



The VHHPA AVIATOR

The Newsletter of The Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association



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

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From the President of the VHPA

~ MIKE SHEUERMAN ~



Several days ago a fellow VHPA member and Unit pilot contacted me concerning something a Special Operations Association member had told him.

The SOA guy said he heard that VHPA, being a "LAST MAN STANDING" Association, was close to dying off. As Membership Chairman I assured him this was not the case. By Gary Roush's best estimate VHPA believes around 55,000 guys attended a military flight program between 1952 and 1973 and, of the number, around 44,000 flew one or more tours in Vietnam and the surrounding countries. As of this article's date, over 16,630 have joined VHPA, both as LIFE and REGULAR memberships. Now, as with any group with this age demographic, you start to see some DAT losses (about 2540 so far), some members will opt, for many reasons, to not renew their memberships (about 5125) leaving an active membership of about 8930. We are still a large viable group of military veterans.

Based on Gary's estimates, I told him we actually have more "Z" members (potential members) that, for whatever

the reason, have not joined VHPA. I encouraged him to seek out one or more of these guys he flew with in the Army, Reserves or Guard and encourage them to join VHPA and attend the Reunion in Atlanta next July. I also suggested he look at the Units he served with, find a non-current buddy, get him to renew his membership and come to Atlanta.

Fellow VHPA members, Aviators, Classmates and Friends - I encourage each and every one of you to do the same. I ask you to help VHPA double its active membership over the next year. If necessary, give a new guy a one year membership. Locate a past member you like and pay his dues. Get him to come see you in Atlanta. With members like you, VHPA will not fail

We may be a "LAST MAN STANDING" Association, but we are still standing strong!!! See you in ATLANTA next July!

Thanks,

Mike Sheuerman
Panther 15, 5/71-4/72
361st PINK PANTHERS

FROM THE VHPA STAFF AT HQ!

HQ has a few R2017 Indianapolis T-shirts available in different sizes. Call HQ to see if we have the size on hand you need.

If you did not attend this year, R2018 will be July 3-7 in Atlanta, GA. We have already begun planning some great things so mark your calendars to attend!

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

Don't forget - the deadline to order your 2017 directories that will be mailed out in October is September 15. After this date, the price will be \$25 for the printed or \$20 for CD copies. We will also begin taking orders for the 2018 directories for the price of \$15 for the printed and \$10 for the CD copies to be delivered in October 2018.

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!>

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

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

Sherry Rodgers, VHPA Office Manager

FINAL APPROVAL COMPLETE!

The VHPA Legacy Committee is pleased to report the United States Commission of Fine Arts (CFA) has approved the Vietnam Helicopter Pilot and Crewmember Monument design proposal submitted July 2, 2017. Although the U.S. Army authorized the monument's placement within Arlington National Cemetery (ANC), the CFA must review the design proposal to ensure aesthetic values are appropriate. Their approval was the final step needed before construction and placement could begin.

With the approval process fully complete, the VHPA can now contract with Granite Industries of Vermont (GIV) to begin constructing the 1100-pound granite monument. Along with carving the monument, the grounds within ANC must be prepared for the stone.

The soil within the cemetery is sandy in nature, and monuments frequently require a concrete base footer to ensure stability. The Legacy Committee will work with contractors who are familiar with ANC policies to place a solid foundation for the memorial monument. The footer construction and installation must avoid interfering with the 30-plus burials accomplished every day, so the process is complicated.

Working with Army MAJ Shannon Way, ANC Strategic Planner, the Legacy Committee is studying how to establish a trust fund for the perpetual maintenance of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilot and Crewmember Monument. Surprisingly, Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) management does not have a template for this function, so we are constructing it as we go.

The best way to establish an appropriate dollar amount is to determine how much preservation will be needed in the future. Based on the simplicity of the granite stone's design, the fund should not be large. Expenses should be limited to releveling of the stone, and possibly crack repairs. As part of the GIV contracting, we will ask them to provide an estimate of possible preservation issues and costs for 50, 100, and 200 years.

Many ask when the dedication ceremony will be held. The Legacy Committee anticipates a ceremony being scheduled before Memorial Day, 2018. The event must be coordinated with ANC management and other federal entities to coordinate military honors and ensure the Memorial Amphitheater is available for the ceremony. In addition to the normal protocols, we hope to arrange a helicopter honor flyby by the USAF 1st Wing, based at Joint Base Andrews and flying UH-1Ns. It will be a memorable event.

For three years we struggled against the odds to achieve a physical monument honoring our fallen rotary-wing comrades, and we have triumphed. It is a genuine pleasure to see the efforts moving towards a successful conclusion. The Legacy Committee will continue to keep you informed as the process continues.

By Bob Hesselbein, Chairman VHPA Legacy Committee



"The Vietnam Helicopter Pilot and Crewmember Tree Commemorative Monument"

The Vietnam Helicopter Pilot and Crewmember Tree Commemorative Monument, (Monument), will be constructed and carved from select Barre Granite, will complete a national memorial tribute honoring the service and sacrifice of almost 5,000 American servicemen who died operating rotary-wing aircraft in the Vietnam War. Authorized by the Secretary of The Army for placement in Section 35, Arlington National Cemetery, the monument will stand near the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and Memorial Amphitheater. Bordering the east side of Memorial Drive the simple monument will complement the Red Maple tree donated and dedicated by the VHPA August 28th, 2015. Combining a living tree with a suitable tree marker, will complete the memorial project initiated in 2014.

The VHPA has received a number of communications from members wanting to know how to donate to the Monument that will be placed in Arlington National Cemetery. The VHPA now has The Vietnam Helicopter Legacy Fund. Any donated funds will go into the VHPA's checking account and will be spent to help pay for the monument, the upkeep of the Monument, as well as the other related expenses for the Monument. It is likely the VHPA could collect more funds than needed for the Monument, under the guidance of the Executive Council any excess funds received would be used for other future legacy projects including the Texas Tech Endowment.

If you are interested in donating, make your donation to the VHPA, with the notation "The Vietnam Helicopter Legacy Fund".

From John Shafer, Past President

From the Managing Editor

This year's Reunion afforded me the opportunity to sit on the Writers' Workshop Panel, where I contributed to the Q and A, but more importantly was able to solicit submissions for the Aviator. My advice was: "Try an article before attempting a complete book". That request was acted upon by several attendees. The Reunion, as always, gives me a chance to meet new people (and of course, ask them to write an article). I do not much care where the event is held, in that I enjoy the interaction with fellow pilots above all else. That said, I was pleasantly surprised by the city of Indianapolis and enjoyed my visit. Mike Law has provided a recap and an article in this issue which covers the basics. We will use photos for the Aviator's summary.

It has been apparent for some time that the Taps section is becoming more extensive by the issue. In fact, several members made that very observation at the reunion. The sad fact is the number of obituaries will grow exponentially as our average age creeps past seventy. For that reason, beginning with this issue, the amount of information delivered in each notice is being significantly reduced to create a more compact entry. The obituaries we receive are either from a newspaper or the mortuary, rarely from a family member or colleague. Accordingly, the format is less than ideal for our purposes. All of the obituaries, however abbreviated in the Taps section, are available in their original version on our website. Please see the sidebar for more information on the option to view a complete listing.

Tom Kirk

The DAT information on the new version of our web site will be updated daily. While that is not yet in place, I can manually update the online DAT information every two months in conjunction with each Aviator until the new site is online. There is a standard protocol already in place for the link to each man's record. You will find the link in the online membership directory. The protocol is as follows: The decedent's member number, i.e. www.vhpa.org/DAT/datR/D05706.HTM for DAT (for Adam Runk in this example).


The only two items that change for any individual is the first letter of the last name (datR for Runk) and the member number, such as D05706 as above. Be aware that these URLs are case sensitive

An alternative to including the specific URL is to use <https://directory.vhpa.org> as a generic, then search for the name and click the link to the obituary. That feature is already in place.

HQ updates the online membership directory daily including DATs. The obituary is currently updated manually and will not be immediately available for recent deaths, at least until the latest edition of the Aviator mails. We will announce the newer automated procedure once it is in place.

Gary Roush, Webmaster

PURPLE HEART VETERANS HELP PRESERVE THE HISTORY OF YOUR SERVICE



Colin P. Cahoon, former Army helicopter pilot and author of the critically acclaimed historical fiction thriller, *The Man with the Black Box*, is soliciting personal stories for a book project dedicated to Vietnam Helicopter Pilots and Crew Members who received Purple Hearts in combat during their service in Vietnam. The book will feature the Purple Heart events and life stories of between 12 and 15 individual servicemen meeting the above criteria.

Please visit www.colinpcagoon.com/purpleheart for more details about having your story memorialized as part of this project.

~ MISSION ~

Preserving the Oral Histories of Combat Veterans



Witness to War is proud to be a content provider for the Library of Congress Veterans History Project.

Videos collected to date:

WWII 3,429

Korea 270

Vietnam 1,069

Afghan/Iraq 242

As of Mid-July 2017

The Witness To War (WTW)/VHPA relationship reached a "personal best" in terms of the number of oral histories recorded at the VHPA Reunion this year in Indy! Twenty Five (25)!!! On two of the four recording days scheduled for Indy, EVERY 90-minute recording sessions was used! This is on top of ten (10) done with the Alamo Chapter of the VHPA in mid-April in San Antonio.

The mid-April WTW statistics for Vietnam videos collected was 836 for Vietnam. Now it is 1,069 as shown in the right column above (copied from their website). The VHPA is responsible for at least 35 of the 233 new videos added in the last 90 days.

