mid-afternoon on June 19th. It was decided to postpone the airlift to 0800 June 20th. At 8:12 on the 20th just as we were starting the lift, an F/79th AH-1G was hit by an SA-7 missile just to the east of QL-13 near Tan Khai. I was at about the same altitude and about 100 meters west of him over the highway looking NW when I heard "Cobra down". It was a ball of flames and not recognizable as a Cobra. Apparently, the missile hit the tail pipe and engine. There was a white trail all the way back to where the missile was fired on the west side of QL-13. A F/79th heavy fire team attacked the launch point but the enemy was ready with a well-planned ambush. One F/79th Cobra was shot down and a second sustained numerous hits and was escorted back to Lai Khe by the third Cobra which sustained little-if-any damage. The damage to the second Cobra was so extensive it was evacuated to Vung Tau for shipment back to the states. From what we were able to determine the crew from the



After a successful visit to An Loc, President Thieu called ahead to have a "field lunch" at Lai Khe. Shown under the eagle are President Thieu, a civilian advisor and two of his top generals.

COL McConnell is at the right of the picture talking to the President's aide who was a graduate of a US engineering school.

Cobra that was shot down got the aircraft on the ground but before they could be located and evacuated, the NVA got there first. As I recall, their bodies were found in a B-52 shell crater. However, the Daily Log reports the bodies were seen outside the aircraft.

After all this, the lift was called off. That night I received a message from Danger 79, MG Hollingsworth, that if we did not get the lift going the next day, we would have a night operation. That really concerned me. I knew he was serious; we had to get the operation going the next day. We had no defense against the SA-7 missile and had no idea how many they had or where they would be launched. The only location for the LZ/PZ was on QL-13 south of An Loc in the rubber trees. Coming out of the PZ loaded with troops the aircraft would be passing within a few hundred meters of where the SA-7 was previously fired. The available intelligence was not encouraging. The SA-7 was a shoulder-fired weapon with a one-pound warhead that locked on to a heat source like a tail

pipe and was effective up to seven thousand feet. We knew the missile always left a white trail. Conceivably, if the missile was coming at your aircraft you might escape by heading directly at it thus breaking lock and then making an evasive maneuver. It was also told to me that in theory the missile might be decoyed by a flare fired from a Very pistol. We had a mission to do and we had to have some hope of surviving more attacks. Therefore, at the mission briefing on June 21st at Lai Khe I told all attending (to include the VNAF crews) to monitor a common VHF frequency. If anyone saw a white trail they were to yell "MISSILE" over the VHF. They were further informed that if you do not see the white trail, kick your aircraft around because it may be coming after you. If it is, do an evasive maneuver and hope for the best. The 362nd ASHC Chinooks were always available to recover downed aircraft or to be used to haul troops. However, I never used Chinooks to haul troops during this period because I figured if the NVA had any SA-7s left they could not resist shooting down a Chinook with 30-40 troops on board. Therefore, the Chinooks while used extensively on previous missions were used sparingly. The survival plan for the Chinooks was a crewman on the rear ramp with a Very pistol. I was glad we never had to test the validity of that theory.

As you might expect there is a whole lot to tell about the Army air support for the Battle of An Loc. Therefore, I will jump to the first known survival of an SA-7 hit that was brought out in the VHPA Aviator. On the morning of June 21st the 229th and the ten VNAF UH-1s were on station at Lai Khe and ready to go at 0800. However, there were delays which could have been more airstrikes or problems routing the NVA out of the LZ/PZ on QL-13 south of An Loc with mature rubber trees on both sides of the road. Those rubber trees proved to be a blessing because the lift flights were able to come in



over the clouds, spiral down through the clouds over An Loc which was still surrounded by NVA and land on QL-13 south of An Loc. The NVA never knew just where we were landing and when the artillery and mor-



Maj. Gen James C. Smith (ret) Commanding General of 1st Cavalry Division in 1972 and COL Lewis McConnell (ret) last Commander of the 229th Aviation Bn in Vietnam at the 2006 AAAA Convention in Nashville standing in front of the restored UH-1H with the 229th Winged Assault crest.

tar rounds started getting close we would shift the LZ/PZ. Our pathfinders did a miraculous job of coordinating the LZ/PZ operation and keeping the South Vietnamese from overloading the outgoing Hueys. But with almost every flight going out I heard the dreaded words "taking fire."

At this point we had 30 229th UH-1s and 10 VNAF UH-1s in the five-ship lifts escorted by Cobras. By mid-afternoon the clouds had dissipated eliminating some of our cover but the lifts were going well. Most flights were taking some small arms fire on the way out but no one had been shot down. The Cobras were doing a good job of keeping the NVA's heads down. After our experience the day before and with the reported range of the SA-7 I decided to fly a little higher. The NVA had shot down several USAF and VNAF aircraft with anti-aircraft and missiles, including Air Force Forward Air Controllers (FAC). Apparently, the enemy figured out those aircraft loitering above were not on a sight-seeing trip. The FACs took that seriously and were always above me. Locating targets from that altitude was obviously difficult, as was keeping track of eight flights of five coming and going. Assisting me during those flights, to include monitoring the five radios with multiple frequencies, were either Bn. S-3 MAJ John Hatcher or Asst. S-3 CPT Harry C. Small, both outstanding officers. We always got a chuckle over high altitude battle damage assessment by the FAC for fast movers going off station. It sounded more like a negotiation or auction. The FAC would often throw in a 105 Howitzer (captured) just for good measure.

Then about 1500 I heard "missile, missile" and saw the missile heading toward a Cobra. The crew later reported they were at 4,000'. I was probably at around 6-7,000' just northeast of their location. Just before the missile got to the Cobra, the Cobra appeared to kick right. Instead of going up the tail pipe it hit the tail boom just aft of the engine. I saw the tail boom fall away and the Cobra in a nose down decent slowly turning and heading in a southerly direction. My first response to my crew was: "they are going to make it." It was obvious they would go into the trees because that was about all there was under them. I called to my crew to see if we had a rope or anything we could use to pull them out of the trees. The answer was nothing on board, but I continued the decent. Within minutes I got the word that one of the lift ships coming out of the PZ with a load of Vietnamese was going to attempt a rescue. I was somewhat relieved when I heard that because my aircraft with several people on board, and that humongous secure radio console in the middle of the floor was not a good choice

for chopping trees. It may have seemed to Captains Brown and Cordon that they were on the ground for 10-15 minutes before they were pulled to safety as stated in their debrief (thanks to someone the debrief is available at www.vvwhnfen.org/missile.html). However, even with the B Company Huey having to chop trees to get low enough to pull them in, I think it was probably under 10 minutes.

While all this was happening, B Company yellow flight with MAJ Ernie Isbell, the Company Commander in the lead helicopter was coming out of the PZ with a load of ARVN. Ernie heard the "missile" call and saw the missile hit the Cobra. Ernie said part of the action was observed through the "greenhouse" so he must have been close. He called to chalk five, who was just coming out of the PZ with four ARVN's and five body bags to try to rescue the Cobra crew. With total disregard for their own safety in an area known to be infested with enemy, they descended over the downed Cobra and crew. When they could not reach the pilots, they began chopping trees. Time was not on their side. I am sure they knew they had only minutes to get the pilots on board before the NVA would arrive. Chop trees they did until they could finally reach the two captains. With the pilots on board they headed to Lai Khe. This episode of surviving an SA-7 strike and recovering the crew was a truly inspiring time for everyone. Up to then, with maybe one or two exceptions, with every known firing of an SA-7 missile, the NVA had destroyed an aircraft and killed a crew. The success in getting the Cobra down and surviving with not much left to work with reminds me of an old adage I often heard in flight school and put to use several times since: "when in trouble, first fly the airplane." Mike and Marco did a masterful job getting the helicopter down and surviving with what they had left.

That night I got a call from Ernie Isbell saying he had a crew who was concerned about intentionally damaging an aircraft. Ernie was obviously joking. He invited me over to see the rotor blades from the Huey. The swaths on the blades looked to be up to four inches wide. It was miraculous the Huey stayed together with all that punishment. The vibrations must have been enough to jar one's teeth loose. Thank goodness those Vietnamese trees were not as tough as our oaks or maples or this rescue attempt may have ended differently. Anyway, I was impressed with what these pilots had done. I recommended that Ernie write the pilots up for Silver Stars. With the war winding down, most all awards were downgraded or lost. I have been in contact with Ernie (retired as an O-6 and the owner of a Brokerage Business and living in Dallas, TX) and he does not recall the names of the pilots. As I remember, it was a LT and a WO Mike Sloniker, the Operations Officer for A Company and very much involved in this operation, thinks one of the pilots' name was Wright.

Now for the 229th mission to take President Thieu into An Loc. Late on the afternoon of July 6th I received a call from COL Brandenburg that President Thieu wanted to visit his people in An Loc. He was quick to tell me this mission would be carried out in complete secrecy. Only MG Hollingsworth, he and I would know whom we were taking into An Loc. The President made up a story for his staff about where he was going because he was afraid

of leaks to the NVA. I called together my staff for the planning and told them we had a mission to take a VIP into An Loc. I am glad no one asked me who. We had taken several VIPs into An Loc before including LTG Minh, CG of MR III and counter guerilla warfare consultant Sir Robert Thompson. However, making a run into An Loc was always a hazardous business. Previously, BG Richard Tallman, Deputy Commander of TRAC, his aide, LT John Todd and two others were killed and two wounded by artillery as they ran from the helicopter LZ to a bunker. The 120th Avn. Co., part of the 12th Aviation Group commanded by LTC. Jack Dugan, provided support to TRAC Headquarters so it was one of their helicopters that carried General Tallman's party. President Thieu and his party would be landing in the same area providing they did not get shot down on the way in. It was not a comforting thought that we could be involved in the President getting killed or captured.

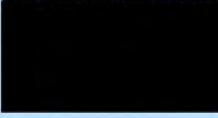
The plan we developed was for a heavy fire team to escort the UH-1 into An Loc with, as always, the delivered party getting away from the LZ as quickly as possible. The Cobras and the lift ship would go to Lai Khe and refuel and return as quickly as possible to be ready to extract the President's party. In case the party needed to be extracted before the crews got back from refueling, we would have a light fire team and a Huey over An Loc to make the extraction.

Before daylight the next morning, we sent a weather bird north to check on the weather. About 0630 they called to advise they got to Lai Khe but it was socked in to the north. I immediately advised COL Brandenburg of the situation. Within minutes I received a call back stating we have to go now otherwise the President's intentions will be known and he will not be able to go to An Loc. I told COL Brandenburg I would head to Lai Khe and search for a way to get into An Loc. When I reached Lai Khe it was definitely socked in to the north, so I decided to go east and look for another route. I had had some success in the past by going east and then north along the Song Be River, then turning west to An Loc. It was touch and go, but I made it into An Loc without getting shot up. The NVA was probably not expecting someone to be flying in such miserable weather. I then climbed to altitude and called headquarters on the secret secure radio and described the route I had taken. I asked them to give me time to get back to Lai Khe to refuel so I would be ready to lead the party to An Loc.

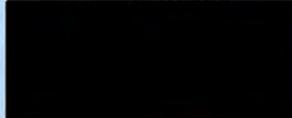
While this conversation was going on some big stuff started going off and so, as I had done many times before, I headed for the nearest cloud. I stayed in the clouds most of the way back to Lai Khe. Within minutes after I reported finding a way into An Loc I received a call that Danger 79 had launched the flight and was heading to An Loc. General Hollingsworth was a very impulsive man who was not inclined to wait on anything or anybody. A lot of thoughts were going through my mind as I headed to Lai Khe and none of them was good. The NVA hated Cobras and three Cobras and a Huey would be great target. Flying around under the clouds possibly at reduced speed was not a comforting thought and what a prize for enemy gunners. I had made it into An Loc without getting shot up but I was not sure they would.