As announced in Indy, the VHPA is now looking at ways to "port" WTW videos into The Vietnam Center and Archive (VNCA) at

Texas Tech. Stay tuned for more on this important subject in the months to come.

WTW Interviewer, Martin Madert, has attended at least the last five VHPA Reunions at zero expense to the VHPA or to individual VHPAers. This year's push by the Reunion Committee and the Executive Council of the "Your Own Legacy" theme really helped Martin reach this "personal best."

Because WTW is based in Atlanta and because the VHPA now knows how to pre-schedule individual interviews, we are hoping for even bigger results at the Atlanta Reunion.

If you are interested in signing up to be interviewed in Atlanta, please contact Mike Law at [REDACTED]

For a moment consider the following scenario!

About a year from now, your ten-year old grandchild (or great grandchild) suddenly says to his or her parents [while attending your memorial service], "Wow! I never knew grandpa was a veteran! What did he ever tell you about his time in Vietnam?"

One of the child's parents (our own child or grandchild) answers, "Oh, you know, he was just too busy to write anything down for us. Just last week, we found a box of his old Army stuff with some pictures – but we didn't understand much about that, so we just pitched it out."

GENTLEMEN YOU CAN FIX THIS NOW!!!!

Right now is the time to have **YOUR HISTORY** recorded **YOUR WAY**. It will be **PRESERVED** and **HONORED** as part of the Legacy of all the rest of us who "enjoyed that all expenses paid vacation" to Southeast Asia in the 1960s and early 1970s.

Feel free to contact VHPA Headquarters 800-505-9472 (ask for Mike Law) for more details about the VHPA's Legacy efforts involving not only Witness to War but also The Vietnam Archive at Texas Tech.

About Witness to War

The Witness to War Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) founded in 2001 by Atlanta-based entrepreneur Tom Beatty. The Foundation is dedicated to capturing the stories of individual combat veterans.

It is about the 'foxhole' or 'windshield' view of combat as seen by the soldiers, sailors, and airmen who experienced it. It is about the fear, the emotions, the training, and the previously untapped wells of personal courage that enabled ordinary individuals to survive, and in some cases thrive, under extraordinary pressures and almost unimaginable danger.

The Witness to War Foundation is dedicated to understanding, as much as possible, what was like to 'be there.'

www.witnesstowar.org



Martin Madert, Witness to War Interviewer, is a 2011 graduate of Georgia State University where he received bachelors' degrees in History and Film. He is responsible for performing interviews with veterans across the country, including reunions, and distributing content to interviewees and their families. He has conducted hundreds of interviews with veterans of all wars.



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HOW YOUR SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION WORKS

By BG (Ret.) Tom Konitzer

The Army Aviation Association of America (AAAA) Scholarship Foundation Incorporated (SFI) has been managing VHPA's scholarship investments for over **15 years**. SFI has a 54-year history of continuous improvement from a single \$1,500 scholarship awarded in 1963 to \$476,000 distributed to 286 recipients in 2016. Of those, VHPA gave out 5 scholarships at \$3,000 each.

SFI is a separately chartered organization from AAAA. Although both are not-for-profits focused on supporting Army Aviation Soldiers and Families, they do it in different ways. AAAA SFI is a 501(c) (3) where all donations are deductible as charitable contributions on your tax return. AAAA is a 501(c) (4) where donations are not tax deductible.

SFI could not survive without the generosity of Donors – Individual, Chapter, Heritage, and Corporate. Few, if any, not-for-profit organizations can say that every penny donated goes to scholarships or principal investments. SFI is indebted to the AAAA National Board for resourcing all of SFI's operating expenses. Naturally, VHPA receives the same benefit of not having to pay for any administrative costs.

Over the past 18 months SFI has been looking toward the future by initiating a very detailed strategic planning process under the leadership of Col (R) Lou Bonham. The areas of Governance, Financial Management, and the Scholarship Process were identified as the major muscle movements of SFI. Goals (what needs to be accomplished) and Objectives (how to get there) were defined for each area.

■ Under Governance Board Member responsibilities were defined and the relationships between SFI, AAAA, and AAPI (Army Aviation Publications Incorporated) were codified.

■ Under Financial Management a thorough review of the SFI investment strategy, policies and procedures, and the process to determine annual award amounts resulted in no changes. The Fund Raising Committee chair will be responsible for synchronizing the activities of the Marketing & Publicity and Alumni Committees as it relates to generating donations.

■ Major changes are taking place under the Selection Process. The current timelines have scholarship winners being announced late August and certificates mailed early September. We are looking at notifying award recipients in May prior to students departing their High Schools. This would take effect in 2018. The Application Process is being streamlined with the intent to eliminate letters of recommendation. The other major change will be the transition to voting all files electronically in 2017. In the past, volunteers met at the National Guard Center in Arlington, VA in July to vote most of the files face-to-face. The AAAA Awards Committee has

been voting the Hall of Fame and AAAA National Awards files electronically for the past few years and it has been successful in maintaining a quality process and we anticipate the same results.

I have been impressed by the increased generosity of VHPA members and saw it first hand at the 2006 Reunion in Washington, DC. I was AAAA President at the time and spoke at the General Membership Meeting after which the Cav hat was passed and ended up overflowing. Since then VHPA has accumulated over \$240K in an endowment that will continue to generate funds to support scholarship on behalf of your family members in perpetuity, which means forever.

The VHPA Scholarship Program is linked at the hip with the AAAA Scholarship Foundation Inc. to include Mike Sheuerman, VHPA Scholarship Programs, serving on the SFI Board as your representative.

There are several named perpetual scholarships (361st AVN Co., 7/17th Cav, Otter-Caribou, etc.) that originated either through direct donations or SFI matching funds that have accumulated over \$30,000. This amount guarantees at least a \$1,000 scholarship will be awarded annually for each organization.

There are a number of ways for you personally or on behalf of a Vietnam unit to establish a legacy scholarship. In addition to the Individual and Heritage Matching Fund Program, consider Annuity Giving. This is through the AAAA Charitable Gift Annuity Program where the rate of return that you receive is dependent on your date of birth and is locked-in for life. Details of this program can be found at www.quad-a.org under 'Scholarship'.

Another opportunity is the Bequest option. A major benefit of making a Charitable Bequest can not only enable you to contribute to the AAAA SFI VHPA Fund after you pass on, but will save estate taxes by providing you estate with a charitable deduction for the value of the gift. You can gift a dollar amount; gift a percentage of your estate; gift a specified asset such as an insurance policy; gift the residual of your estate; or gift a retirement asset like an IRA or 401(k). Any of these gifts can be donated to any of the Funds (VHPA, Families of the Fallen, Perpetual) designated in your name, or in honor of a loved one.

Regardless of the method you use to contribute to the AAAA Scholarship Foundation, it will provide a dual benefit: one is private whereby you can feel good knowing your treasure is going to a worthwhile cause, and the other is public where the recipients of these scholarships will greatly appreciate the financial assistance.

BG (R) Tom Konitzer is a AAAA Past President and currently President, AAAA Scholarship Foundation, Inc.

The VHPA's Fourth of July visit to the American Huey Museum

Photos: courtesy of Mike Law

This day, filled with the sounds, smells, sights from our days in Vietnam plus the special camaraderie with dedicated mostly Vietnam vets, was the culmination of over four years of planning. It was made possible by various VHPAers and the leadership of the American Huey 369 Museum based at the former Grissom Air Base outside of Peru, IN. Briefly, about 60 Museum volunteers (including 16+ VHPAers) welcomed the 240+ VHPA Reunion attendees who travelled in buses or POVs from the JW Marriott hotel to the temporary Museum Hangar. They were then treated to a tour of the temporary Museum; a briefing on the progress made to start construction on the National American Huey History Museum plus the various aircraft restorations. There was the second opportunity for the VHPA to visit with The Wolfhounds (Vietnam Era infantry re-enactors who conducted a Combat Assault Re-enactment), as well as a display of VHPA Member Peter Bales's restored OH-6A "Little Bird 26". Also available was one of the first public displays of the recently restored UH-1B Gunship 049 to fly-able condition with its authentic XM-21 weapons system. There was a catered lunch followed by the opportunity to ride in one of two real Vietnam Era Hueys (Dustoff 369 or 803 Warrior 11). Just as the initial Welcome and Program briefing was concluding, Paul Cobb, another VHPAer, landed Sapphire Aviation's UH-1H - another Vietnam Vet Huey. Paul came to the VHPA Reunion in San Francisco in a Cobra so he has some bona fide bragging rights! This is the white Huey that was parked at Gate Ten's BBQ Party on the 3rd.

While there is always some risk when one starts mentioning names that someone will be missed, we absolutely need mention the VHPAers who were involved on the Fourth. Ronald Paye, and Ron Clark are two of the Aircraft Commanders and have been for years. Phil Marshall and Chuck Canfield have volunteered at the Museum for eight and seven years respectively. They have manned the Museum's booth in the vendor area at VHPA Reunions for years. They along with Art Jacobs and David Hansen have gone the extra mile many times to advance the VHPA's relationship with the Museum. Yet another volunteer, Jim Crigler, is the kayaking the Mississippi as a fund raiser guy. Others are: Mo Modjeski, Don Nelson, Glen Veno, Pat Wing, Ted Buisker, Robert Fureigh, Jim Kovach, Lee Luck, Tom Agness and, of course, Peter Bales with his OH-6A.



On special occasions Gary Moline still dons his nomex uniform shirt from his 1971 tour with D/1/1 CAV. He and his wife, Pat, are 12-year volunteers at the Museum. Note some of the 76 Service Ribbons on the Huey. Each covers a correctly repaired and patched bullet or shrapnel hole.



The 4 helicopters "take a bow" after completing the Combat Assault Reenactment.



VHPA Member Thomas Dunn is "mostly blind" (his words) but he wanted to come to the Museum to hear and smell the Hueys again.



Gunship 049 recently restored UH-1B complete with a real XM-21 weapons system is the pride of the Museum.

As with most every Vietnam helicopter vet, there are stories and then there are stories related to all the Museum's volunteers. Gary Moline, a VHPA subscriber, and his wife, Pat, have volunteered with the Museum for a dozen years. This year they (and several others like Chuck Canfield) will attend all 15 of the Museum's flying events. They live in their RV as they move from event to event. They even visited 049 when it was in the rebuild shop in Texas last winter and spring. In 1970, Gary was going through Army Basic Training on a 'delayed entry' program prior to going to Flight School. Well the American side of the War started winding down and training Vietnamese pilots started spooling up, so Gary's group of 750 future pilots was scrubbed. After Basic, Gary attended 67V School, turbine engine mechanic, and ended up with D/1/1st Cav at Marble Mountain flying as a Huey crew chief. He suffered some sad experiences near the end of his tour and wasn't at rest with things for many years. He says, "There is a lot of healing that comes with volunteering with American Huey 369; not only for me but lots of other guys I know". My good wife often asks: "How much longer are we going to do this?" My response is: "I don't know but there is something magical about these Hueys that really attracts me and motivates me. I ain't done yet!" Believe me, it was an honor to shake Gary's hand. There for a moment I was back at Phan Thiet talking with SP5 Taylor as we stoked rockets in the Cobra with our names painted on the side beneath the pilot's canopy.

Visit www.americanhuey369.com
for more details and for you to become involved.

By Mike Law



VHPA Past President, Phil Marshall, on the yellow stand, was the commentator and public address announcer as he was in Louisville.

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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

email:



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 |
| | - William C. Brooks |

KOREAN WAR VET SATISFIED CLIENT

- Kenny Hames Photos of War Tour
- 1952-53 Heartbreak Ridge & Sugarloaf

An Update on The Vietnam Center and Archive (VNCA) at Texas Tech University:

The VHPA helps "Get 'er Done" by Mike Law

In 1999, the VHPA, under the leadership of Tom Payne and Bob Smith, selected the VNCA as its official repository for all historical material. Years went by and while many VHPAers (the notables being Mike Sloniker, Jack Swickard, and Phil Marshall) donated individual collections to the Archive, VHPA HQ and the VHPA Executive Council did little more than "to make certain the membership knew" about the VNCA in case they wanted to donate plus ensure the Archive received copies of *The Aviator*, the Membership Directory, and the VHPA Calendar.

Things began changing about 2013 in three ways:

1. VNCA leadership started attending VHPA Reunions at the invitation of VHPA leaders.
 2. VHPA HQ expanded the business process previously used to make quarterly payments to AAAA for member Scholarship Fund donations to include the VNCA donations from the membership.
 3. The VHPA IT and Database guys began looking for a "permanent repository" for VHPA Died After Tour (DAT) and Vietnam Helicopter databases when the VHPA 'sunsets' (meaning the experts are no longer available to maintain these databases or provide reports from them to the public).
- About the time of the Reno Reunion, the VHPA EC decided to fund a \$9K grant to the VNCA to hire students with the primary goals of: (a) getting the boxes of VHPA member collections processed and scanned into the Archive [versus waiting in queue to be worked 'someday'] and (b) ensuring that a "complete set" of VHPA magazines, directories, and calendars are scanned into the Archive. This grant requires: (a) the VNCA to report progress on a VHPA prioritized list of backlog tasks and (b) for the VHPA to attend (either electronically or in person) at least two status report meetings annual.

BTW, VHPA President John Shafer plus Mike Law and Gary Roush attended the most recent meeting in Lubbock this past June.

OK, what does this have to do with the 1st Aviation Brigade's Hawk Magazine?

In early June, the VHPA received this email message from Charles Winer: "I was the editor of 1st Aviation Hawk Magazine 1970-1971. I have many copies in my possession and would like to send them to whatever entity is scanning and archiving them. Might you be able to offer the



1st Aviation Brigade's Hawk Magazine



name/address of a contact person involved in this archival work? Thank you for your kind response."

At that time, the Archive had only 4 or 5 Hawk magazines. Thanks to donations from Charles Winer, John Shafer, and Mike Law, the Archive now has copies of 40 issues as follows:

1967: September, October, November, December.

1968: January, February, March, May, November, October, December.

1969: January, February, March, April, May, July (2 copies), August, September, October, November (2 copies).

1970: January, February (2 copies), March (2 copies), April (3 copies), May (3 copies), June (2 copies), July (3 copies), August (3 copies), September (3 copies), October (3 copies), Fall (2 copies).

1971: Winter (2 copies), Spring (2 copies), Summer-Fall (2 copies).

1972: January, March, June, Summer, Winter (2 copies).

The 1st Avn Bde was activated in Vietnam on 25 May 1966 from a provisional unit organized by USARV on March 1, 1966 and it departed on March 28, 1973.

We don't know what all was published? Is there anything before September 1967? We definitely do not need any more editions from the list above, but if someone can fill in the holes, the Archive would be happy to accept them.

Please consider sending them to:

Amy K. Mondt, CA

Associate Director, The Vietnam Archive Special Collections Library,

Room 108, Box 41041

Lubbock, TX 79409

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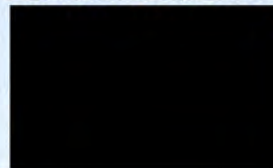
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VHPA 2018 CALENDAR

Available for Immediate Shipment!

The Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association and Acclaim Press are pleased to present the new VHPA 2018 Calendar, hot off the press and available for immediate shipment. This is the 25th 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.

On the cover: In a single day, HMH-463 used twelve helicopters in four flights of three to drop 2,000 55-gallon barrels of napalm/diesel mix on an enemy tunnel/cave complex, June 1970. Photo courtesy of Bill Stilwagen.



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2018 CALENDAR



Barrel Bombing
Marine Style

Photo details on back cover





"ABOVE THE BEST"



Dear Fellow 71-44 Class Members,

At last our Reunion is fast approaching! I hope you are as excited as I am in anticipation of renewing old acquaintances and seeing friends that perhaps we haven't seen in over 45 years!

Please follow the below instructions and adhere to the requested deadlines as our reservations, tickets, etc. are dependent on my getting money to the proper place within the established cut-off dates.

1. The Inn at Opryland: Rate is \$157.00 per night + tax (approximately \$183.44), we have 15 Kings & 10 Doubles at that same rate. Our Group Rate may be available for dates before and/or after our Reunion; check with Marriott Reservations. **MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS DIRECTLY WITH MARRIOTT reservations at 1-855-584-3466.**

Use the Reference # M-8QACUKA, mention "Flight Class Vietnam Vets Reunion".

CUT-OFF FOR RESERVATIONS IS 4 SEPTEMBER 2017 !!!

2. Nashville Nightlife Dinner Theater: This is literally within walking distance of our hotel. Doors open at 5:30 PM & Show begins at 6:30 PM, **Friday, 13 October 2017.**

Price is \$40.95 per person (taxes & tip included)—this is a buffet dinner & show for one price. **FOR THIS YOU WILL PAY AT THE DOOR**

BUT I NEED TO KNOW IF YOU'RE GOING NLT 4 SEPTEMBER 2017 SO I CAN PROVIDE AN ACCURATE NUMBER TO

THE THEATER. www.nashvillenightlife.com

3. Reception on Friday 13 Oct, 1PM-3PM (sandwiches, fruit & veggie trays, etc), there will be a cash bar, Hospitality Suite will be available Thursday-3PM to Sunday Noon.

PLEASE SEND \$40 PER PERSON
(\$80/COUPLE) NLT 4 SEPTEMBER 2017

Make your checks payable to: Flight Class 71-44 & mail to, Steven E. Blanton, 320 Wildflower Drive, Social Circle, GA 30025

This will cover the cost of the Reception & Snacks, Soft Drinks, etc. for the Hospitality Suite. Alcoholic Beverages will be at your own expense; we may consume them only in the Hospitality Suite or of course in your own room.

4. Grand Ole Opry—14 October 2017, 7 PM (doors open at 6 PM)
PLEASE SEND \$68 PER PERSON (\$138/COUPLE) NLT 4 SEPTEMBER 2017

Make your checks payable to: Flight Class 71-44 & mail to, Steven E. Blanton, 320 Wildflower Drive, Social Circle, GA 30025. View our seats, click on the link below, click on the back button, choose Oct 14, 7PM and then click on Search, Go, Buy: A seating Chart will appear: we are in Section 1, Rows A, B, C & D.

www.opryentertainmentgroup.com/Opry/Online/mapSelect.asp

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UPCOMING REUNIONS

D Troop, 1/1 Cavalry (Air)
101st Airborne Division & 23rd Infantry Division (Americal)
50th Anniversary Reunion — D Troop invites all troopers, family, and friends

Date: May 13-15, 2018

Location: Flamingo Resort Hotel & Casino
 Las Vegas, Nevada

Contact: COL Roger Wise (Saber-77) at [REDACTED]

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/D-Troop-11-Cavalry-119341268079296/>

Website: <http://www.dtroop.com>

Reunion website: dtroopreunion.org

20th Aerial Artillery Association Reunion

Dates: September 13th to September 17th, 2017

Location: Williamsburg, VA at the Embassy Suites

Details: visitaraassociation.com

From: Dave Borgeson, President, ARA Association

173rd Assault Helicopter Company (Robin Hoods)

Who: All members of the Robin Hood organization and those that supported 1966-197

When: October 2-5, 2017

Where: The Lodges at Gettysburg PA/ Reservations: thelodgesatgettysburg.com or call (717) 642-2500. Mention you are with the Robin Hood Reunion

Contact: Jim.Roop@aol.com for additional information

The USAF Helicopter Pilot Association

"A Capital Adventure"

When: Washington, DC Oct 4-8, 2017

Where: The Hilton Washington Dulles Airport Hotel, 13869 Park Center Road, Herndon, VA 2017.