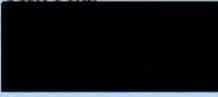
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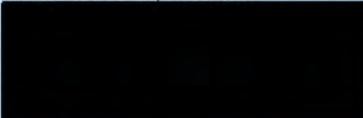
VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

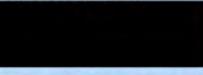
ALAMO CHAPTER
Ben Treadway, President


ALASKA CHAPTER
Lynn Kile, President


ARIZONA CHAPTER
Bill Sorenson, President


CALIFORNIA CHAPTER NORTH
Ken Fritz


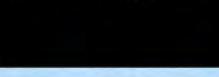
CENTRAL NEW YORK CHAPTER
Tom Mc Millen, President


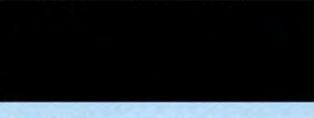
FORT WOLTERS CHAPTER
Donald Ancelin


GEORGIA CHAPTER
Bob Lanzotti, President
3435 Kingsboro Rd NE, Apt 902
Atlanta, GA 30326

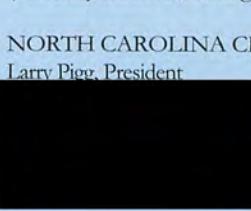
LOUISIANA GULF COAST CHAPTER
Victor Lent, President

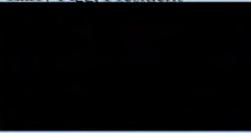

MICHIGAN CHAPTER
Richard Deer, President

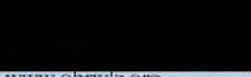

UPPER MIDWEST CHAPTER
Don Abrams, President


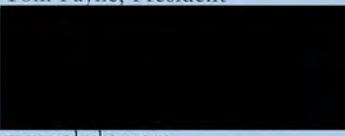
MONTANA CHAPTER
Todd Brandoff, President


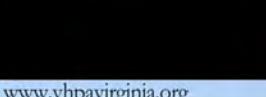
NORTH ALABAMA CHAPTER
Les Haas, President


NEW JERSEY CHAPTER
(currently inactive, seeking members)


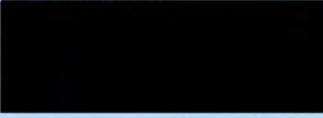
NORTH CAROLINA CHAPTER
Larry Pieg, President


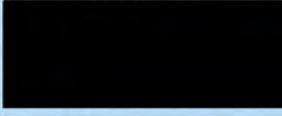
OHIO RIVER LZ CHAPTER
Pete Norman


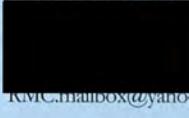
OKLAHOMA CHAPTER
Tom Payne, President


OLD DOMINION CHAPTER
Don Agren, President


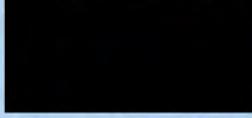
www.vhpavirginia.org

SOUTH DAKOTA CHAPTER
Jim Miles, President


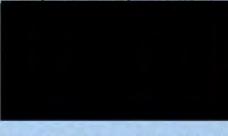
SOUTH MISSOURI CHAPTER
John Wilkinson


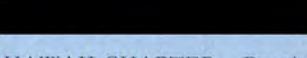
ROCKY MOUNTAIN CHAPTER
Dale E House, President


RMC.mailbox@yahoo.com

SOUTH CAROLINA CHAPTER
(*Celebrate Freedom*) Chapter
Larry Russell, President


SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER
Sven Akesson, President


VHPA OF FLORIDA
Dr. Joe Ponds, President


WASHINGTON STATE CHAPTER
Dave Saunders


HAWAII CHAPTER – Provisional
Ken DeHoff - POC


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 John.Sorenson@vhpavirginia.org or via E-Mail at: John.Sorenson@vhpavirginia.org Feel free to contact John concerning any details on opening your own local Chapter of the VHPA and/or for seeing what assistance is available from HQ to support your efforts.

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

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

ALAMO CHAPTER

Our ladies have continued their monthly luncheon meetings, at BJ's Roadhouse on August 12th and at The English Tea Shoppe on September 9th. Chapter members met for lunch at Crumpets on August 10th and at the Army Residence Community (ARC) on September 13th. After the September lunch, interested members and their wives were guided by ARC staff members on a tour of all the Residence facilities and were allowed to ask questions about living arrangements. We thank Vice President Jim Boykin for arranging this lunch and tour.

Our chapter met on September 22nd at the Barn Door Restaurant in San Antonio, and elected officers to serve in 2017, to assume their duties on January 1st. Jim Boykin will automatically move from his position of vice president to president. Chic Carter was elected as our new vice president for 2017. Al Flory was re-elected as secretary, and John Deer was likewise re-elected as treasurer. Chuck Oualline will automatically move from intermediate to senior member-at-large, and Jim Martinson will move from junior to intermediate member-at-large. Finally, we elected Mike Clark as the new junior member-at-large.

After another fine dinner, and after elections were held, we were honored to have as our guest speaker Colonel Glen Nordin, USAF Retired. He was an F-4 fighter pilot who told us how he was shot down out of the Da Nang GCA traffic pattern, ejected with his back-seater, and subsequently was rescued by an Army helicopter crew, which saved their lives. He said he truly identifies with Army aviators. The rescue pilots were VHPA Life Member James M. "Jim" White, the AC, and Charles L. "Chuck" Canfield, from the 176th AHC. They were returning home from a mission and just happened to



Chapter president Ben Treadway posts



More members and wives at dinner.



Guest speaker Colonel Glen Nordin, USAF Retired speaks after dinner wearing glasses he wore during one mission where he lost the lens.

ALASKA CHAPTER

The skies opened up for our summer picnic and sunshine poured down on the Alaskan Chapter as we enjoyed another get together to mark the end of this warm arctic summer season. The American Legion Post in Palmer, AK provided a beautiful lakeside site from which we barbecued, fished, and recalled tales of heroism accomplished so many years ago. Scout pilots trying to out do the Guns, who railed about the Chinooks. Huey pilots listened in awe. Those were the days!



Members and wives remarked about their summer outings, hikes, salmon fishing, and trips to the 'lower 48' to visit in-laws, out-laws, and other relatives and friends. Many of our members are still active pilots, and tales of bush flying and float plane excursions were interesting to hear.

Thirty-one members and guests participated. People drove their RVs, motorcycles, a 1929 Ford truck, and a restored 1964 Chevy pick-up rounded out the vehicles.

Our president, Lynn Kile, filled everyone in on the Reno Reunion

witness the bail-out. NVA soldiers were closing on the Air Force pilots, shooting all the way, when they were plucked out. Nordin was pulled from a river where he landed. The other 176th crew members were Arthur Gross and David Cunard.

Our Christmas party will be held on Friday evening, December 9th in the Army Residence Community Sky Lounge in San Antonio, with cocktails at 1800 hours. All food and drink and live music will be provided. Please send your reservation and payment of \$30 per person to Al Flory, if you have not.

As always, members should watch for e-mails and check our Chapter website www.vhpa-alamo.org for scheduled events and details.

By Chuck Oualline

and upcoming events. We have a steak dinner night planned at the American Legion Post #1 in Anchorage in November, and will attempt to secure an additional day of halibut/King salmon fishing next spring out on the Kenai peninsula. The ladies of the Quilts of Valor and Quilts of VHPA still have a few veterans to be presented with quilts. They are a special group of women whom are greatly appreciated for all they do.

We thank all those who attended, and the VHPA members who worked so hard to make this event such a success. Time to get ready for moose hunting!

Pride in knowing we FLEW!

By Tim Kavanaugh VP, Alaska Chapter

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

CALIFORNIA CHAPTER NORTH

CCN has participated in four events since the National Reunion in July. A chapter party was held at "LZ Fritz" on 6 AUG to celebrate our success at the Reunion and welcome our 19 new members. Ken Fritz (our President) just finished a new barn at his new farm, just north of Sacramento. Great place for a party and a good time was had by all.

On 5 SEP we participated in the Nicolaus Labor Day parade in Nicolaus, CA. Thanks to Mike Whitten, Ken Fritz, Jim Stein, Al Doucette, Jim Cunningham, Curt Knapp, and Huey 563 for another great day and Labor Day Parade in Nicolaus. We were awarded the first place ribbon for this event!

On 9-11 SEP Huey 563 found its way to the "Cruisin' the Pines" car show in Grass Valley, CA that is sponsored by the Roamin' Angels Car Club. The Nevada County Fairgrounds is an excellent venue providing lots of shade for the cars and plenty of open space for our Huey. There were over 7,000 people in attendance and about 200 cars on display. We've been invited back again next year. Chapter president Ken Fritz explained the cockpit workings of the Huey to Dave and Sue Garber, our gracious overnight hosts. Also helping, but not pictured, were Ken Lake and Curt Knapp behind the camera.

We ended September with a static display at the Serrano Salute to Valor Golf Tournament in El Dorado Hills, CA on 19 SEP 2016. This event was held at the Serrano Country Club in El Dorado Hills, CA. This was a Monday Golf event supporting the El Dorado County Veterans Memorial. Thanks to Curt Knapp, Mike O'Connell, and Jim Stein for showing off 563!

We are planning our next really major display of Huey 563 at the California Capitol Airshow at Mather Field, Sacramento on 30 SEP to 2 OCT. This event displays hundreds of static airplanes, many fly-



Ken welcoming the group before we could eat!



Crew of Huey 563 on Labor Day. Also helping, but not pictured, were Ken Lake and Curt Knapp behind the camera.



Ken Fritz with our hosts for the event



Our new M60 ready for action



563 Crew for the Day at Serrano Country Club

ing demonstrations including the Blue Angels and includes the Army Golden Knights parachute team. It usually is attended by 5,000-10,000 people over the 2 day show. We setup the day before.

We also plan to support the "Corvettes for Vets" car show in Placerville, CA on 16 OCT, followed by a static display at Sierra Junior college on 10 NOV for a Veterans Appreciation Day.

For more pictures and information, please check our website: www.vhpaccn.org.

By Dave Anderson, VHPA-CCN webmaster

FLORIDA CHAPTER

Our 24th annual reunion, September 15-17, 2016 was absolutely outstanding and perhaps one of the finest ever. It was held at the beautiful Ramada Kissimmee Gateway Hotel, located just one mile from the magic of Walt Disney World, and the hotel's complimentary scheduled shuttles offered easy transportation to Disney theme parks, SeaWorld Orlando, and local shopping. This relaxing resort-style hotel, which is one of Central Florida's most vibrant and beautiful destinations, was the perfect location for our annual reunion.

After completing our administrative and logistical tasks of setting up our registration tables, hospitality room, sales store, memorabilia room (our very own Vietnam War museum), and after strategically parking our LOACH in the front parking lot of the hotel, we shared our first meal of the reunion together. The location was Pacino's Italian Ristorante which offered delectable menu options in a beautiful

private room that opened onto an attractive outside patio area. After the splendid meal, we had a mini-awards ceremony. Our Chapter recognized Barry Speare as the 2016 recipient of The Jim Basta Service Award which is presented to an outstanding member whose actions and extended service clearly demonstrate his dedication to the advancement of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association of Florida and its goals. What a wonderful way to end the day!

Following a very exciting and successful first day, the fun, food, and fellowship continued, and concluded with dinner at the Columbia Restaurant. It was named One of America's Most Historic Restaurants by USA Today. Just minutes from Disney's theme parks, the restaurant offered classic elegance in a Mediterranean style setting where we enjoyed award-winning Spanish-Cuban cuisine in old-world-style dining rooms. Needless to say, a great time was had by all!

The highlight of our final day was the Banquet. Our guest speaker,

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

Peter Krunker (LTC, USMC, Retired), was the first Marine officer to complete the Army's Rotary Wing Aviator's Course. After completing the Marine Corps' CH-46 Course, he received his second set of wings (Naval Aviator), and following his tour of duty in Vietnam, he became the first Army-trained pilot to complete Air Force Jet Fighter training and received his third set of aviator wings (USAF). He delivered an exceptionally inspirational and motivational message that was very well received by all. During our Awards Ceremony after dinner, Dan Brunger received The Jim Yoho Memorial Award which is given to the outstanding member whose actions clearly demonstrate his dedication to the advancement of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association of Florida LZ and its goals.

Our newly elected Chapter officers for 2017 are: Dr. Joe Ponds, President; Gary Harrell, Vice President; Mike Waugh, Secretary; Tom Tomlinson, Treasurer; and Tom Rountree, Chairman of the Board.

By Dr. Joe Ponds, Chapter President



Dr. Joe Ponds, Chapter President, presents Barry Speare with The Jim Basta Service Award.



Members and guests appreciated dining in the Columbia Restaurant's classic elegance and Mediterranean style setting.



Chapter President Dr. Joe Ponds presents The Jim Yoho Memorial Award to Dan Brunger.



Barry Speare showing off his Jim Basta Service Award as Chapter members and guests applaud.



Members and guests enjoy Spanish-Cuban cuisine at The Columbia Restaurant in Celebration, FL.

Guest Speaker Peter Krunker (LTC, USMC, Retired) shares a few words of inspiration and encouragement to VHPAF members and guests.



The Ramada Gateway Hotel in beautiful Kissimmee, Florida just minutes away from the Disney Theme Parks and Sea World Orlando.

GEORGIA CHAPTER

On 17 September 2016 the Georgia VHPA Chapter conducted its fifth bi-monthly breakfast meeting of the year at our home base, the Marietta Rib Ranch (LZ Romeo Romeo).

Our speaker for this meeting was Cliff Stern who gave an outstanding power-point presentation on Operation Lam Son 719, the largest helicopter incursion of any war. His pitch included a multitude of photographs and actual sound bites of ongoing radio transmissions from some of his 174th AHC pilots during the operation. Cliff has provided his Lom Son 719 presentation to Georgia high schools, Georgia colleges, and various and numerous Georgia veteran organizations. As past president of the Army Aviation Heritage Foundation, Cliff actually flew to some of his speaking engagements in a Vietnam-era bird (the AAHF has in its inventory five flyable Hueys, five Cobras, one OH-58, and one L-19 Bird Dog).

Our next meeting is scheduled for 23 November 2016 at home base, LZ Romeo Romeo. Our guest speaker for this meeting will be Bob Babcock who served in Vietnam as a 4th Infantry Division rifle platoon leader during 1966-1967. From 1968 to 2002 Bob spent a 34 year career as a Sales and Marketing Executive with IBM. But, Bob Babcock could never leave the Army. He has been a founding

official partner of the Veterans History Project, part of the Library of Congress. He served for ten years as president of the 22nd Infantry Regiment Society and is currently serving as president of the National 4th Division Association as well as the 4th Infantry Division Historian. He was commissioned by two 4th Division Commanding Generals to write chronologies of their year-long deployments to Iraq. Bob was presented the Order of St. Maurice by the National Infantry Association in 2013. He has personally authored six published books and is the founder/CEO of Deeds Publishing LLC that has published over 175 books for established and aspiring authors. I have asked Bob to speak on how he chronologically informed families of Iraq deployed 4th Infantry Division soldiers on a day to day basis during their two year deployment in Iraq. It was an indeed a phenomenal feat for a citizen soldier.

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]

Bob Lanzotti, President
VED
VN
CA

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

NEW YORK CHAPTER

On September 10, the Central New York Chapter of the VHPA attended the annual picnic at the home of Roger and Vicki Baker in Jamesville, NY.

The weather cooperated and we all enjoyed mixed conversation of helicopters, new granddaughters, and delicious food. Roger, your name finally got into the VHPA newsletter.

Gary Roush from Painted Post, NY attended which made the afternoon more official because Gary is upper level management in the national organization.

BY TOM MCMILLEN PRESIDENT



NORTH ALABAMA CHAPTER

October 5, 2016

The fall is the the busiest time of the year for the North Alabama Chapter; 2016 promises to be the most hectic yet!

We started September 10th with our second annual support to the effort to stop childhood cancers. This involved our UH-1C/M, Buccaneer 3 (Buc 3) and many of our members traveling about 20 miles West of Huntsville for the "Super Heroes Day" celebration in Athens, AL. The theme this year was "Blue Lives Matter." It was to celebrate those who help their community. That includes the military. Of course, how could the Chapter not go! As always, Buc 3 is a crowd pleaser. And of course us old vets just love to show off this Vietnam Veteran. Although temperartures were in the mid 90s, our old boys hung in and put many child and adult in and out of Buc-3. Again, a very satisfying day.

On September 15th we took Buc 3 to a reunion of past and present crews of the ubiquitous CH-47 Chinook. Many crew members from Vietnam to present day gathered at the Doubletree Hotel in Huntsville for the chance to meet and mingle with the best of the best cargo folks. Even though Buc 3 is a gunship, many of these "hook" crews remembered flying Hueys, at least in flight school. Memories and stories were the word of the day.

On September 17th the NAVHPA was scheduled to exhibit Buc 3 at the annual Grass Field Fly-in at Moontown airport. Unfortunately, we could not get Buc 3 into the airport due to low-hanging trees and illegally parked cars blocking the entrance road. The best laid plans can fail, as we learned again that day.

The following Saturday we exhibited Buc 3 for Yulista Aviation's Annual family picnic at Tate Farms, near our hangar facility in Meridianville, AL. Yulista is a major sponsor, partner and supporter of the NAVHPA's restoration efforts. This was the fourth year that we exhibited for the Yulista Families. Many of the children are still in awe that their dads and dad's friends actually flew these helicopters. But that did not stop any from climbing aboard to pretend to fly or be a door gunner on the old gunship.

October 1st found the NAVHPA at the Madison Street Festival in Madison, AL supporting our restaurant partner, The Schnitzel Ranch, serving traditional German fare such as schnitzel sandwiches,



Fictional Super Hero meets fans



Fans line up to see a real Vietnam Veteran



Pretend Door Gunner scans for targets



NAVHPA members and spouses serving German food at the Madison Street Festival

bratwurst, and warm pretzels to a crowd the organizers estimated at 30 thousand! The funnel cakes were "stand in line for" good. It took most of our members, spouses and friends to get it all done, but we were sold out with almost an hour to go. Evidently the German chow was a big hit.



NAVHPA members Steve Pflanzler and John Lowe prepare funnel cakes, a big hit

November and December will be devoted primarily to Veterans Day activities and a service project. The Chapter will celebrate Christmas on December 12th at the Best Western in Madison, AL with our annual Christmas Party. Our guest speaker will be COL (Ret) John Reitzell, a long-time Special Operator mentioned in the dedication of many of W.E.B. Griffin's best-selling books. If you live in the North Alabama and Southern 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, serve our area and tell the next generations what YOU did in Vietnam.

By Ralph Weber

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

NORTH CAROLINA CHAPTER

During the last week of August the North Carolina Chapter of VHPA placed one of its Vietnam helicopters, UH1-M 66 15217, on display in front of the Charles George VA Medical Center in Asheville, NC. This aircraft display was part of a larger innovative effort centering around the arts and humanities led by Dr. Bruce Kelly to honor and care for those who fought in the Republic of Vietnam, many of whom still carry the wounds of that war.

It's estimated that there are 250,000 Vietnam veterans still living with the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder. It didn't take Dr. Kelly long, as a primary care physician, to realize the impact this and other wounds had on his patients who still live daily with the aftermath of their combat there despite the best efforts of devoted CGVAMC staff and available care options.

This has led to a three year collaborative, innovative effort to bring together veterans and creative individuals from within and outside the VA to launch, among other projects, a pilot creative writing program devoted to the recovery and healing of Vietnam veterans with PTSD. Writing program for veterans have existed since the 2nd World War, with many scattered throughout the country in a variety of settings. It's well known that the act of writing can help in taking whatever memories, feelings or emotions are "banging around" inside to help make sense of and begin to move beyond the suffering they bring.

But bringing together the typical RVN combat veteran/patient and nationally recognized academics and laureates from the arts and humanities to address these experiences and deeply buried wounds focused on healing in a primary care driven setting is unique...to say the least. With the support of grants from the Asheville Area Arts Council, North Carolina Arts Council, North Carolina Humanities Council, and the support of community sponsors Dr. Kelly enlisted Joseph Bathanti, North Carolina Poet Laureate (2012-2014) to engage with more than 26 Vietnam veterans at CGVAMC to launch a series of eight week writing groups.

These veterans formed three teams to collaborate, very cautiously at first, with these extraordinary gentlemen of the arts and humanities to find new ways to express themselves, an outlet for their deeply personal responses to their experience in RVN, and ultimately find a voice of recovery they didn't know they had. The result was an extraordinary collection of poetry, prose, and narrative, and as importantly, a supportive group of brothers devoted to the work and to each other. Created at the same time was a collaborative effort with Dr. John Woods of the University of North Carolina at Asheville to develop a "photo-voice" based class bringing together seven of these veterans who partnered with students to tell of their Vietnam experience through powerful narrated photos and videos. A website "Veterans Voices" is being created as a home to continue building and sharing this innovative work as well. Both veterans and students alike were inspired by the cross generational aspects of this program.

These creative efforts were so impactful for all involved that it led to a community based event for the larger CGVAMC community of veterans, families and staff.

A staged reading of the veterans writing and photographs was held at the Asheville Community Theater on August 31, 2016, ACT donating their space and staff support to make this event happen in honor of our veterans. It opened with comments and reading by Dr. Bruce Weigl, himself a Vietnam combat veteran and finalist for the 2013 Pulitzer Prize in poetry. The program was entitled "Brothers Like These," taken from the closing line of the final poetry piece presented that evening. Our VHPA helicopter display played an important role in helping promote this event, and in highlighting the service of all who served in Vietnam. The aircraft was positioned directly in front of the main entrance of the Asheville VA Medical Center

As this display was devoted to the patients and staff of this exceptional VA medical facility, it was not where the general public would see or visit the aircraft. The aircraft was on display for three days with members of the NC VHPA Chapter, Jerry Seago, John Hoffman, Brock Nicholson, Edmund Hughes, and Larry Pigg, present to answer questions about the aircraft and to share their own experiences flying these amazing machines.

There were many noteworthy reactions to this aircraft display. For example, on the second day gentlemen rolled slowly in his wheel chair over to the aircraft from the hospital parking lot. He looked up at the aircraft for four to five minutes and then tears rolled down his cheek. When I asked him if he needed any help, he looked at me silently for a few minutes and then said that he hated coming to the hospital for his treatments but that this was his best day ever at the VA. At another time, actually several times each day in fact, individuals came to us at the helicopter and would place a hand somewhere on the aircraft and just gaze at it. Then what would follow was often something like: "These things and you guys saved my ass!" or "I am only alive because of you guys" or "You were my ride into combat....but you were my chariot out and home!"

On the more humorous side, were the very numerous comments and questions about how we had landed the helicopter under a tree, right next to a stop sign? "Obviously", one VA hospital staffer stated, these Vietnam helicopter pilots are really, really good just as people say!" Seems no one could see the 15 foot trailer frame and hitch sticking out from under the front of the airframe...or the fact that the skids were about six inches off the ground. And what about the tires!??

One really touching moment came when a hospital staffer shared with me that there was an elderly Vietnam veteran in the assisted living facility next to the hospital who could see the helicopter from his window. He wanted to come down to touch the helicopter because a "Huey" had saved his life. Unfortunately the guy was both bedridden and attached to too many life preserving machines to leave his bed, much less his room. And there was little we could do because his unit did

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

not allow visitors. It was three days of similar occurrences. I think that all of us who participated in the aircraft display at the Asheville VA Medical Center will agree that the VA medical facilities offer an extraordinary venue for VHPA to share something very strong and very deep with our fellow RVN Veterans. If you have the chance to do this...jump on it!

The evening at the Asheville Community Theater was just as amazing and moving for all of us. A sample poem from the 22 poems recited that evening is on page 37.

By John Hoffman

Submitted by Larry Pigg, President

OHIO RIVER LZ CHAPTER

It is our thirtieth year, thus it seems appropriate to show the original 15 members who made this all happen.

All preparations for the 30th annual meeting of the Ohio River LZ Chapter of the VHPA have been completed and it is going to be a great reunion.

I have been working with the documentary artist who is going to come and film the 30th reunion and still have a few details to work out. He is looking forward to the project. He is out of the country at this time and I need to furnish him with dates so he can finalize his schedule.

The Banquet will be held at the Indiana War Memorial Foundation and the hotel is the Hilton Garden Inn, Downtown Indianapolis.

See you at the reunion April 7, 8, and 9th.

By Robert Blair



Original 15 members who started the chapter.



Main Lobby
where the
Banquet will
be served.

OLD DOMINION CHAPTER

Upcoming Events

Nov.11: Veterans Day Memorial Services at the Virginia War Memorial in Richmond, VA. 10:00 hours Guest Speaker: Governor Terry McAuliffe. www.vawarmemorial.org

December 7: CHRISTMAS GALA WITH MOAA @ MEADOWBROOK COUNTRY CLUB 18:00. You must register by 2 Dec. Dress: Coat & Tie. Register yourself using attached form in link below.
https://gallery.mailchimp.com/371146d70a0516f97f83f3bb5/files/2016_11_Newsletter_Complete.pdf

May 28, 2017: DINNER Gathering somewhere in Northern VA 6:00 PM (please give us your suggestions). Frosty Price has 9 rooms reserved at Crown Plaza Hotel Crystal City, VA.

May 28, 2017: MONDAY: Attending Arlington National Cemetery Memorial Day Ceremony.



Sorry you missed the Great Autumn Rambler Birmingham Branch Railroad train Operated by the Old Dominion Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society.

We had a blast. I have attached a couple of pictures from our trip.

*By Don Agren, President,
Website: VHPAVirginia.org*



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

We held our August meeting at the American Legion Post #1. The August meeting with 10 members present was nearly two hours long as we needed the extra time to cover our new Web site development www.RMCVHPA.com, additions to the Museum Trailer which included a new evaporative cooler and storage installations, and the

after actions report for the Erie Air Show Museum showing. Our September Membership meeting was held at Phil Lanphier's house in conjunction with the Summer BBQ. We had quite a turnout and the Hamburgers and Brats were delicious, not to mention the mass quantities of beer provided by Walt Wise through a generous donation by the "POP-A-Smoke" Marine Combat Pilots organization.

Among other summer activities; we hosted "Honor Flight"

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

returnees from Washington, D.C. ceremonies, and The Broomfield Days Community celebration, which was dedicated to Military Veterans.

The Erie Airfare held on August 13, 2016, was a big success with over 700 visitors and with only three docents: Terry Olson, Dale House, Rick Beaver and Bill Bates did half days. Talk about ***holes and elbows. No pictures for that event, we were too busy. It was the first usage for the evaporative cooler, thanks to Rick Beaver and Bill Bates, which saved our lives; with the over 90 degree outside temperatures it allowed us to stay cool. Honor Flight was on time at Denver International Airport on September 12, 2016, arriving at the Signature Flight Support facility with 123 WWII (20), Korea (45), and Vietnam (58) Veterans after tours and ceremonies in Washington, DC. Carl and Barbara Cavalluzzi, the event organizers, were joined by chapter members Terry Olson, Rick Beaver, John Mitchell, Greg Mann, Bill Bates, Phil Lanphier, and Dale House to welcome them home. The last remaining P-38 pilot of Air Group 42-J, Major Fredric Arnold, USAAC (ret.) was among the returning "Honor Flight" members. He is a renowned sculptor who lives in Longmont, CO. His Sculpture project, "Lest We Forget: The Mission", is currently on display at the Wings Over the Rockies Museum, and will soon travel to New Orleans and become a permanent exhibit at the National World War II Museum.