For information: Call Gray Line Gatherings Plus at 417-334-4048

281st Assault Helicopter Company Annual Reunion

The U.S. Army's First Special Operations Helicopter Company

When: 12-15 October 2017

Where: Hyatt Regency Crystal City at Reagan National Airport
 2799 Jefferson Davis Highway, Arlington, VA 22202

For Reservations:

<https://aws.passkey.com/event/16117454/owner/10336/home>

Contact: Bain Black [REDACTED]

Website: <http://www.281st.com/>

13th Biennial Reunion for the 57th AHC, 615th TC, and 822nd SIG

When: October 16 to 20

Where: New Orleans Hotel and Casino, Las Vegas NV

Contact Joe Sottile: [REDACTED]

or Stan Steenbock: [REDACTED]

More details available on 57thahc.com

Announcing the 50th Anniversary of the Royal Australian Navy Helicopter Flight (EMUS / TAIPANS).

The event, at this stage, will be over **Sunday 15th, Monday 16th and Tuesday 17th October 2017**. The 15th and 16th October are the two dates the first contingent left Australia for Vietnam.

Location: Nowra, New South Wales Australia.

Details: at <http://www.135ahc.net/ranhfv/> (click on reunions), or contact [REDACTED]

Point of Contact: Australian, John Macartney, [REDACTED]

USA: Fred Dunaway [REDACTED]

(backup contact).

Virginia Veterans

I had the distinct pleasure of meeting a number of you as I addressed some of your membership at the monthly meeting of the Old Dominion Chapter of Vietnam Helicopter Pilot Association (VHPA) at Legend's Brewery.

My purpose for meeting with you was to extend an invitation to the Vietnam War Era Veterans Picnic. The Kiwanis Club of Chester, VA is hosting a picnic on **Wednesday, October 4, 2017** at Chesterfield County Fairgrounds from 4 to 8 pm (1600 to 2000 hours for those still on the 24-hour clock). This is for all our local men and women who were in the US Armed Forces at the time of the Vietnam War (1965 to 1975), irrespective of whether or not you served in country. Please join us so we might recognize and celebrate your contributions to our

country. We would like to belatedly give you the recognition you deserved, but never received during that tumultuous time.

If you are interested and attending, please provide the following information so we may prepare an appropriate welcoming for you and your spouse. Your full name, nick name, spouse's name, service branch, rate/rank when you left RVN (or served in US during the war, telephone number, email address and complete residence address. Email your response to [REDACTED] Subject: RVN War Vets. This will allow us to keep you up to date on any changes that may occur between now and October 4, 2017.

Thank you for helping us, and thank you for your service to our great nation,
 Joe Hillier, Chairman

179th Assault Support Helicopter Company reunion.

When: October 5-8, 2017

Where: Nashville, TN at the Four Points by Sheraton, in Brentwood TN

Reservations and Registration information are on the 179th unit website

<http://www.179thash.org/>

Contact: Stan Neckerman, [REDACTED]

ger, [REDACTED]

or Tom Messen-

Marine Heavy Hauler Reunion

Where: Laughlin NV

When: October 24 through 26, 2017

POC: Mike Amtower 1658 Knoll Ridge Circle Corinth, TX 76210-1907

This is Mike Amtower; I'm heading up the planning and co-ordination of this year's Gathering. We are setting up the 6th Biennial Heavy Haulers Gathering in Laughlin, NV at the Colorado Belle on October 24, 25 & 26, 2017. Let's make this one the biggest and best Gathering we have had to date. It has been nearly 50 years now, (my how time flies!) since the original 463 folks first left SE Asia. This would involve ALL Heavy Hauler folks from both HMH-462 & HMH-463. Actually, it involves ANY and ALL folks that have ever driven or laid hands on a CH-53 from all eras and any other squadron, Including HMH-362, The Ugly Angels. We will make every attempt to arrange for another Color Guard from Miramar for this event. All Marines and friends of Marines are welcome, also family members of Marines. Consider contacting your local Marine Corps League and American Legion organizations.

Two dinners on Wed (10/25) and Thurs (10/26) will be held at \$40 per person each night. We are also requesting a \$15 surcharge to help fund the hospitality suite. This charge is only per each squadron attendee, not their guest.

I have reserved a block of 50 rooms at the Colorado Belle at \$25/night and a block of 10 rooms at the Edgewater at \$27/night. The link to the Colorado Belle/Edgewater is: Colorado Belle/ Edgewater (800) 677-4837. When talking to them, specify the Heavy Hauler name as a code phrase to get the above room rates. We hope to see a bunch of you there! S/F!

Please make your checks out to me for the dinners and the hospitality suite. Or, for anyone that absolutely cannot attend and would like to send a donation for the Color Guard costs or to the Semper Fi Fund.

187th Assault Helicopter Co. Reunion

When: November 8-12, 2017

Where: Orleans Hotel/ Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada

Who: All unit members and support personnel

Contact: See <http://www.187thahc.net/> for information

or contact John Wilson @ [REDACTED]

Hello Black Cats.

Next Reunion and Membership Fees, Shirts and Hats in the PX. Please join the 213th Black Cats Alumni Association. The Membership Fee is \$15 Yearly; \$100 for Lifetime Membership Fee. Please send check to George Haley, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Net Make check out to the, Black Cat Alumni Association. Thank You for joining Reunion location 2019: We are considering the mid-west or in the east. Philadelphia is at the top of the list.

Please email the location you would like and why to, Foster Sexton Black Cat President at foster_213th@yahoo.com

We currently have some nice shirts and hats in the PX. Please E-mail Sam Parrish for the remaining stock on hand

Submitted by Mike Brown

THE 281st ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY

The U.S. Army's Legacy, Special Operations Helicopter Company

A Brief History

The 281st AHC and its attached Maintenance (483rd TC) and Signal (499th SIG) Detachments arrived in country in June of 1966 and were assigned to the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion and immediately placed under the 5th Special Forces Group for operational control, housing, and logistical support. Upon arrival, the 145th and 6th Aviation Platoons were integrated into the 281st and the new unit provided combat aviation support to all the elements of the 5th Group with emphasis on special operations support to Project Delta, the 5th Group's long-range reconnaissance unit, and the MACV Recondo School, which was acknowledged to be the deadliest school in the US Army. To support long range recon missions, the 281st formed task forces which moved and operated in remote areas with Project Delta and other 5th Group elements.

During its tour of duty in Vietnam the 281st AHC lost fifty-two Intruders, of which ten are still unaccounted. While in Vietnam, the unit was recognized for valor by the US Army, The US Navy, and the Republic of Vietnam. The 281st left Vietnam in 1970 and joined the USAR in Saint Louis, MO. Currently the unit has an association of all former Intruders and will hold its 2017 annual reunion in Washington, DC in early October. Association and reunion information can be found on the unit web site: <http://www.281st.com/>.

On 7 October 2016, with the approval of the Secretary of the Army, the US Army Special Operations command officially designated the 281st Assault Helicopter Company as the US Army's first special operations helicopter company. The guest speaker was Special Forces Command Sergeant Major Donald J. Taylor, who spoke for the special operations community at the dedication ceremony held at Fort Bragg:



281st AHC Training at Recondo School

THE DEDICATION SPEECH

General Evans, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, old comrades, friends, and fellow soldiers. I'm Retired Sergeant Major Donald J. Taylor, U.S. Army Special Forces, and I'm deeply honored to have the opportunity to speak here today on behalf of my fellow Vietnam Veterans of Project Delta, Detachment B-52, 5th Special Forces Group.

We were a team during the Vietnam War, Project Delta and the 281st Assault Helicopter Company, and the placement of this memorial stone here today, dedicated to the 281st, is a



281st Memorial-Ft. Bragg



281st Memorial-Ft. Bragg

ing a Special Operations mission as if it was just another ash and trash support mission.

group of warriors who, in the infancy of Special Operations, created, frequently by trial and error, and while under enemy fire, a system of operational procedures and techniques that blazed the trail for future Special Operations units to follow. Long after those of us here today are gone, this stone memorializing the 281st will remain here, lying beside the stone memorializing Project Delta, in this Special Operations Memorial Garden, for many years to come.

Future generations of Special Operations soldiers will pass this way, and more than likely, these passersby will occasionally pause at this stone and wonder who those men of the 281st were who fought long ago in a nearly forgotten war in a far-off place called Vietnam. They'll wonder at the significance of the words on this stone that say "The U.S. Army's First Special Operations Helicopter Company" and some may notice the Delta triangle on the stone and wonder if that Delta had any meaning and whether or not it has any relation to the Project Delta stone lying beside it.