We were guests of the Broomfield Veterans Museum for "Broomfield Days" held on September 17, 2016. The Museum was manned throughout the day by, Terry Olson, John Cunningham, Rick Beaver, Doug Neil, Phil Lanphier, George Mayl, Dale House, Bill Bates, Carl and Barbara Cavalluzzi. Lyle Borders made an appearance and Cliff Lawson spent most of the day taking pictures of the event. George went into his recruitment mode with the kids. I swear, there'll be no helicopter pilot shortage in the years to come. Bill McPherson's Helicopter Ministries had his 'Mike' Model Gun Ship alongside the Museum after the parade. Another highlight was a visit from Sandee Swanson and her daughter Brigid. Sandee's husband, CPT Jon E. Swanson, was killed in Vietnam in 1971 performing duties as a Scout Pilot for the 1/9 Cav. He was a medal of Honor Recipient for whom the Rocky Mountain Chapter has a memorial in the Museum. Jon's brother Tom was also present. It was a Great Day!

Other Chapter and Upcoming Activities:

We are coordinating with "Lest We Forget: The Mission" Project to hold a special viewing for the Rocky Mountain Chapter and have Major Fredric Arnold, USAAC (ret.), the Sculptor as a guest speaker. Also, weather permitting we will attend the Veterans Day activities sponsored by the American Legion Hall in Longmont, CO on November 11, 2016, which will conclude our Museum schedule for 2016. Our annual Christmas Party will be held at Greg Mann's house on December 3, 2016. I'll report on those activities in the January/February issue of the Aviator. Visit our new Web site at www.rmcvhp.com.



Honor Flight: LR Standing Greg Mann, Phil Lanphier, Dale House, Rick Beaver
LR Sitting Terry Olson, John Mitchell, Bill Bates, Carl Cavalluzzi



Broomfield Days: Helicopter War Museum and 'Mike' Model Huey Display



Broomfield Days: George Mayl Recruiting Helicopter Pilots

Meeting Schedule and other Information:

We normally hold meetings once a month, on the third Saturday of the month, at 10:00 hours 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 will meet periodically to continue categorizing inventory and developing additional displays.



Honor Flight: Bill Bates and Rick Beaver Welcoming Home a Vietnam Veteran



Broomfield Days: Tom Swanson and Sandee Swanson

We continue to look for artifacts for the Museum; among these items are 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-fireable AK-47. Please contact our Chapter President and Museum Curator, Dale House 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, President

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

SOUTH MISSOURI CHAPTER

The third quarter meeting of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association, South Missouri Chapter, was held on September 10, 2016. The meeting began at 11:00 a.m. in the second floor Hy-Vee Club Room at Hy-Vee Jefferson City, MO at 3721 West Truman Boulevard. After a minute of silence to remember those who did not return from the theater of operations, those who have passed since their return, and on this weekend especially, those who died 15 years ago in the attacks on 9/11/01, Chapter President John Wilkinson made some introductory comments and welcomed back COL John Clark. COL Clark is a graduate of the University of Missouri-Columbia, and was commissioned through the Air Force ROTC program in 1962. He was awarded his pilot wings in 1963 and subsequently flew C-131s with the 12th Aeromedical Transport Squadron at McGuire AFB, NJ. He then completed RF-4C Combat Crew Training, serving at RAF Alconbury, England, from June 1965 to October 1966. In October 1966, he began flying with the 11th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron at Udorn Royal Thai AFB. On March 12, 1967, then Captain Clark was forced to eject over North Vietnam and was captured.

Last year, Air Force COL (RET) John Clark spoke at our third quarter meeting and covered much of the period up to his move to Hanoi. He spoke again this year, going into more detail regarding his time as a prisoner of war from March, 1967, to February, 1973. Among the subjects he discussed during his presentation were the conditions under which the prisoners were held, the methods of communication developed by the prisoners, the psychological and physical tortures employed by the North Vietnamese, the changing standards for Code of Conduct and SERE training, and he discussed the role of Doug Hegdahl, an ammu-



Chapter members and some spouses

nition handler on the USS Canberra, who fell overboard and was captured by fishermen. He was returned to the U.S. later with the identification of some 256 P.O.W.s. COL Clark also passed around several pictures and other items used to illustrate his talk.



Col. Clark

After COL Clark spoke, the floor was opened and a question and answer period ensued with several of the members asking questions.

The next meeting is scheduled for November 5, 2016, at the Keeter Center at the College of the Ozarks. Meetings for 2017 have not yet been finalized.

The formal part of the meeting was adjourned, and lunch was served. The remainder of the time was spent eating lunch and visiting.

I want to thank all the attendees, and wish all a great fall season.

By John B. Wilkinson

UPPER MIDWEST CHAPTER

On August 15, 2016, 14 members and their guests participated with Washington County Veterans' group in a dinner cruise on the St. Croix River. The weather was beautiful, the speaker interesting, and the companionship excellent. The speaker was Major John Plaster who regaled us with stories from Vietnam which brought back vivid memories. The other veterans from World War II through Afghanistan were eager to share experiences with us. There was excellent food, good company, and pleasant surroundings which will lead us to try this social gathering again next year.

September 29th was the date for our regular lunch meeting. We are in the midst of planning events. Our next social meeting with members and guests is scheduled for November 17, 2016. That will lead us into our next business meeting in January 2017. Several upcoming veterans' events are occurring in our area soon. We are gathering more information in order to participate with these groups and share information about our organization.



Cruise photos



By Richard Anderson

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

WASHINGTON STATE CHAPTER

Our beautifully restored UH-1H (parts from several a/c hulks donated to the Olympic Flight Museum (OFM) by NW Helicopters) was officially released for parades and static displays throughout the State of Washington last year. Our first big venue was the Veterans Day parade in Auburn, WA. Auburn is a city located on the fringe of the Seattle metropolitan area. They host what has been advertised as the largest Veterans Parade on the West coast. It occurs the weekend before Veterans Day. There are from 200 to 300 entries in the parade. Of course we took first place for our entry! This is what our chapter and the other volunteers for the museum worked three or more hours every Wednesday night for 18 months to bring to the Veterans and citizens of Washington State. This is exactly what we wanted, a display everyone could sit in and touch; and for many to reminisce.

It is the chapter's way of sharing this legacy and the opportunity to tell others about our experiences. Our Huey has received a tremendous welcome everywhere it has been taken. Now that the word is out everyone wants it at their event! We are now facing the challenges of getting it to all the places it is being requested. The trailer was modified from one used to take prefab buildings to sites. It is very stout to say the least. The truck/trailer combination is 70+ feet long, with 5" ground clearance and 14' high. We have to conduct a route survey for each event. Routes to/from and during each parade are required. We even had one incident where the crown in a hill caused the trailer to high center. Even going over curbs into parking areas can make it scrape bottom! But WOW the whole package looks real impressive. We are rightly proud of it.

Now with this fairly lengthy opener let me get to the point of this issues report. As you know, some events may seem insignificant because of their size and/or location (remember Auburn, largest Veterans Parade west of the Mississippi). We had a request for the month of August of this year from a small town called Pacific Beach on the coast (population 321) for a parade and short static display. We said yes, but later had some doubts and were having difficulty getting participation and some logistics issues. We almost cancelled but decided in the last week to go ahead and make the effort. Our site survey indicated a route about 10 blocks long if you started where the Hwy 109 entrance starts at one end of town and ends at the other onto the highway! OK, the parade might last for 20 minutes and then park for static display for one hour max and then drive back to Olympia. WRONG, the parade actually started at the entrance to off Hwy 109 at Moclips, WA (population 207) and followed



the coast Hwy 109 to Pacific Beach for 2 miles! We ended up parading with many floats and groups (even pirates) down the coast highway holding up traffic for over



VHPA President John Shafer (chapter member) performing some detail work on the Huey

an hour and a half!! Good thing the county sheriff and state patrol already know about this event. We didn't get any tickets! What a hoot. What a turnout. There were way more than 528 people there!

Take a close look at the pictures. Recognize the dude in the funny hat washing the windshield of the Huey? See who is cleaning the seagull poop off the tailboom and tail rotor of the Huey just before the parade? Not to name drop or anything. Our national president is an active member and treasurer of our chapter. We always have to re-introduce him to the parts of the Huey; he flew scouts during his tour in VN.

Next issue I will write about two accounts that occurred after the parade while we were sitting on static display that made this little (insignificant?) trip to these small towns on the Washington coast MORE than worth the effort. Until next issue...

By Dave Saunders, President
Vhpa.wa.ch.pres@scattercreek.com

A POEM PRESENTED AT NCVHPA VISIT TO VA

HELICOPTER *by Butch Gudger*

I went to a dinner
with a helicopter pilot
and told him
that one of the most beautiful sights
I'd ever seen - was my ride out of the jungle -
But there'd also been the ride in.

And those memories -
become tied to
when I clear everything else out
in my mind,
and something else enters in -
sometimes a smell -
such as diesel fumes -
will confuse me -
My mind spirals down
Like the spiral route of
the helicopter descending
into the white cloud of phosphorus
and jungle.

We jumped out before
it landed,
then it rose up and left us
struggling with the green weeds
in the garden of our youth.

Change

From eighteen to one hundred eighteen
From a High School graduate to a Machine Gunner
and Recon Marine

From a follower to a leader

From places like Weaverville, Asheville, Myrtle Beach,
Parris Island, Camp Lejeune and Camp Pendleton to
places like Okinawa, DaNang, An Hoa, Ashau Valley,

Charlie Ridge, Dodge City and Marble Mountain
From girls, cars, music and having fun to insertions,
artillery, jets and sweating

From what's happening this weekend and with who, to
surviving til dark or morning's first light

Priorities change
We Change?

Is it maturity, age, bonding or is it experiences?
Is it too much change in too short a period of time?
And back again!!

Continued from page 26

Well, the Cobra guys got the President's party into An Loc, and I was tremendously relieved. Next, we had to get them out. Before the three Cobras and the Huey could get back from refueling, the President decided to come out. According to members of his party about 40 rounds had landed on An Loc while he was on the ground. That may have influenced his decision to leave early. According to reports, his visit to An Loc brought tears to everyone's eyes. Those poor souls in An Loc, military and civilian, had been under fire for over three months and now their President was there to congratulate them for their heroic defense of An Loc. By then, I was back over An Loc and the back up team was sent in to make the extraction which went well. We had been tremendously fortunate to get in and out without casualties.

On the way back to Lai Khe I was notified the President had called ahead and ordered the ARVN's on station to prepare "field lunch". I did not know what that was, but I was sure anxious to get on the ground and put this mission behind us. The festivities at Lai Khe turned out to be a celebration and a nice time to converse with the President's party (I think they all spoke English). I am not sure I ever got to thank those Cobra guys who got the President into An Loc through all that cruddy weather. The Cobra crews would have been from F/9th or D/229th because F-79th and part of "B" company had been deployed north.

Fifty Americans lost their lives during the Battle of An Loc. There was a Memorial Service for Fallen Warriors held at the Vietnam Memorial in Washington D.C. on September 20, 2008.

We can never do enough to remember those who did not make it back. However, our VHPA Historian, Mike Sloniker, has made a valiant effort. Since 1992, Mike has been leaving memorials at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial on Veterans Day and Memorial Day. This wonderful tribute has caught on with others and there are now about 40 memorials being placed. Mike has also placed memorials for lost ones other than the 229th. From all veterans: thanks, Mike.

Lewis J. McConnell Colonel USA (retired), Stack Deck 6

Editor's Note: The 229 Assault Helicopter Battalion was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation (PUC) for its valorous actions at An Loc. This was the battalion's second award of the PUC. The 229th was previously awarded the Presidential Unit Citation during the period 23 Oct 65 to 26 Nov 65 for action in the Ira Drang Valley, the Meritorious Unit Citation for the period 1 Sep 65 to 30 Nov 66 and the Cross of Gallantry with Palm for the period 9 Aug 65-17 May 69. Battery F, ARA, 79th Artillery (Blue Max) was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation for the period 23 Oct 65-26 Nov 65.

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VHPA 2017 CALENDAR

Order Now for the Holidays!

The Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association and Acclaim Press are pleased to present the new VHPA 2017 Calendar, hot off the press and available for immediate shipment. This is the 24th calendar produced by the VHPA.

The goal of the VHPA calendar project is to refresh the memories of all those who flew and worked on helicopters in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War era, and to record, preserve and display the events and activities that were important to veterans of that period.

Each month features photographs depicting the machines & people that flew over Vietnam, plus detailed captions about what is pictured. This VHPA Calendar also commemorates the 2,165 helicopter pilots who died or whose bodies were not returned (BNR) from Southeast Asia during the Vietnam Era (1961-1975).