None of us here today will be available to answer these future questions. But if we were, we'd tell them that during the Vietnam War, Project Delta and the 281st wrote the book on Long Range Reconnaissance Patrolling Operations, and that many of the procedures and techniques developed by this team of Project Delta and the 281st are still in use today in U.S. Army Special Operations units around the world. Project Delta was the first Special Operations unit to have its own assigned helicopter company, the 281st.

This marriage of an aviation company with a Special Operations unit was so successful that it was remembered in 1986 when the Reagan administration was rebuilding our Special Operations Forces, and what is now the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment was formed at that time. Because it just makes common sense, most Special Operations soldiers today probably think it's always been that Special Operations Forces had their own helicopter units assigned to them, but as we here today know, that wasn't the way it was. There was a time when decision makers thought that just any helicopter unit could be given a few hours training, and then assigned the task of support-

Of course, it took a high degree of skill for a helicopter unit to fly for a Special Operations Unit, but it took more than just individual skills for a Special Operations Unit to be successful. It also demanded a high degree of teamwork, and the necessary degree of teamwork couldn't be attained if different helicopter units were used for each Special Operations mission. It was this team effort established between the 281st and Project Delta that made us so successful, because whatever Project Delta was doing, the 281st played a vital role in its outcome. In Delta Recon, we worked so closely with the 281st for so long that we came to know many of the pilots and crews quite well; so well, in fact, that frequently it wasn't even necessary to use call signs on the radio; we simply recognized one another's voice.

Project Delta was, without a doubt, the premier Long Range Reconnaissance unit of the Vietnam War. No other reconnaissance unit could even come close to Project Delta's ability and its reputation when it came to conducting intelligence-gathering long range reconnaissance patrolling operations. The reason for Project Delta's successes was that over the years, it had molded its self into a close-knit team with all of its members working together in close harmony. A very important member of this Delta team was, of course, the 281st Assault Helicopter Company.

The 281st was assigned to Project Delta to provide the Project with the ability to infiltrate long range reconnaissance teams deep within enemy controlled territory, and then recover us when our reconnaissance mission had been accomplished or when we had been compromised and were no longer able to continue our mission. Not only did our reconnaissance missions depend on the skill and the courage of 281st flight crews to get us into targeted areas, but, many times, our lives depended on these same crews' courage and flying ability to get us out.

Project Delta Recon wouldn't hesitate to go into areas where other reconnaissance units would refuse to go, and it wasn't because we were more fearless than the others, it was simply because we knew we weren't going in alone; our Delta team was always with us. If a Project Delta recon team got into more trouble than the six of us could fight our way out of, we knew we could depend on the 281st to come in and get us out.

knew we could depend on the 281st to come in and get us out. When a Project Delta recon team called for an emergency extraction, it was just that, an emergency. We either came out, or we died. These were the extractions where 281st slicks and guns would have to fight their way in to get us and then fight their way out again, but we knew that no matter how bad it got for us on the ground, the 281st would never abandon us. It was once said as a joke, but there was truth to it, that when a 281st crew came in to recover a Project Delta Recon Team on an emergency extraction, they'd either get us out or they'd all crash beside us, but they wouldn't quit until one or the other had happened.

The thing that made Project Delta Recon the premier Long Range Reconnaissance Unit in Vietnam can best be explained in an old African proverb that goes like this: "Two men who know one another like brothers can work together and easily kill the lion.

However, if ten strangers come together and attempt the same task, they'll not only fail, they'll become the lion's next meal."

That team spirit is still with us today and that's the meaning behind the small Delta carved into this stone memorializing the 281st Assault Helicopter Company. We were an inseparable team, Project Delta and the 281st, and this stone will keep that memory alive well into the future. On behalf of my fellow Veterans of Project Delta Recon, I thank all of you Veterans of this First Special Operations Helicopter Company, the 281st, for being there for us back then, because Project Delta couldn't have done it without you.

*Good luck, God Bless,
and I'll see you all again one day on the final LZ."*

By Joe Bilitzke

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WELCOME TO THE VHPA!

Look the list over and if you recognize anyone, give them a call, drop them a line or send them an e-mail welcoming them into our Association. Full contact information is available either on-line in the Member Services section of our website, or through our staff at HQ by calling 1-800-505-VHPA.

Line 1, Last, first, MI and/or nickname of new member; double asterisks (**) ID new life members. Line 2, current city and state. Line 3, branch of service. Lines 4 to 6, flight class and Vietnam units and served with, if that info is available.

13 members who have joined in the period of June 7th to July 28th, 2017.

New Members:

Branham Terry W. **
Lakeville Minnesota
Army
69-24
D/3/4 CAV 25 INF in 69-70

Bratkovic Robert J 'Carol' **
Creve Coeur Missouri
Army
70-17 70-15
135 AHC in 70-71

Carnathan James F.
Tampa Florida
Army
69-19
D/3/4 CAV in 69-70

Densford Charles F 'Charlie' **
Georgetown Texas
Army
59-13 64QC
1 BDE 4 INF in 66; IIFV ARTY in 67; USARV FLT STDA in 69; 334 AWC in 70

Goin Eric D.
Two Rivers Wisconsin
Army
71-11
362 ASHC in 71-72

Hubbs William F. 'Bill' **
Cibolo Texas
Army
69-43
E/725 MNT 25 INF in 70-71

Joplin James Edward 'Jim'
Lubbock Texas
Navy
37-60
HA(L)-3 in 70; HA(L)-3 DET 8 in 70-71

Landreth John R.
Mansfield Texas
Marine Corps
72
HMH-462 in 74-75; HMM-165 in 75

Montgomery John E.
Loudon Tennessee
Army
69-48
B/227 AHB 1 CAV in 70

Myers Allen G **
West Chester Pennsylvania
Air Force
57-I
20 SOS 14 ACW in 65-66

Nowicki James E. 'Jim'
Columbus Mississippi
Army
69-7
B/7/17 CAV in 69; POW in 69-73

Sennett John D
Raleigh North Carolina
Army
62-10FW 66QC
71 AHC in 66; HHC/12 CAG in 66

Toops Richard D.
Mabank Texas
Army
69-26
240 AHC in 70-71

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cell [REDACTED]



"The Day Colin Powell Should Have Listened to Shark 4."

By J.C. Pennington (Shark 4)

When I was flying Dolphin slicks with the 174th Assault Helicopter Company (before I got into the Shark gun platoon) in late '68, Colin Powell was a staff officer, Major, on the Americal Division staff.

The Americal was made up of three brigades with one aviation assault helicopter company supporting each brigade. I was in the 174th AHC and we supported the 11th Light Infantry Brigade (LIB) of Lt. Calley/Capt. Medina/My Lai infamy.

The 11th LIB was made up of three (or four depending on need) infantry battalions (BN). Each BN was assigned a 174th resupply ship and one command and control (C&C) ship each day.

The resupply ship would spend the whole day flying out to the BN's companies in the field with beans and bullets. You basically spent the whole day (10 to 12 hours) flying round trips from the BN's resupply pad to the field units and back.

The C&C ship was the property of the Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) who commanded the BN. That could be flying him out to field units, recon of landing zones (LZ) for planned assaults, flying him to the hospital to visit his wounded troops or even helping out with resupply if the LTC didn't need his ship.

These resupply missions could be, and usually were, all over the map in terms of missions. Resupply of course, but Medevacs were common, recons, spraying Agent Orange (although we didn't know that's what it was at the time), mail runs, transporting personnel in and out of the field. Hell, I even flew a Vietnamese brass band in one time as part of a change of command ceremony.

OK, to the day in question with Colin Powell. I was flying resupply for one of the BNs that was on a sweep in the mountains. There was terrible terrain and jungle below. I really felt bad for the grunts. On one of my trips back to the resupply pad I got a radio call telling me to go out and support one of the companies of the BN that had just stumbled on a huge North Vietnamese Army (NVA) base camp. Apparently, they had found tons of enemy supplies: ammo, food, weapons, medical supplies, barracks, mess hall, the whole shootin' match.



Warrant Officer J.C. Pennington with a bamboo model of a helicopter found at the NVA base camp. It was a training aid to teach the bad guys how to shoot down helicopters.

As I was getting ready to take off, the BN CO jumped on board with his operations officer and first sergeant. Apparently, his C&C ship was busy, so off we go trying to find this unit that found the base camp/cache. Working off a map and grid coordinates, we eventually found them but there was nowhere to land within several clicks (kilometers). Triple canopy jungle, ridge line, etc. Nasty.

The LTC desperately wanted to land and inspect the loot (and no doubt have his photo taken with it). He told his unit to cut out an LZ so we could land and drop him off. My tail was already starting to pucker over that prospect. So, we bored holes in the sky for a while and the grunts started taking down trees with C4 (plastic explosive) and deto-

nation cord. It cleared the space of trees but left stumps so actual "landing" was not really an option...so long as I wanted to keep our tail rotor, and I did so we'd just have to hover at the bottom.

Also, when you take down trees at the base it leaves neighboring trees still overhanging the LZ. Those tend to shred main rotor blades. Finally, they said they had a hole cut for the LZ and I should come on in. It may have been a big hole at the bottom but it wasn't much of a hole at the top. I told the CO I'd give it a try but if at any point I thought it was a no-go I was not going to push it. He reluctantly agreed but since I was the aircraft commander he had no choice.

Well, I trimmed a few branches on the way down but kept the tail rotor clean and we barely had enough room at the bottom for the main rotor blades, barely. I can say that in 1,000 hours of flying helicopters in Vietnam I never landed in a tighter spot. Big time pucker factor.

The CO jumped off, I very carefully lifted straight up and cleared the trees. I went to refuel and when I got back the LTC was ready for me to pick him up, so I had to go through the whole "let's don't crash" routine again. He jumped on board with some souvenirs and I took him back to his headquarters. I made one more

trip in and out (more souvenirs) safely. Those three landings, in what we called a "hover hole", were never easy and I was sweating bullets each time. To the grunts I'm sure it looked routine after seeing a Huey get in and out of there three times. It was never routine.

Now... for the Powell part. As I was flying back to the resupply pad I got a radio call that the Division Commander, Maj Gen Gettys (two-stars) was flying out to the just-discovered enemy base camp and they wanted me to circle the area until they arrived to show his pilot where the LZ was.

I immediately got a bad feeling about that. The guy flying was a VIP pilot on a VIP ship. To this day it was the most immaculately-kept Huey I ever saw. Beautiful new paint job and the whole ship was waxed! It looked like it was on the way to a parade.

Anyway, when I hooked up with the VIP ship I called and offered to fly the general into the LZ. I said that I was the only one who had flown into and out of the LZ and it was very tight. I said we could transfer back at the BN pad and it would only take about 25 minutes round trip.

Naturally the VIP pilot declined. I don't blame him. I'd have done the same thing. It's the old "balls/brains" conundrum. The fact is, as a VIP pilot, he just didn't have the experience line pilots had doing all the crazy shit we did 10 to 12 hours a day, seven days a week. As soon as he said he didn't need me I took off because I still had a lot of resupply missions to the other field units.

So, I didn't see the crash. The VIP pilot got about halfway down into the canopy, caught a main rotor blade on a tree trunk, slung both blades, rolled it over and crashed inverted. The good news was that there was no fire and no fatalities. The bad news was that everyone on the VIP ship was hurt to one degree or another. General Gettys broke his back and Maj. Colin Powell broke his ankle.

I didn't know until years later that Powell was on the ship. I saw him when he was Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and noticed that he wore an Americal patch. I still didn't think too much about it. Only when he wrote his book did I find out that he was on the VIP ship that day. I smiled to myself and thought, "You should have listened to Shark 4."

After writing this story, I thought I'd pull out my copy of Pow-

ell's book, *My American Journey*, which I had not read in 20 years to see if his story and mine matched up. They did, more than I had remembered.

Funny thing about us Warrant Officer Huey pilots of the day. We were called many things. John Steinbeck said we had "the slow hands of Casals on the cello." Correspondent Joe Galloway, co-author of *We Were Soldiers Once...And Young*, called us "God's own lunatics." Turns out Colin Powell said we had "the hands of a safecracker's touch." Then of course there were a lot of senior officers who just called us "arrogant and insolent." They had no sense of humor.

In any case, this is an excerpt from Powell's book about the day

his VIP pilot tried to get into a very tight landing zone that only I had flown into at that point:

"I had thought earlier that maybe this landing would be better handled by a small slick piloted by one of those nineteen-year-olds with the hands of a safecracker's touch and plenty of experience in shoehorning helos into tight fits.

But the General's pilot, Chief Warrant Officer James *****^{*****}, was an experienced flier. This was his general, his helo, his landing, and he expected no problem.

We spotted a smoke grenade

signaling the site of the hole chopped out of the heavy growth and headed for it. The pilot began his approach to the landing site, realized he was coming in too fast, backed off, and came at it again. On the second pass, he hovered; then began his descent. Bits of stripped-off branches and leaves swirled through the air as we moved down through the trees.

Since I was sitting outboard, I could see how little clearance we had, about two feet at each end of the blade. I began to shout, 'Pull out!' But it was too late. I watched the pilot struggling against the treacherous backdraft created by the trees, and then, WHACK! At the height of about three stories, the blade struck a tree trunk. One minute we were flying and the next we were dead weight, as the rotor blades went instantly from 324 rpm to zero. The helo dropped like an elevator with a snapped cable. I reflexively assumed the crash posture, head down, arms locked around my knees. I listened to the engine's futile whine for what seemed an eternity before we smashed into the ground."

Colin Powell may have been wrong about Iraq, but he was right about who should have been flying him that day in Vietnam.



MG Gettys (2nd from the right) on LZ Cork days before the crash.



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

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NOTICE FROM THE VHPA EXECUTIVE COUNCIL



The Executive Council has approved a plan for funding the Endowment Agreement at the Vietnam Center and Archive at Texas Tech University. The Executive Council believes this is a worthwhile program for the VHPA membership. The plan is to have the Endowment fully funded, \$250,000, by August 31, 2020. The funding will come from members donations and the largest part of the funding will come from the VHPA investments. A small portion of the VHPA's investment in bonds will mature over the next 38 months. Of that portion one third of those maturing investments will be sent to the

Endowment Fund at Texas Tech. The other two-thirds will be reinvested in the market in profitable and prudent investments per the investment policy as a part of the VHPA portfolio.

This project will ensure that our legacy, the critical role that helicopter crews played in the Vietnam War, is archived and preserved forever - our story, from our perspective, will always be maintained and told. See Mike Law's article in this issue: An Update on The Vietnam Center and Archive (VNCA) at Texas Tech University

By John Shafer - Past President

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL EMAIL BLASTS

VHPA HQ is trying a new VHPA Membership renewal program to help reduce the mailing costs to the Association. This new process offers the savings of almost \$3 per dues renewal letter. Recently, the HQ Team has started to send out a "Notice of Upcoming Dues Renewal Date" email. This email is sent out in a "blast format" two months before your actual dues renewal date. It is for information only, letting the annual member know his dues will come due in the next two months. The email tells the member where he can go to securely pay his dues on line with a credit card or where he can mail a check. A roster of those being emailed is kept at HQ and once the dues renewal is received that name is removed from the list. Those not responding by the member dues renewal date will receive a follow-up letter reminding the member that his dues are now due. A second follow-up letter is sent to the member one month after the member's dues renewal date has passed to again remind the member that he is no longer dues current.

Please help your Association operate in a cost savings manner and renew your dues when you receive the email.

Thanks,

Mike Sheuerman
VHPA Membership Chairman

Sherry Rodgers
HQ Office Manager

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Unit specific items: Patches, Uniforms,
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A Summary on the 34th Reunion in Indy

By Mike Law, Chairman of the VHPA Reunion Committee

As I look back at the Indy Reunion, several thoughts come to mind. This article was written on July 30, so most of the Reunion dust has settled so to speak. Here are seven main ideas for your consideration.

First, THANK YOU – Especially those who preregistered! This table, presented in the Annual Business Meeting (ABM), contains the final results.

Year	City	Adults	Indy versus	Pilots*	Banquet	Rooms
2017	Indy	987	71% of Reno	558	622	2150
2016	Reno	1394		759	941	3133
2015	Wash DC	1787		958	1181	4591
2014	Louisville	1698	58% of Louisville	916	1103	3313
2013	San Fran	1496		735	856	3482

denotes a “primary attendee” - most of the time this is a VHPA member but it can be a Gold Star Family member, a subscriber, a vendor, etc.

Our contract with the JW Marriott required the VHPA to sell at least 70% of the sleeping rooms in the contract block and to insure the Food and Beverage sales total at least \$80K. Thanks to a wonderful (and very timely) gift from Russ and Nancy Janus of two bottles of wine for each table at the Closing Banquet, we passed the Food and Beverage minimum by the slimmest of margins. If only a half dozen people did not attend the Closing Banquet and did not stay in the hotel, we would have caused us to miss our required minimums. The financial ramifications of missing the required minimums guarantees the Reunion would lose money that the General Fund (meaning the membership as a whole) would have to make up. For at least the last decade, the Executive Council's thought has been that Reunions need to “stand on their own” since only a small percentage of the active membership attend. So, again **THANK YOU** to all who attended. If you attended the Closing Banquet and had rooms in the JW Marriott that night- an extra **THANK YOU**!

Second, Financial: All the bills are paid; and by the time you read this all refund checks should in people's hands.

As a general rule, when HQ gets an invoice, it is processed for payment within a day or two. The last Reunion invoice, from the hotel for the Master Account settlement, was paid a few days ago. The same is true for those who owe us money. The last vendor payment was received last week. Now we start working on the Reunion's Profit & Loss report for the EC. We started in November with the EC approved Reunion Budget. Now we need to see “how the boots actually hit the ground.”

As is our custom, we mailed out 59 1st class letters providing folks with their refund details within three weeks after the Reunion closed. The checks from Chase start going out the first week in September. This year the refunds totaled \$9.2K. Last year there were 79 refunds for \$17.3K. Sadly this year six registrants, who had not purchased the Refund Guaranty Insurance (RGI), had to cancel after the 16 June cutoff date. Several experienced events that would have been covered by the RGI. It is always hard on our hearts to work these cases.

Third, Volunteers: I continue to smile at the wonderful contributions Julie Kink and the Gold Star Family team plus Kathleen Sherfey and the Quilters make. Jim and Patti Squyres did a wonderful job as the Welcome Desk Coordinators. I think this was the best year even for the Welcome Desk in terms of information provided and number of folks served. Gary Jones certainly went above and below as the Volunteer Coordinator. The hotel allows us to have “the perfect” locations for distributing T-Shirts and Pre-registration packets. Gary and those teams “made it look easy”; and there were very few lines. Dianna Law has Banquet Seating mastered to the extent that there were no lines and no stressed out folk prior to the Closing Banquet. This was without a doubt the VHPA's “personal best” in the Banquet Seating category. Collectively we need to thank **AGAIN** to Gary Roush for helping with the Writers' Workshop when two of our most faithful guys (Marc Liebman and John Penny) could not attend this year. David Hansen and Art Price continued the wonderful Memorial Service tradition that is now an important part of the Reunion's fabric. Thank you both!