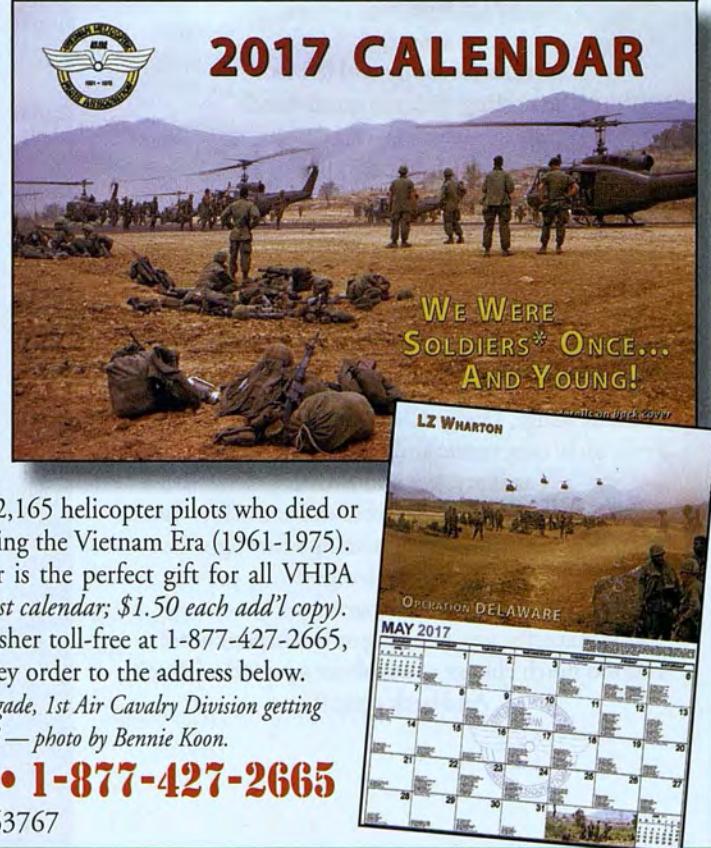
Printed in full-color, this 17x11-inch (BIG) wall calendar is the perfect gift for all VHPA members and their families. **Only \$14.95 - plus shipping (\$5 first calendar; \$1.50 each add'l copy).** Missouri residents add 6.225% sales tax. To order, call the publisher toll-free at 1-877-427-2665, visit online at www.acclaimpress.com, or send your check/money order to the address below.

Pictured on the cover: Members of the 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry, 2nd Brigade, 1st Air Cavalry Division getting ready to leave LZ STUD for their part in Operation PEGASUS — photo by Bennie Koon.

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TAPS

In the Sep/Oct Aviator, we listed Col Samuel G. Conley's military data incorrectly. The correct information is: Flight Class: 56-12. RVN: 62-63 611 TC CO, 66-67 147 ASHC, 67 USARV, Callsigns: Moonshine/Hillclimber/LBJ

Ayres, Mark USA CW4 (Ret.) Flight Class: 69-15, RVN: 69-70 A/25 AVN 25 INF

Mark Ayres, 67, of Poteau, OK, passed away Tuesday, August 30, 2016, in Fort Smith, AR. He was born August 3, 1949, at Independence, MO.

He was a retired Chief Warrant Officer from the U.S. Army where he served as a helicopter pilot in both Vietnam and Desert Storm; he also retired from BP Refinery in Texas City, TX where he was a Sr. Maintenance Supervisor.

Preceding him in death was his mother, Barbara A. (Makemson) Dutzel.

He is survived by his wife of 46 years Carolyn Ayres of the home, a son and a brother.

Burial: Fort Smith National Cemetery, Fort Smith, AR.

Blake, Robert R. USA CW3 (Ret.) Flight Class: 69-17, RVN: 69-70 235 AWC, Callsign: Viper 31



Robert R. Blake, 68, passed away August 4, 2016. Distinguished Flying Cross recipient, loving husband and father, he is survived by his wife, Candace, and children. I know he was born February 18, 1948. Robert served in Vietnam 1969 in the Delta. He was a Cobra Pilot, one of the first, as he transitioned in-country. He retired from the Missouri Army National Guard.

He was a patriot, my best friend, had a unique wit, and was a generous, honorable man who loved his family and he was the best Cobra Pilot I had the honor to fly with.

Blake, Thomas J. USA Flight Classes: 66-9W/66-9, RVN: 67-68 605 TC CO, 68 539 TC CO, 68-69 11 ACR, Callsign: Nomad 5



On August 20, 2016, Thomas Blake of Woodbridge, VA lost his battle with cancer. He was a highly decorated Army helicopter pilot, Vietnam War veteran, pistol champion and an avid golfer. "TJ" was loved and admired by those who knew him and will be remembered for his numerous stories and sense of humor. He is survived by six

children, 14 grandchildren, four great-grandchildren, six brothers and three sisters. In honor of his memory, the family is supporting the Prostate Cancer Foundation (www.pcf.org/ThomasBlake). Burial: Quantico, VA.

Boyer, Gene T. USA LTC (Ret.) Flight Class: 54G, RVN: 66-67 B/228 AVN 1 CAV, 69 HHC/45 TC BN/145 AVN BN, Callsigns: Crossbow 6, Army 1



Gene Tunney Boyer, 87, distinguished US Army aviator, passed away Saturday, August 27, 2016 in Los Alamitos, CA leaving behind his beloved daughter Robin and son Curtis. Born on July 24, 1929 in Akron, OH, to George and Edna (Monroe) Boyer, he arrived in the company of his twin brother Jack Dempsey Boyer. Named for two of the 20th century's greatest prize fighters, the Boyer family, including older brother Wallace Richard (Dick) Boyer, battled their way through the Great Depression one odd job, one cabbage dinner, one shoeless summer at a time.

A Boy Scout in his youth, the Colonel excelled as an athlete at Copley High School. His football coach helped him land a football scholarship to Ohio University. It was there he first became sensitized to the injustice of racism when African-American players were forced to stay in "colored only" hotels on away game trips. That experience would fuel the Colonel's determination to fight prejudice in the military and purposefully integrate the White House Executive Flight Detachment when he took command in 1969.

After the Colonel graduated from Ohio University in 1952 with a degree in Business Administration, he was drafted into the Army where he qualified for Infantry Officer's Candidate School. He attended helicopter training at Fort Sill, OK, and began his prestigious career as an US Army Aviator flying MASH helicopters in Korea. In the mid-1950s, the Colonel left the Army to fly for New York Airways and was among the first civilian helicopter pilots to fly in South America doing oil survey work.

In 1958, the Colonel re-enlisted in the Army, trained as a paratrooper and completed Ranger School at Fort Benning, GA. In 1962, he was assigned to the 1st Aviation Detachment, US European Command at Orly Airport southeast of Paris, France. In addition to

shuttling NATO VIPs, he had the opportunity to fly former President Dwight Eisenhower and CBS anchor Walter Cronkite over the beaches of Normandy during the filming of the 20th Anniversary of D-Day. While in Europe, the Colonel married Cynthia "CeCe" Wells Campbell. They would have two children and divorce in 1980.

By the spring of 1964, the Boyer family had relocated to Fort Belvoir, VA, where the Colonel began his eleven-year tour of duty as a White House helicopter pilot with the Army's Executive Flight Detachment, a mission they shared with the Marines. During the next decade, he accumulated nearly 650 flight hours with President Johnson, Nixon or Ford aboard as well as other world leaders such as Anwar Sadat, Leonid Brezhnev and the Shaw of Iran. Other notable passengers included, John Wayne, John Steinbeck and Winnie the Pooh. He flew missions in 49 US states and 17 countries amassing nearly 7,000 total helicopter flight hours.

During a year-long tour of duty in Vietnam, 1965-66, the Colonel was stationed at An Khe where he earned the coveted Soldier's Medal for "heroism" and accumulated 368 hours of combat flight time. Additional awards include a Distinguished Flying Cross w/ 1 Gold Leaf Cluster, a Bronze Star, an Air Medal w/ "V" and 6 Oak Leaf Clusters, and three Legion of Merit Awards, among many other well-earned recognitions.

History will long associate the Colonel with the day Nixon resigned from office. In the cockpit of Army One, the helicopter upon which steps Nixon paused to give a final salute, were LTC Boyer and his lifelong friend CW4 Carl Burhanan, the first black pilot to fly for the White House. Frequently described as a "sky-witness to history," the Colonel's military career is chronicled in his award-winning memoir, "Inside the President's Helicopter: Reflections of a White House Senior Pilot."

The Colonel retired from the Army in 1975 and moved his family to Southern California, where, among other lofty ventures, he worked for Hughes Helicopter as Director of Marketing for the Middle East and Africa where he also marketed L-1011 aircraft for Lockheed. In his later years, he became an advocate for veteran rights and spearheaded efforts to restore the White House helicopter now an exhibit at the Nixon Library.

Gene is survived by his former wife CeCe, a daughter, a son, and two grandchildren.

Suggested donations: Alzheimer's

TAPS

Association of Orange County at www.alzoc.org or to the ongoing restoration of the helicopter at the Nixon Library LTC Boyer piloted the day Nixon left office. Please make checks payable to the Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, note "Helicopter Fund/Gene Boyer" in the memo section and mail to 18001 Yorba Linda Blvd, Yorba Linda, CA 92886.

Burial: Private interment will take place in the near future at Riverside National Cemetery.

Broeme, Keith R. USA CW4 (Ret.) Flight Class: 69-19, RVN: 69-70 A/4/77 ARA 101 ABN, Callsign: Dragon 91



Keith Sherman Broeme of Enterprise, AL passed away on Tuesday, March 29, 2016 at Flowers Hospital. He was 67.

Keith was born January 1, 1949, in Norfolk, VA, to the late Otto and JoAnn Tabor Broeme. He retired from the U.S. Army after 25 years, during which time he served two tours in Vietnam. He then continued to serve his country through the private sector until he retired from CSC as a Senior Battle Master in 2009. He was a founding lifetime member of the Army Aviation Museum in Fort Rucker, AL.

Survivors include his son, a daughter, his sister, and four grandchildren.

Memorial services will be held at a later date in Arlington National Cemetery.

Bustos, Robert G. USMC LTC (Ret.) Flight Class: 55-F, RVN: 62 HMM-163



Robert "Bob" Gregory Bustos, of Pace, FL, departed on his final flight Wednesday, September 14, 2016 at the age of 83. He was born in Los Angeles, CA on September 17, 1932 to George and Mary Bustos and was preceded in death by his parents along with his oldest son, Donald Bustos. Survivors include his loving wife of 65 years, Maren (Anne) Bustos, his two sons, a daughter, six grandchildren, and eight great grandchildren.

As a young man growing up in Los Angeles, Bob attended and then graduated from Mount Carmel High School and enlisted in the United States Marine Corps as a Private. He was a bright and motivated young man who moved quickly through the ranks and was soon commissioned as an officer in the Marine Corps and sent to flight school in Pensacola, FL where he trained to become a heli-

copter pilot. During his 23 years in service, he earned the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and served his country with honor and distinction to include piloting Marine One for President Lyndon B. Johnson.

After retiring from the USMC, he continued his education in Business Administration and graduated with a Master's degree from the University of West Florida in Pensacola, where he became a professor in the Accounting department. Bob was a well-loved family man and remembered for the many jokes he often told, even if they were received with rolled eyes and a small chuckle. His children will remember him singing loudly and frequently in the church choir and his loving wife will miss her lifelong love and confidant.

Suggested donation: The Alzheimer's Association at <http://www.alz.org>.

Burial: Barrancas National Cemetery Pensacola FL.

Chastine, Robert T. Sr. USA MAJ (Ret.) Flight Class: 66-9W/66-2, RVN: 66-67 187 AHC, 69-70 330 TC CO, Callsign: Blackhawk 57



Robert Thomas (Bob) Chastine, Sr. 73, died after a long struggle with lung cancer on Thursday, June 16, 2016 in Huntsville, AL with his family at his bedside. He is survived by his wife Linda, a son and daughter, and a grandchild.

Burial: Redstone Arsenal Cemetery

Clelan, Joseph R. USA COL (Ret.) Flight Class: 57-15, RVN: 64-65 28 SIG DET, 68-69 USARV FLT, 69 62 CAC, Callsign: Coachman 6



Joseph R. Clelan, age 83 of Mechanicsburg passed away suddenly Thursday, September 8, 2016 at West Shore Hospital. Born December 24, 1932 in Lewistown, he was the son of the late George J. and Isabelle Mae (Brown) Clelan.

Joe graduated from Clemson University in 1955 with a degree in engineering. He has been an enthusiastic Tiger's football fan ever since. Joe had a distinguished military career, serving in the Army for 28 years. He was a Master Army Aviator, served two tours in Vietnam as a helicopter pilot, commanded a battalion at Fort Bragg, and along the way was awarded the Legion of Merit, two medals of Valor, two Bronze Stars, a Silver Star, a Meritorious Service Medal, and twelve Air Medals.

Following his retirement, he worked for the Pennsylvania Dept. of Veteran Affairs as a budgetary officer. He was promoted to the second highest position in the DVA, The Deputy Adjutant General for Veteran Affairs. He was a lifetime member of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association, an active member of St. Mark Lutheran Church, and long-time member of the Carlisle Country Club where he played golf weekly.

Joe was preceded in death by his wife Erline (Valentine) Clelan. He is survived by a son, two daughters, a brother, a sister, eight grandchildren, and a great-grandson.

Burial: Indiantown Gap National Cemetery, Annville PA.

Curtis Jimmy E. USA Flight Classes: 68-1/67-25, RVN: 68-69 190 AHC, Callsign: Gladiator 15



Jim Curtis of Pensacola, FL passed away Saturday, August 27, 2016. He was preceded in death by his mother, Jimmy Virginia Murphy, his step-father Vincent DePaul Murphy and his father H. C. McGee. Jim was a Vietnam Veteran serving as a gunship pilot and later retired as an FAA Air Traffic Controller.