Fourth, HQ Staff: Sherry and Ashley did an **OUTSTANDING** job...no surprises there but they deserve our deep heartfelt appreciation for sure! This was Ashley's first year as the bus and tour coordinator replacing Rebecca Bittle who was our contractor for this area for many years. Let's just put it this way; the VHPA is honored and “well serviced” by having Ashley in that role! Sherry continued to mature the long, long list of “in house” tasks traditionally done by the NRC. This year the VHPA took an important step forward with the goal to replace contractors and “specialized” VHPA members and volunteers with HQ employees. Thank you both and **THANKS** as well to Caitlyn and Sissy as “behind the scenes” temps.

Fifth, Vendors: While we certainly missed Joe Kline (Aviation Art) in the vendor room, we had 26 other exhibitors, book sellers, and vendors. Traffic was high and most everyone was smiling. Several organizations (Martin Madert of Witness To War [Oral History interviews], a large team from American Huey 369 led by

VHPA members Chuck Canfield and Phil Marshall, and Steve Maxner of The Vietnam Center and Archive (VNCA) to name just three) experienced "personal best" numbers at this Reunion versus previous years. Those three organizations have separate articles in this issue covering their activities. It is always good to see our faithful friends; Brian and Marilyn Paine of 3D Custom Crystals; Jim and Iola Messinger of Friends of the Museum; Denny and Petra Crouch with David Gray of Honor and Pride; the team of John Johnson, Randy Whitehead, and Leon Thurgood of Shallus Pens; Ed Stiteler and Bill Stilwagen of Vietnam Battlefield Tours; Ron & Jan Jones of BCAY; Curt Herrick of AAAA; Joe Emerson and Steve Joyce of the Army Aviation Heritage Foundation plus Richard Carmer of Picture Phoenix. We had a good group of book sellers: (this list may not be complete) John Bercaw, Eric and Margaret Brettschenider, Jim Crigler, Rex Gooch, Susan Jimison, Marc Liebman, Roy Mark, Harry Nevling, and Bill Reeder. We were in the "bonus round" this year having David Hansen represent both the Khe Sanh Garden and PeaceTrees Vietnam plus Randy Baumgardner of Acclaim Press (the publisher of the VHPA Calendar). Alex and Kim Villalva's LZ Texas display was a special treat.

Sixth, Ride At A Gallop: This whole multi-day special collection

of 1/9th Cavalry 1st Cavalry Division presentations came together in the Spring, too late to be included in any of the Reunion's advertising and printed publications. I'd guess at least a dozen individuals attended this Reunion specifically because of Ride at a Gallop. We video recorded the sessions and hope to have a DVD available by the next issue of The Aviator. We owe (to name just a few) Matt Brennan, John Flanagan, Walter Gutsche, Walker Jones, Dirk Kretschman, Barry McApline, Jim Pratt, Phil Raschke, Rudy Ribbeck, and especially SGT Thien, the former 1/9th Kit Carson, a big THANK YOU.

Seventh, Health Issues: The Reunion and HQ staff "learned" about many members and/or family members with medical issues that precluded attending the Reunion. It seems this year's "operation of choice" is knee replacement surgery. Speaking for my family and many of my friends at HQ and the VHPA leadership, you all are in our thoughts and prayers. We wish you God Speed.

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

LOOKING FOR

Hi from Perth, Australia!

My father, Peter Macdonald, was an engineer in the Australian Army, and served in Vietnam in 1967/68.

On March 15, 1968 at 10.15am whilst on patrol about 1000 feet from Long Hai Mountains, he was ambushed and his right arm was badly wounded, and another sapper was killed. There wasn't an Australian helicopter available to get to my dad, and he was losing a lot of blood. Luckily, an American helicopter pilot overheard his distressed radio calls for assistance, and despite his location being in a risky area with North Vietnamese troops around, he and his crew came in and rescued my dad at around 12.00pm. He told me it was an Iroquois helicopter with 2 pilots and 2 gunners.

This was obviously a very brave act, and they risked their own lives to save my dad's. We have no idea who that pilot was, and I've always thought about what I can do to find him and thank him. Thanks to that helicopter crew, my dad went on to have a wonderful life with a wife of 44 years, two kids and two grandchildren (who he adores). My Dad is a very proud Vietnam vet who marches every year in Perth's ANZAC Day parade (Australia's Memorial Day), and works hard to bring awareness and recognition to those who served.

If this story is familiar to anyone out there or you can help me find the amazing crew of that Iroquois, I would love to talk to you. Feel free to email me at [REDACTED]

Katie Bell

To: president@vhpa.org
Subject: aircraft parts

In the May-June 2017 issue of The VHPA Aviator there were a

couple of articles about the restoration of old Hueys, I then recalled that I have two dual com VHF radios in my possession that I would like to donate to an aircraft in rebuild. I do not have the wiring harness. I am sure you have the network in place to help make this happen.

Best of luck in your job. As a past multi-year VFW Post Commander, Chapter Adjutant & commander of an MOPH chapter and an MOPH Adjutant at state level I understand and appreciate your efforts.

Welcome Home!

Jim & Peggy Grant - Class 66-19/21
[REDACTED]

Sirs,

Huey UH-1E 255345 was donated to the Military Museum of the Mid-South and is associated with the local chapter of the MVPA, of which I am a member.

We need to verify what unit the aircraft was in when these safety reports were generated and if these reports are legitimate.

Hopefully someone in your organization will recognize the number. Would be great to have someone that flew, crewed or gunned from it give us their recollection of what the painted insignia would have been back then. And actually come see it in person if possible.

Thank You,

Raymond Knox: [REDACTED]

A LOOK AT THE 2017



Static display Grissom AFB -
courtesy Jim Barger



Vietnam era A/C and vehicles at
Grissom AFB-courtesy Jim Barger



USS Indianapolis Memorial
courtesy- Bob Rich



View from the JW Marriott
courtesy-Bob Rich



Indiana War Memorial Museum
courtesy-Glen Veno



Guess who?



The "O" Club
courtesy-Ralph Weber



Gary Roush receives an award for 31
years of volunteer service from John
Shafer - courtesy Gary Roush



Magic Show



Indianapolis City fireworks

INDIANAPOLIS REUNION



Murder Mystery Lunch



Canal walk



O Club



The JW Marriott.



Reception desk



Watching the ball game from the O club



Indianapolis Speedway Hall of Fame Museum



Guided tour of the race track facilities



The bricks in "The Brickyard"

All pictures not otherwise attributed are provided courtesy of Carolyn Kirk

See you at the next Reunion!

GOLD STAR FAMILY BREAKFAST CELEBRATES THE LIVES OF THOSE WE LOST

by JULIE KINK, sister of WO1 David Kink, C Troop 1/9th CAV KIA 8-3-1969

Surrounded by friends, fellow helicopter pilots and their families, Gold Star family members celebrated the lives of their lost loved ones at this year's VHPA Reunion in Indianapolis.

Thirty-six Gold Star family members plus about 100 VHPA members and their families attended the Gold Star Family Breakfast on July 2. With tears and laughter, Gold Star family members talked about the loved ones they lost to the war in Vietnam. It became evident that most knew very little about their loved one's time in Vietnam. Many had always longed to find his fellow aviators, but never knew how.

For those who lost a family member flying helicopters during the Vietnam War, the Gold Star Family Breakfast is an opportunity to learn about their brother, father, grandfather, uncle, husband, or cousin, from men who were there. Whether or not they knew the KIA personally, VHPA members warmly welcome Gold Star families, knowing that if circumstances had been different, it might be *their* family seeking answers.

I want to thank **VHPA Reunion Chair Mike Law**, **President John Shafer**, headquarters staff, especially **Sherry Rodgers**, and the generous sponsors whose contributions make this event possible. I also want to applaud two VHPA members who are especially passionate about Gold Star families: **Jim McLaughlin**, who provided every Gold Star family a CD showing the exact location of their loved one's loss; and **Jim Crigler**, who gave every Gold Star family a beautiful coin honoring their loved one, representing American Huey 369.

Families of the following attended the Gold Star Family Breakfast this year:

WO1 Peter Claus Behrens	SP4 Jeffrey John Klaves
CWO Edgar Davidson Berner	1LT Colin Keith Nichols
CWO Mark Dennis Clotfelter	1LT Michael Kent Nickerson
WO1 Gregory Stephen Crandall	CPT Neil George Reuter
WO1 Albert B. Crouch	1LT Thomas Francis Shaw
MSG Carl Marcus Eubanks	CPT James Garland Siddons
1LT Gary Dean Frasher	WO1 James George Zeimet
WO1 David Robert Kink	



Families of the fallen at the VHPA Reunion
Gold Star Family Breakfast, Indianapolis
(photo by Military Reunion Photography)

In 14 years, the Gold Star Family Breakfast has grown from five of us Gold Star sisters gathering informally for breakfast, to a signature event that has provided insight and healing for many hundreds of people. I'm personally proud of every Gold Star family, and every VHPA veteran, who attends. I know it takes a bit of courage to come.