He is survived by his wife of 49 years, Pattie Curtis of Pensacola, a son, two granddaughters, and two grandsons. No service will be held at this time; a Celebration of Life will be scheduled at a later date. Memorial donations may be made to Wounded Warrior project of Florida or St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

Eckert, William N. USA LTC (Ret.) Flight Class: 61-10, RVN: 65 170 AHC, 65-66 155 AHC, 68-69 E/701 MNT 1 INF, Callsigns: Bikini/Stagecoach/Danger



William Eckert, 82 died at home on Monday, September 19, 2016 from complications as a result of lung cancer.

He retired in 1979 with over 23 years of regular army commissioned service. He served at Ft. Hood, Tx, with the 4th Armored Division in 1957 and with the 2nd Armored Division in 1958. He served in Korea with the Eighth U.S. Army in 1959. He served in Europe in 1963 with the 41st Transportation Battalion and again in 1968 with the 24th Infantry

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Division, as well as two combat tours in Vietnam.

A Senior Army Aviator, he was the recipient of the Bronze Star for valor with three oak leaf clusters, the Meritorious Service Medal with oak leaf cluster, the Air Medal with 13 oak leaf clusters, the Joint Service Commendation Medal and the Army Commendation Medal. He was a distinguished member of the Transportation Corps Regiment. He retired from Buck Kreihs Company, Inc., a New Orleans marine and industrial repair company as vice president in 1996.

He was a life member of the Retired Officers Association, life member of the Army Aviation Association of America, Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association and the Society of the First Infantry Division. He was a life member of the Army Transportation Corps Aviation Association. He was a charter member of the Military Officers Association and a life member of the National Association for the Uniformed Services.

He was preceded in death by his father Colonel Norman J. Eckert, mother Mildred Norris Eckert, brother Colonel (ret.) Edward N. Eckert, and his wife of thirty-three years, Linda Kreihs Eckert and his wife Helen Ann Franks Eckert. He is survived by: two daughters, a son a brother, eight grandchildren and four, great-grandchildren.

Burial: Gulf Coast Memorial Cemetery Bay Saint Louis MS.

Furney, Robert M. USA (Ret.), Flight Class: 54-K, RVN: 66 A/2/20 ARA 1 CAV, 68-69 HHC/17 CAG, 69 361 AWC, Call-sign: Panther 6



Surrounded by his children, Robert Furney passed away peacefully August 7, 2016 in the home he built in Pacific Grove. A proud native of Detroit, Bob was born February 22, 1932 to Melvus Hayes and May Lyon Furney. Bob and his brother, Richard, spent a happy childhood in the Motor City, obsessed by cars, and summers spent on their cousins' farm in Indiana.

After graduating from Highland Park High School, Robert attended Albion College where he pledged Sigma Chi and met

the love of his life, Mary Evelyn Craft. They married, and with Robert's Officer's Commission started out on the first of their 22 moves with the Army. Bob became both a fixed and rotary wing aviator and was stationed in many posts in the United States. He graduated from the Command and General Staff College in Fort Leavenworth. He served in Korea, the Dominican Republic, Naples, and two tours as a helicopter pilot in Vietnam. Their last posting was Fort Ord where they fell in love with the area and settled in Pacific Grove. The couple enjoyed a sixty-year marriage before Mary passed away in 2014.

Bob was an active member and past Commodore of the Monterey Peninsula Yacht Club where he was recently feted for his 40 years at the helm of his beloved sailboat, Yankee. He will be watching the Shields Nationals from above and cheering on his club's team!

Robert was an active, lifelong Sigma Chi. He enjoyed the company of his aviator compatriots from the Quiet Birdmen and his fellow old soldiers of the Fort Ord Alumni Association. The national gatherings of the Vietnam Helicopters Pilots Association were a favorite destination. Bob enjoyed many years of singing and friendship with the choirs of Fort Ord Main Post Chapel and Monterey United Methodist Church.

Bob enjoyed meeting people, helping strangers, giving directions, and cooking breakfast for his many welcome house guests.

Grandpa Bob will be missed by Brighid Strejc (John), Heidi, and Kathleen Furney; Laura and Sara Furney-Howe; and Mary and Joseph Gaule. Grandpa was very proud all his grandchildren were employed!

Donations in Robert's name can be made to the Fort Ord Alumni Association Scholarship Fund c/o CSUMB, 100 Campus Center Drive, Seaside, CA 93955, or to give online csumb.edu/give and denote FOAA Scholarship in the comments. It was one of the highlights of Bob's year to select and meet recipients of this annual scholarship.

Gallagher, Joseph P. USA LTC (Ret.) Flight Class: 59-1, RVN: 66 11 ACR, 67 162 AHC

Joseph P. Gallagher, December 27, 1930, died of natural causes August 1, 2016 at his home in Radcliff, KY.

Joseph was a 37-year Army Veteran. He

served two combat tours in Korea, one combat tour in Vietnam, two tours in Germany and numerous tours throughout the United States.

During his military career, he served his country in peace and in war, first as an enlisted soldier for over eight years and then as an officer for an additional 28. Significant among his many decorations and awards is the Silver Star, our nation's third highest award for valor. Additionally, he was awarded two Bronze Stars, 3 Purple Hearts and 23 Air Medals, the equivalent of 2300 flying hours; primarily flying combat missions.

He was a member in good standing of the Military Officers Association of America, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association, 11th Cavalry Veterans of Vietnam and Cambodia, Military Order of the Purple Heart, 70th Tank Battalion Association and the Knights of Columbus at St. Christopher's Catholic Church.

He was married for 59 years to Mary Rosetta Jones from Vine Grove. They had five children. He is preceded in death by his wife Rose and a son CPT Michael K. Gallagher. He is survived by his 3 daughters, one son, five grandchildren, and nine great-grandchildren.

Expressions of sympathy may take the form of donations to the Alzheimer's Association at ALZ.org in memory of Rose Gallagher. Burial: North Harden Memorial Gardens.

Gunter, Cecil T. USA MAJ (Ret.) Flight Class: 68-22, RVN: 69-70 118 AHC, 72-73 229 AVN 1 CAV

Cecil Thomas Gunter, age 72, of Jonesboro, GA and Soso, MS, passed away on August 27, 2016.



Major Gunter retired from the US Army as a Master Army Aviator. He served two combat tours in Vietnam as a gunship pilot.

He was preceded in death by his wife: Frances "Marilyn" Page Gunter and son: Cecil Thomas Gunter, Jr.

He is survived by his daughter; three brothers, one sister, and two grandchildren.

Suggested donations: Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association 2100 N. Hwy 360 Suite 907 Grand Prairie, TX 75050, 1-800-505-VHPA.

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Edge, Raymond C.USA
Flight Class: 69-49, RVN: 70-71 114 AHC, Callsign: Cobra 39

Raymond Claude Edge, 69, of Lubbock was born May 16, 1947 in Lubbock to Glenn and Barbara (Berry) Edge. He departed from this life and went to be with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, on September 26, 2016. Raymond was preceded in death by his parents, Glenn Edge and Barbara Rampy and his grandson, Roy "Fella" Matthews III. He is survived by his wife; Nancy, two sons, two daughters, seven grandchildren and two sisters.



Raymond was very proud of his service to his Country. He served in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War and was a Cobra helicopter pilot for the 114th Aviation Company. He owned and operated Edges Upholstery from 1971 to 2014. He was a life member of Lubbock Elks Lodge #1348, a Mason, and a member of the Eagles and VFW.

Suggested memorials: the Lubbock Elks Lodge #1348, P.O. Box 16161, 79490 or Fella's Mission 12311 Hwy 87 #4, Lubbock 79423.

Hartman, Glenn L. USA
CW3 (Ret.) Flight Classes: 67-13/67-17, RVN: 68-69
C/7/17 CAV, 69 57 AHC, Callsign: Cougar 20/Suppy



Glenn La-Marr Hartman was born 11 April 1938 in Chattanooga, TN and passed away 30 August 2016 in San Marcos, TX. He graduated from high school in Odessa, TX and enlisted in the US Navy in 1955 for 4-years. A few months after leaving the Navy, he enlisted in the US Army. He served much of his time prior to flight school at Fort Wainwright, AK. He married Gay Ann Roket on May 23, 1964 in Tacoma, WA. He was a SSGT in the NCO Academy when he was accepted into the Warrant Officer Candidate program. He started with class 67-13 and graduated with 67-17. Gay recalls that their daughter, Marla, was born 28 Nov 1966, the day Glenn (she calls him La-Marr) soloed at Fort Wolters. His first duty assigned after receiving his wings was C Troop (Air), 2/17th

Cavalry, 101st Airborne Division at Fort Campbell, KY. Glenn and a few others from class 67-17 would be some of the last troopers needed to bring C Troop up to strength as the 101st had recently been alerted for Vietnam deployment.

Only a few months earlier C Troop had just a handful of men and one helicopter, an OH-23, which it would not take to Vietnam. When Glenn joined it was receiving equipment almost on a daily basis, had a full complement of men, and an exhausting training schedule. Of the approximately 150 men in C Troop, only Major Jack Frost (the Troop Commander), Captain (on the promotion list for Major) Terry Glover (the Operations Officer), CW3 Bob Kinlaw (the Maintenance Officer), and 1st Sergeant Turner had been to Vietnam. All the rest was "green stuff" as Major Frost was quick to say. Perhaps because he had been in the military more than a decade at that point and certainly "knew the system," he was assigned to the maintenance and supply area with the secondary duty as Property Book Officer. While the Army is generally quick to deliver even hard to find TO&E equipment to priority units scheduled for deployment, every unit always had "scroungers" that "acquired" extra "stuff" like a Coke machine, a few new ceramic flush toilets, lots of fans, plus a wide array of tools and almost too many extra parts of M-60 machine guns. Being an old NCO with a knack for "creativity" and with Major Frost's encouragement plus lots of extra space in the CONEX containers, Glenn "had lots of fun" as C Troop prepared to go to Vietnam. Luckily for Glenn (and C Troop), Bob Kinlaw and a Tech Inspector, SP6 Lentz, were very good maintenance men. They must have taught Glenn well because he stayed in helicopter maintenance for the rest of his career in the Army and later with Bell Helicopter in Arlington.

Just as C Troop was ready to deploy in July, 1968, it was reflagged C Troop, 7th Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry and went into Pleiku and hence to Camp Enari to join the rest of the Squadron that had been supporting the 4th Infantry Division since September 1967. Glenn flew Hueys and served in maintenance until the end of 1968 when as part of the DERO shuffle he was trans-

ferred to the 57th AHC at Camp Holloway and Kontum. He really loved those guys and the walls of his office are lined with Cougar memorabilia. He departed Vietnam in July 1969 and was stationed at Fort Richardson, AK. Glenn Hartman Jr. was born there in August 1970. Glenn retired from the Army as a CW3 at Fort Lewis, WA in May, 1977. After trying a few small businesses he really wanted to fly again, so in the 1990s he went to work for Bell Helicopter and stayed with them for 12 years. About 2005 he relocated to Wimberly, TX. Again he had lots of fun – raised goats, kept bees, planted fruit trees, had a large green house and plants everywhere, harvested deer (they are a nuisance in this part of Texas ~ but make very nice sausage!). He did not talk much about his time in the Army. Once Marla asked him what he did in Vietnam. She recalls that he just smiled and said, "I fixed stuff." And that was that. He was a Life Member of the VHPA. He attended the Atlanta Reunion in 1992 with many C Troopers. He attended 57th AHC Reunions. Sadly Glenn had a long history of lower intestinal medical issues that runs in his family. Like many of us, he didn't like hospitals much at all. In late August when he finally went in, the infection had advanced much too far to be stopped. The family had him cremated. They held a lovely memorial service at his house on Friday, 23 September. The Honor Guard from Fort Sam Houston provided an especially impressive tribute.

Submission by Mike Law who deployed to Vietnam with Glenn in C Troop.

Heape Charles N. USA
LTC (Ret.) Flight Class: 67-15, RVN: 67-68 A/227
AVN 1 CAV, Callsigns: Winter Monsoon, Chicken-man



C. Neal Heape, DDS, 70, of Sullivan, IN, beloved husband and best friend of Ruth (Unger) Heape for 48 years, passed away peacefully surrounded by the ones he laughed with, lived for, and loved on August 11, 2016. He was predeceased by his parents Lester and Frieda Heape, his brother Norman Heape, and his sister Jean (Heape) Daugherty.

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Neal was born in DuQuoin, IL on November 17, 1945. His family moved to Sullivan, IN where he graduated from Sullivan High School in 1963 and lived most of his life. He attended Indiana State University from 1963 to 1966. In October of 1966 he enlisted in the U.S. Army. He attended basic training at Ft Polk, LA, followed by primary helicopter training and Warrant Officer Candidate School at Ft Wolters, TX. He received advanced helicopter training at Ft Rucker, AL, where he was awarded the wings of an Army Aviator. His first assignment as an aviator was with A Company, 227th Aviation Battalion, Assault Helicopters, in the 1st Air Cavalry Division in Vietnam. His duties there included Aircraft Commander, Instructor Pilot, and Fire Team Leader. During this combat tour, Dr. Heape was promoted to Chief Warrant Officer. He logged well over 1,000 combat hours as an assault helicopter pilot in support of 1st Cavalry operations in Operation Byrd in Phan Thiet; Operation Pershing in Bong Son and Landing Zone English as well as the Tet 1968 Counter Offensive at Hue and Phu Bai. He participated in relieving the siege at Khe Sahn during Operation Pegasus and in the A Shau Valley in Operation Delaware. During this tour, he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for Heroism, the Bronze Star for Meritorious Service and 36 Air Medals with two awarded with the V Device for Valor. Upon returning to the United States in 1968, and while serving as a Crash Rescue/Training Officer, Neal enrolled as a pre-dental student at IUPUI. He also joined the Indiana Army National Guard where he continued to serve his nation and state as a helicopter pilot for the next twenty years, participating in numerous disaster relief efforts. During this time, he obtained his BA from IUPUI in 1973 and his DDS in 1977 from the I.U. School of Dentistry. After achieving several awards and accumulating over 3,500 accident free hours, he transferred to the Indiana Air National Guard in 1991, serving as a Dental Officer. He was subsequently promoted to Base Dental Surgeon where he was responsible for monitoring the dental health and readiness of over 1,200 members of the 181st fighter Wing, Terre Haute, IN. As a member of the 181st Medical Squadron, Dr. Heape was a member of "Care Force" a joint civilian/military effort to provide free immunizations, vision and

dental screening exams for medically underserved populations in five Indiana counties.

In his nearly forty years as a family practice dentist, Dr. Heape balanced the responsibilities of husband, father, dentist, citizen soldier, and community leader. His community involvement varied from elementary "room father", Little League coach of ten years, Elks Exalted Ruler, numerous veteran and civic organizations, counselor for the Boy Scouts "Dental Merit Badge," host for several pre-school and Head Start dental office visits, supervisory dentist for an IUSD Hygiene sealant program at Carlisle Elementary School and along with fellow Sullivan dentists provided free dental screening exams at the county Senior Centers. He held leadership positions as President of the City Park Board, President of the Sullivan Planning Commission, and President of the Sullivan City Council. Dr. Heape's educational efforts and leadership abilities succeeded in passing a resolution to fluoridate the water supply for the City of Sullivan and surrounding area, making it possible for an additional 7,000 plus Indiana residents to enjoy the benefits of better dental health. Dr. Heape was then elected Mayor of Sullivan in November 1999 and also served two terms on the Indiana State Dental Board; continuing to be of service to his community.

In December 2015, Neal was awarded the Sagamore of the Wabash, the highest award given by the Governor, in recognition of his service to State and Country. Neal loved the beach and spent many wonderful vacations there with his wife and family. He was a beloved grandfather and "Pawpaw", his grandchildren bringing him tremendous pride and joy. He also loved attending the Indianapolis 500, a tradition he passed onto his kids and grandkids, and rooting for his Indiana Hoosiers.

Besides his wife Ruth, Neal is survived by his two sons, his daughter, six grandchildren, and his sister.

Burial: Center Ridge Cemetery.

Joyce, Warren C. USA LTC (Ret.) Flight Class: 58-17, RVN: 65-66 B/15 TC 1 CAV, 68 146 RR, 68-69 144 RR, Callsign: Vanguard

Warren C. Joyce, 81, passed away on Friday, Sep-



tember 9, 2016. He was a native of New York and had been a resident of the Peninsula since 1973. Colonel Joyce received his education in the Leonia, NJ public schools and at Rutgers University, where he was a member of the Phi Gamma Delta Fraternity. He was commissioned as a distinguished military graduate in 1957. He holds a Master of Science Degree in Transportation and Industrial Management from the University of Tennessee. Colonel Joyce retired from active duty with over 25 years of federal service. His assignments included; the U.S. Army Aviation Materiel Laboratories, where he was a project coordinator on the XV-5A fan-in-wing aircraft (1964-1965), deployed to Vietnam with the 1st Air Cavalry Division as an Aircraft Maintenance Officer in 1965, and served in the U.S. Army Transportation School as Deputy Director of the Office of Programs and Management (1966-1968). Following a second tour in Vietnam as an Aircraft Maintenance Officer and Commanding Officer of Radio Research Aviation Companies. He served as Executive Officer to the Deputy Chief of Staff, Intelligence, Headquarters, U.S. Army, Europe and Seventh Army (1969-1970), commanded the 582nd Transportation Company (Aircraft Direct Support), which was selected as the outstanding aviation support unit for 1971 by the USAREUR Region Army Aviation Association of America. He was Chief of the Intelligence Division under the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, U.S. Theater Army Support Command, Europe (1971-1973). He also served as Chief of the Aircraft Repairman Training Division and Chief of the Management and Quality Assurance Division, Aviation Maintenance Training Department and Executive Officer to the Deputy Commandant for Combat and Training Development (1973-1976); also, he was Project Officer and Chief of Materiel Systems Development Division, Directorate of Combat Developments, U.S. Army Transportation School (1976-1978). He was fixed and rotary wing rated and wore the Senior Army Aviator Badge. His decorations include: the Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal with Oak Leaf Clusters, Air Medal with Oak Leaf Clusters, and the Army Commendation Medal.

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Shortly after retiring from the Army, Warren applied for and was hired as Exhibition Director for a nationwide art gallery (and later as Sales Director), specializing in exhibiting and selling original graphic art by worldwide artists, including contemporary and old masters, at colleges, universities, art museums and military officers' clubs. After a few years with the company and extensive experience on the road with expanding art sales, Warren began his own business of wholesaling fine art prints to galleries, gift shops and frame shops, especially in the high tourist areas of the Williamsburg Historic Triangle and the Outer Banks of North Carolina. Warren was a member of Denbigh Presbyterian Church for many years, where he served as an Elder and sang in the Chancel Choir. He was a 32nd degree Master Mason and a Shriner. He also belonged to the Army Aviation Association of America, Army Aviation Heritage Foundation, Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association, Transportation Corps Aviation Association, and the Army Transportation Museum Foundation of America, where he served on the board of directors since 1975. He was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Patricia Joyce. Survivors include; his two daughters, one son, two brothers, and one great-grandchild. Memorials may be made to Denbigh United Presbyterian Church, 302 Denbigh Blvd., Newport News, VA 23608

Burial: Private services will be held at a later date.

Kalen, Herbert D. USAF COL (Ret.), RVN: 67 37 ARRS

Herb died the evening of Saturday, August 27, 2016 in Panama City Beach, FL area after a short illness. After cremation, interment will be in Arlington at a future date. A Celebration of Life memorial service is being planned for some time in November in the Panama City Beach area. Herb was an H-3 Instructor at Eglin, then Chief of Standardization at Rescue stationed at Scott, from there CO of the Rescue unit at Clark, retiring as a COL from Kirtland. He was the aircraft commander of the H-3 that landed in the Son Tay, NVN prison camp in the fall of 1970, for which he was awarded the Air Force Cross. After retirement, Herb built a series of homes in Angel Fire, NM where he lived for 30 years, subsequently moving to Panama City Beach, FL the past few years. Herb is survived by his wife Kathy and daughter Kristy. "Herb was my dear friend, skiing buddy and I will miss him." (Wally Barnes)

Keller, Floyd H. USMC LTC (Ret.), RVN: 62 VMO-2, 67-69 HMM-262

Floyd H. Keller, a decorated Marine pilot, enthusiastic Shriner, loving husband, Dad and Grandpa passed away July 24, 2016. He was 80 years old.



Floyd was born September 23, 1935 in Punxsutawney, PA to the late Hestor B. and Guilah Keller. He spent his early years with his brothers, Harold and Bob, and sister, Helen, on their dairy farm. He graduated from Punxsutawney High School, class of 1952.

After high school he attended Penn State University for two years, then joined the Naval Cadet Program. Upon graduation in 1957, he was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant in the Marine Corps and designated a Marine Aviator.

Floyd married his high school classmate Velma (Babe) Harl in October 1959. They happily shared 53 years of marriage together before her death.

He was a Vietnam veteran and during his Marine Corps career, he served as helicopter pilot with HMM262, VM06 and VM02 serving a total of four tours. After Vietnam, he served at various squadrons throughout the U.S., eventually joining the White House Support Squadron HMX-1 where he served as Presidential Command Pilot for five years during the terms of Presidents Nixon, Ford, and Carter.

During his 20-year career with the Marine Corps, Floyd received many decorations and awards including the Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal with Bronze Star, and 24 Strike Flight Mission Awards. He was awarded the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Silver Star for his actions under fire.

In 1977, Floyd and his family settled in Grand Junction, where he became involved in many projects and activities. He was an active member of the United Methodist Church, holding many committee posts.

He was a Masonic member of Scottish Rite, Shriners and Jesters of #136 Denver, CO where he was an enthusiastic supporter of the Shriners Hospital for Children and served as the Circus Chair and with the Scooter Patrol. His time spent with his Jester brothers held a special place in his life.

Floyd had a wonderful, mischievous sense of humor which he shared often with his friends and family. He loved listening to Dave Brubeck Jazz and enjoyed dancing to the

music with his wife Babe. Floyd was first and always an officer and a gentleman.

He is survived by his two daughters; five grandchildren, one great-grandson, and his brother.

Maggio, Christopher A. USA Flight Class: 70-21, 70-23, RVN: 70-71 118 AHC, 238 AWC, 134 AHC, Callsign: Gunrunner 13



Christopher, "Chris" A. Maggio, born June 12, 1949, a veteran Alaska helicopter and airplane pilot died when his helicopter crashed near the Denver glacier in Southeast Alaska during a support mission for the Alaska Icefield Expedition's sled dog camp. The cause of the accident on May 6, 2016, is still unknown.

Chris grew up in Pasadena, CA and first started flying as part of the aviation curriculum at Mt San Antonio College in California where he earned his private pilot license. After college, he enlisted in the Army in 1969 and completed the Warrant Officer flight-training program for helicopters. Following graduation, he was assigned to the 118 AHC in Bien Hoa, South Vietnam, where Chris quickly qualified in "Charlie Model Gunships". In the latter part of his tour in Vietnam he was reassigned to the 238 AWC and finally to the 134 AHC.

After Vietnam, Chris started a family and pursued a non-aviation career, but his love for flying never diminished. In 1986, he bought a 1948 Stinson 108-3. Chris then seasonally supported a private gold operation near Nome, AK. However, getting back to flying helicopters was always one of Chris' goals. In 1992, he earned his FAA commercial helicopter license and went to work for a large Southeast Alaska helicopter operator. Soon thereafter, Chris moved permanently to Alaska and became the base operations co-manager in Skagway.

In 1997, Chris and a crewmember rescued the pilot and a passenger after the charter airplane they were on crashed into a deep salt-water inlet. Even though Chris' response to the incident took only seven minutes and he guided rescuers to other passengers, four were lost. In 2013, the FAA recognized Chris with inclusion in the prestigious FAA Airman Certification Database, listing him as a pilot who has exceeded the highest educational, licensing, and medical standards established by the FAA.

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Chris was a twenty-year resident of Skagway, AK. He served on the Skagway school board and was an active member in the Skagway Arts Council. Chris had a love for antique bicycles and motorcycles, hotrods, Alaska art, guitars, family, and his partner Denise. But for all the things Chris was known for, he was most recognized for his engaging smile, generosity, and kindness. Family, friends, and the community of Skagway will never forget Christopher A. Maggio. A life cut too short.

Moore, Jimmy N. USA LTC (Ret.) Flight Class: 56-10, RVN: 67-68 HHC/214 CAB, Callsign: Cougar 6



Jimmy Moore died at home in Temecula, CA, July 14, 2016. Born March 5, 1935 in Fort Smith, AR. He retired from the Army as a LTC in 1974. A memorial service is planned for 10:00am, Donations to The California Chamber Orchestra, The Temecula Symphony or The Temecula Historical Society would be appreciated.

Perry, Arvel H. USA Flight Class: 66-7/66-5, RVN: 66-67 173 AHC, Callsign: Crossbow 34 died on January 1, 2016. No other information was provided.

Silva, Charles E. USA (Ret.) Flight Class 63-6, RVN: 65-66 128 AHC, Callsign: Tomahawk 12



Charles Edward Silva of Southington passed away after an 18-year courageous battle with Parkinson's disease at the age of 75, on September 13, 2016, surrounded by family and friends. Born in Norfolk, VA, December 21, 1940, he was the son of the late Joseph Charles Silva and Mildred Bernice Kamendulis Silva.

Eddie, as he was known by all, grew up in Gloucester, MA, and graduated from Gloucester High School. He went on to the University of New Hampshire where he graduated as a history major. He played hockey, football, and lacrosse for the University teams.

Ed was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Army after completing the ROTC program at UNH. He eventually was deployed to Phu Loi, twenty-five miles north of Saigon, where he served as a helicopter pilot. Captain Silva received eighteen air medals, flew several hundred missions and was shot down three times. He recovered one

of the rounds that had been fired into his aircraft and turned it into a necklace, which he wore while in Vietnam for good luck. He carried a number of notables during his tour including Ann-Margret and Vice President Humphrey. Ed also enjoyed a drink of vodka with Russian cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin at the Paris Air Show.

While in the service, Captain Silva was stationed at Fort Eustis, VA; Fort Wolters, TX; Fort Rucker, AL; Munich, Germany; Fort Campbell, KY; Vietnam; and Fort Knox, KY.

After completing active duty, Eddie settled in Southington, CT where he worked for Allstate Insurance for the next 30 years. During that time, he completed his twenty years of service in the Connecticut National Guard. He also served as president of the Southington Rotary Club, served on the Board of the Southington YMCA, and the Board of Directors of the Northern Little League. He was also an active member of the girls' and boys' sports programs in Southington. Ed loved sports, especially playing golf, rooting on the Boston Red Sox and all Boston sports teams.

Eddie, as he was known to his friends and colleagues, was a man who defined the meaning of perseverance, courage and love. He was a coach, mentor and friend to the very end. We learned to count our time together by the moments we shared and the laughs we had, which were many.

Ed Silva was the proud father of four daughters and two sons. He had ten special grandchildren.

Suggested donations: the Southington VFW, 68 Main St, Southington, CT or American Parkinson Disease Association, 27 Allendale Drive, North Haven, CT 06473.

Sears, William D. USA CW3 (Ret.) Flight Classes: 66-9W/66-9, RVN: 67 A/9 AVN 9 INF, 67-68 170 AHC, 70-71 178 ASHC, 71 B/229 AVN 1 CAV

William "Bill" David Sears, age 74 of Harrison, AR passed away Sunday, June 5, 2016 at Diamond City, AR.

He was born in Wichita Falls, TX on April 17, 1942. After the military, he lived many years in Texas before moving to Arkansas. Bill served in the US Army for 22 years as a helicopter pilot, rank CW3. He flew 3 tours in Vietnam.

He enjoyed fishing and telling stories of his time in the military. He loved any time spent with his family.

Bill is survived by his wife of 30-years, Vicki Sears of Harrison, his three daughters, one son, nine grandchildren, and a great grandson. He will be greatly missed and will always be remembered as a good husband, father and great grandfather.

Smith, William E. USA Flight Class: 67-7, RVN: 67-68 191 AHC, Callsign: Boomerang 18



William E. Smith age 72 passed away Tuesday, February 9, 2016 at his home. William was born January 26, 1944 in Kansas City, KS to Robert and Lois Smith. He was united in marriage to his wife Freda (Pack) Smith and they shared 50 years together.

Bill proudly served his country in the United States Army. As an enlisted man he became a paratrooper and qualified for the Senior Parachute Badge and later he became a parachute rigger. He was awarded the Good Conduct Medal (1st Award).

He graduated from Warrant Officer Rotary Wing Aviators Course. Smitty flew UH-1D Huey helicopters in the 1st Platoon of the 191st Assault Helicopter Company stationed at Bearcat, Republic of Vietnam. He was known throughout the unit for his outstanding mustache. For his service he was the recipient of the Air Medal with 50 Oak Leaf Clusters, the Army Commendation Medal with V device, National Defense Service Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal, the Vietnam Campaign Medal, and two overseas bars.

He was a retired member of International Brotherhood of Boilermakers Local #83, Veterans of Foreign Wars Post # 869, American Legion Post 346, and the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association. He was also a Master Mason in Ben Hur Lodge #322. Bill was also an Assistant Scout Master and an honorary warrior with the Tribe of Mic-O-Say.

William was preceded in death by his son William R. Smith, and brothers Robert and Frederick Smith. He leaves behind his wife: Freda J. Smith, a daughter, and two sisters.

Burial was at Maple Hill Cemetery Kansas City, KS.

TAPS

Stevenson, Ed R. USA
Flight Classes: 68-510/68-16, RVN: 68-69
B/1 AVN 1 INF, 69 3
BDE 1 INF, 69 D/1/4
CAV 1 INF, Callsigns:
Pont/Nighthawk/Darkhorse



Edson Ray Stiverson, age 68, of Graford, TX and formerly of Celina, OH passed away at 3:23 p.m. on Wednesday September 21, 2016 at the Laurels of Shane Hill in Rockford, OH. He was born May 4, 1948 in Celina, OH to Fay and Alberta June (Hoel) Stiverson. Edson was preceded in death by his father Fay Stiverson, and his daughter Natasha Kolleen Stiverson, brother and sister-in-law John and Gail Stiverson.

He graduated from Celina High School with the Class of 1966. He served his country in the U.S. Army, during the Vietnam War, as a Captain and a helicopter pilot having served two tours from 1968-1969. He received the Air Medal and was the recipient of a Silver Star for his service to his country during the Vietnam War. Edson was employed at Can-Tex in Mineral Wells, TX. He was a member of the National Rifle Association and the Vietnam Helicopter Pilot Association. He was a naturalist and loved being close to nature. He enjoyed hunting, reloading rounds, fishing and welding.

Ed is survived by his mother; Alberta June (Hoel) Stiverson, a brother, a sister, former wife Sandra Sue (Evans) Stiverson.

Memorial Contributions may be made to Kindred Hospice of Marion, OH or State of the Heart Hospice in Mercer County. Condolences may be left at LehmanDzendzelFH.com.

Burial: North Grove Cemetery at a later time.

Stone, Gordon USA COL (Ret.) Flight Class: 61, RVN: 64-65 A/501 AVN, 67-68 A/1/9 CAV 1 CAV, Callsigns: Firebird/ Apache/Warrior 6



Gordon Stone died on August 28, 2016 at age 85.

He began his Army career in 1949 with the Tennessee Army National Guard, being promoted to First Sergeant. In 1956, he was commissioned a Second Lieutenant as an Armor Officer assigned to Fort Hood, TX. From there he was transferred to Germany as a Cavalry Scout Platoon leader. Promoted to Captain, he assumed command of a Tank Company. Transferred to Air Cavalry, he became a helicopter pilot. He was deployed to Vietnam in 1964-65 and again in 1967-68 as Com-

mander A Troop, 1/9th Air Cav, 1st Cavalry Division. Promoted to Lieutenant Colonel and commanded the 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry. Colonel Stone attended the National War College and NATO Defense College. He was promoted to Colonel and moved to NATO AFSOUTH Headquarters, Naples, Italy as Chief Special Weapons, Europe, retiring in 1986. Throughout his career he received many awards and decorations to include: The Silver Star, The Bronze Star with Oak Leaf Cluster, The Legion of Merit, 42 Distinguished Flying Crosses (sic) and The Purple Heart.

Memorials may be made to the Military Officers Association of America, MOAA Scholarship Fund, c/o Tony Prince, 1168 Yorkshire Parkway, Myrtle Beach, SC 29577.

Burial: Fort Jackson National Cemetery

Theobald, David A. USA
Flight Classes: 69-29/69-27, RVN: 70 242 ASHC, Callsign: Muleskinner



David Allen Theobald was born in Detroit, MI, May 5, 1942, to Vivian and Charles Theobald. He left this world holding the hand of the love of his life on August 8, 2016. David joined the Army in 1960, leaving Decatur, IL for the big wide world. And he saw quite a bit of that world. He traveled from Germany to Officer Candidate School in Ft. Benning, GA, to Vietnam as an infantry officer to Massachusetts, to Texas, to Virginia, then back to Texas for flight school. He served a second tour in Vietnam flying Chinook helicopters. When told he would do another tour, he politely declined and left the military after 10 years. In the 70s, he joined John Hancock Insurance in Newport News, VA. He spent years learning the business, earning almost every designation available in the insurance and financial planning world. In 1981, the agency hired a new business clerk, Gail Spinks, and he was smitten. After many ups and downs, broken and healed hearts, they were married on March 10, 1990. Along with Gail came two sons to love. And love them he did. They moved back to her home state of Texas and he became a manager for Prudential. He was transferred to Midland in 1992. He eventually opened Theobald Financial Solutions. David loved, in no particular order, golf, singing, the Dallas Cowboys, and Danica Patrick. He and Gail spent many hours at Midland Community Theatre, both onstage and backstage. His favorite roles were the Governor

of Texas in "The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas," David O. Selznick in "Moonlight and Magnolias," and the King to Gail's Queen in "Cinderella." He was a member of the MCT Board of Trustees at the time of his death. David leaves a devastated family to cherish his memory: his loving wife, Diana Gail Theobald; two sons, eight grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, and two sisters.

Donations: Midland Community Theatre, 2000 W. Wadley, Midland, TX 79705.

Burial: Dallas-Fort Worth National Cemetery.

Torrey David L. USA CW4 (Ret.) Flight Classes: 69-37/69-35, RVN: 70 282 AHC, Callsign: Black Cat 19

David Lee Torrey, of Lewiston, passed away on Saturday, July 23, 2016. He was born in Olean on August 24, 1946, the son of the late William and Glenna Nester Torrey.

Mr. Torrey grew up on a dairy farm on East River Road in Olean, and graduated from Olean High in 1964. Dave received an associate's degree in civil engineering from SUNY Alfred in 1968.

In 1969, he enlisted in the U.S. Army to participate in flight school. He served in the 282nd Assault helicopter company "Black Cats" in Vietnam from December 1969 to December 1970 as a Huey pilot. Dave began a lifetime love of flying as a civil service technician and instructor pilot for the NY Army National Guard, permanently based in Niagara Falls. He retired in 1996 as Chief Warrant Officer 4. Dave was appointed by the FAA in 1988 as a designated pilot examiner for fixed and rotary wing aircraft. In 1992, he began flying for the Niagara County Sheriff's Department as a special deputy.

Dave married the late Roberta J. "Bobbie" Scott Torrey in Fort Rucker, AL August 16, 1969. They were married 46 years.

Dave and Bobbie joined the Youngstown Yacht Club in 1990 and began sailing, racing and entertaining friends aboard Interloper, Arbitrage and most recently Knot Flyin. They enjoyed riding across the country alongside each other on their Harleys for many years.

David was literally and figuratively a strong man with deep compassion, a hero to many, but especially his surviving son and granddaughter as well as his sister. He was the brother of the late Raymond and Darrel Torrey.

Memorials in his name may be made to Niagara Hospice, 4675 Sunset Drive, Lockport, NY 14094.

Vautrinot, Dave USA, USN, USAF, USCG, LTC (Ret.), RVN: 67-68 178 ASHC, Callsign: Boxcar

David Paul Vautrinot, 89, Clifford Twp., passed away Sunday at Geisinger Community Medical Center with his wife, Mary Theresa Vautrinot, by his side. They celebrated 15 years of marriage on May 7.



Born in Massachusetts, son of the late Theodore Antone and Alice Carpenter Vautrinot, Dave dedicated his life to the military. As a career military man, he served in the Coast Guard, Navy, Army, completing his military career in the Air Force. Following his military career, Dave was employed by Boeing Co. and Bell Helicopter Co.

He enjoyed hockey, golfing, being outdoors, music, dancing and the performing arts. Dave dearly loved his dogs, Cory, Lady and Jolie. Dave was a loving and caring husband and very devoted to his wife. His selfless acts and gentle nature will be remembered by all those lives he touched.

He was preceded in death by a sister, Marjorie Vautrinot Winthrop; and brothers, Theodore, Allyn, Brad and Donald Vautrinot.

Should friends desire, memorial donations may be sent to the Diocese of Scranton, 300 Wyoming Ave., Scranton, PA 18503.

Records of the recent deaths of the following potential members of the VHPA were gleaned from internet searches within the last two months. All the information VHPA has for these pilots may be found at VHPA.org or by calling 1-800-505-VHPA. If you knew any of the pilots listed, please help VHPA by sending any information you know about the person to HQ@VHPA.org or call 1-800-505-VHPA (8472) so it can be added to our database.

Asdel, Gary L. USA CW4 (Ret.) Flight Class: 68-523/68-43 RVN: 69-70 92 AVN, Callsign: Sidekick died August 13, 2016.

Lehman, George William USN LCDR (Ret.), RVN: Cam Ranh Bay, Ton Son Nhut (years?) died July 22, 2016 (no other data).

Berthold, Hubert M. USAF COL (Ret.) died May 24, 2016 (no other data).

Lombardo, Ronald C. USN LCDR (Ret.) died July 24, 2016 (no other data).

Brady, James J. USMC COL (Ret.) died August 25, 2016 (no other data).

Morgan, Hugh W. USA died August 10, 2016 (no other data).

Brumage Harold R. USN LT (Ret.) died September 3, 2016 (no other data).

Oglesby, John E. USA (Ret, Rank unk.) Flight Class: 67-13 died September 21, 2016 (no other data).

Burch, Walter M. USA LTC (Ret.) Flight Class: 61-4, died August 16, 2016.

Pratt, James T. III USA COL (Ret.) Flight Class: 64-2, RVN: 67-68 AH-1G NETT died August 19, 2016.

Carosella, Michael A. USA (Ret. Rank unk.) Flight Classes: 70-33/70-31, RVN: 1971 71 AHC died August 4, 2016.

Reinhardt, Thomas E. USAF died August 20, 2016 (no other data).

Cederholm, Roger W. USMC COL (Ret.) died August 25, 2016 (no other data).

Riley, Maxie USA Flight Class: 70-4 died June 15, 2016 (no other data).

Dean, James A USA Flight Classes: 68-23/68-37 died August 12, 2016 (no other data).

Rocchi, Francis M. USA Flight Classes: 68-517/68-31 died August 10, 2016 (no other data).

Rusk, Frank USA CPT (Ret.) RVN: 65-66 68 AHC, 66 118 AHC died August 2, 2016 (no other data).

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