As family members, we realize the reunion is your "party," and we don't mean to intrude. We know you carry the memory of your fallen buddies in your hearts, every day of the year. We are simply grateful to be able to gather in your presence to hear the stories we never got a chance to hear. I encourage all VHPA members to invite families of your fallen buddies to an upcoming reunion. Even if you don't know any Gold Star families, come to the Gold Star Family Breakfast and spend some time talking with the families who attend. Get to know us - we can be downright fun!

For the 2018 reunion in Atlanta, we will try to find families of the KIA pilots who were from the states surrounding Georgia; however, all Gold Star families are always welcome to attend. I feel confident encouraging Gold Star families to come, because I know that throughout the reunion, you will help them learn about chicken plates, C-4, pucker factor, elephant grass, incoming, cold showers, warm beer, burning barrels and other fringe benefits of your "all expenses paid trip" to tropical Vietnam.

Most of all, being in your midst tells us our loved ones will never be forgotten, and we are not alone in our loss. As my brother wrote in his last letter home: You're never alone on a mission.

Never forget.

Quilter's Show and Tell

This was our most successful quilt presentation effort to date. The presentation quilts were displayed in the vendor's room and generated a great deal of interest by quilters and other attendees. It was a real pleasure meeting and speaking with all the people who stopped to visit and admire the quilts and the reason for the display.

July 3rd, the quilters presented eight quilts, four of which were donated by Bonnie Moe of Illinois, to our veterans. A special "thank you" to Bonnie, and to all who donated blocks; those that assembled the quilt tops; and the dedicated quilter who made our "Quilts for Veterans" program such a success. We had approximately 50 in the audience for the presentation of the quilts which included quilters and other attendees who were interested. We also held our "show and tell" which included completed quilts, on-going projects and various quilt blocks for next year's quilts.

Already looking forward to next year's presentation! We anticipate meeting in the Kansas City area in early October to begin the assembly process for next year's quilt tops. If you are interested in helping, a few quilters are gathering for a several days of sewing to assemble the quilt tops in preparation to be quilted. If interested in joining us in Overland Park, KS, please contact me (see below) for more details.

The requirements for the blocks are the same as last year.

1. Please prewash all fabrics as some of the dark blues and reds are over dyed and may bleed.
2. Color scheme: red, white and blue, you may use one, two or all three colors
3. The blocks must be 12 1/2" x 12 1/2" unfinished. Please use 1/4" seams in your assembly.
4. Block design is of your choice, there are many to choose from, Rail Fence, 9-patch, Grandmother's Flower Garden, Appliqué block, Robbing Peter to Pay Paul, Orange Peel, Bowtie, just to name a few. They may be simple or as complex as you like.
5. Make one or more blocks as you wish, we will construct as many quilts as possible from the donated blocks and any blocks left over will be saved for the following year.
6. Please print your name and state on a slip of paper and pin to the back of each block(s).
7. Please bring your block(s) to the 2018 VHPA Reunion for Show and Tell.

If you are unable to attend the reunion; you may send the block(s) to Kathleen Sherfey, [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

By Kathleen Sherfey



Cladia Jenkins, with Kathleen Sherfey, displaying her work.



Drew Christensen



Tom Malley



Vendor Room Display.



Jim Ingersoll

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Information about you: Helicopters flown, medals/awards, talents, hobbies, and anything else:

How did you learn about the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association? Referred by? Was membership a gift? From whom?

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

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

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www.okvhpa.org

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Notice to all Members of the VHPA

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

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

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

ALAMO CHAPTER

Our ladies met for lunch at Olive Garden's IH-10 location in June on the 9th, and the men met at Chuy's IH-10 location on June 13th. Because of the national reunion in Indianapolis, the men did not meet in July. Some of the ladies lunched at the IH-10 Longhorn Steakhouse on July 14th, after the Reunion.

Some of our members and their ladies went to the VHPA Reunion in Indianapolis, of course. For the second time, the Alamo Chapter had its own table at the closing banquet. We thank President Jim Boykin and member Mike Law for arranging this table to continue the tradition. Some members chose to sit with their units, and we have no problem with that.

Alamo Chapter will meet at the Barn Door Restaurant in San Antonio in early October, for dinner and to hold elections for next year's officers. The exact date will be confirmed by email.

Our Christmas party is scheduled for the evening of Friday, December 1st, 2017, at the Army Residence Community (ARC) in San Antonio.

Members should watch for e-mails and check our Chapter website www.vhpa-alamo.org for details of future luncheons, the election meeting, and other scheduled events.

By Chuck Oualline

ARIZONA CHAPTER

Dear Arizona Chapter VHPA Members,

I am sorry that I've been off of the net for so long. I've had some major changes going on. I am trying to update the members' email files as my computer dumped. Many people may have also come and gone during this time. Some have changed their email providers. I am also using a new phone number and email address listed below. If you have not received an initial email test message and want to get in touch with me, please use my contact information below and I will add you to the roster.

I have also been working with a new organization. The Army Aviation Heritage Foundation has started an Arizona Chapter, AAHF AZ. We have been flying an AH-1F Cobra. It is now in California for the summer months and will return in October. The organization is working on restoring a UH-1B Gunship for display. They are always looking for new members and volunteers and you don't have to be an A&P to work on it.

I am planning a cookout the 14th of October with the AAHF AZ to celebrate Cobra 589's return. I will be putting out flyers to the members in September. Hope to see you there.

Bill Sorenson

GEORGIA CHAPTER

On July 15, 2017, our Georgia VHPA Chapter mustered its bi-monthly breakfast meeting at our tactical CP, the Marietta Rib Ranch (LZ Romeo Romeo).

Two of our members, David Sherrard and Ernest Pratt, attended the 2017 VHPA Reunion and reported their experiences. Again, during this meeting, there was considerable discussion regarding the 2018



Reunion scheduled for Atlanta. We are ready to show VHPA the Southern hospitality that gives this city its well-deserved name, Hot Lanta! And in July, it will be Hot!!

Our guest speaker for this meeting was CPT Melvin Pender (USA Ret.). Mel served 21 years in the Army, retiring in 1976. Mel enlisted in the Army during 1955. Subsequently, he attended OCS and interestingly, one of our Chapter members, David Sherrard (present for Mel's presentation), was one of Mel's OCS classmates. Mel subsequently served one tour in Vietnam as a rifle company commander. But, early in Mel's Army career his athletic skill and running speed was noticed on the football field and his coach encouraged him to try out for the US Olympics. While his sprinting speeds were world class, an injury prevented him from participating in the 1964 Tokyo Olympics. But he did participate in the 1968 Summer Olympics in Mexico where he anchored a gold medal win in the 4x100m relay. Mel brought in the medal and passed it around for all to examine. We learned that the medal is not solid gold, but is gold plated. After Mel retired from active duty he became head track coach at the US Military Academy. Mel is the author of 'Expressions of Hope, the Mel Pender Story.'

Our next meeting is scheduled for 23 September 2017. Our guest speaker for this meeting will be Susan Clotfelter Jimison. Susan's brother, Mark Clotfelter, was a Cobra gunship pilot assigned to the 361st Aviation Company. Mark was killed in 1968 while supporting a US Army Special Forces Camp under enemy siege. Susan wrote a book about her brother entitled, Dear Mark, that was nominated for 2015 Georgia Author of the Year award in the memoir category. Susan also authored another book, Through the Eyes of a Tiger, The John Donovan Story. This book is about a distant relative who flew with the American volunteer Group during WWII, known as the Flying Tigers.

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

By Bob Lanzotti, President

OLD DOMINION CHAPTER

Up Coming Events:

SEPTEMBER 2017

Luncheon Meeting: Saturday 9 Sept 2017 Legend Brewing Co 321 West 7th Street Richmond, VA 23224 13:00 hours.

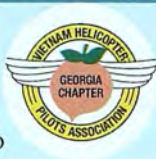
Wives/Significant others always welcome.

Day trip Cruise to Tangier Island, date to be determined later <https://tangiercruise.com/>

NAS Oceana Air Show 16 & 17 September, Blue Angels performing Virginia Beach

OCTOBER 2017

Wednesday 4 Oct 2017 4PM to 8 PM Chesterfield Kiwanis Vietnam Veteran Welcome Home Event and Dinner for Vietnam Veterans and Spouse at the Chesterfield County Fairgrounds 10,300 Courthouse Rd Chesterfield, VA 23832



VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

Train Ride, Autumn Rambler, Old Dominion Chapter National Railway Historical Society, and Buchingham Branch Railroad, Dillwyn, VA date and time to be determined later.
<https://odcnrhts.ticketleap.com/>

NOVEMBER 2017

Normal Meeting Saturday 13:00 hours 4 November, Legend Brewery, Richmond, VA

DECEMBER 2017

Christmas Gala with Richmond Chapter MOAA.
www.racmoaa.org

Volunteering to lay wreaths on graves at Arlington National Cemetery
<https://wreaths.fastport.com/donateLocation.html?page=14720>

Chapter Officers:

President - Don Agren

Vice President - Jim Squyres

Treasurer - James Holden

Secretary - Hugh Adams

Webmaster - Frosty Price

ROCKY MOUNTAIN CHAPTER AND THE HELICOPTER WAR MUSEUM (HWM)

The Chapter meeting was held at the American Legion Post #1 on June 21. Chapter Officer Elections were held at this meeting. All incumbents were reelected to their previous posts - Dale House; President, Doug Neil, Vice President, Jim McNamee, Treasurer and Bill Bates, Secretary. Although not elected positions, Terry Olson is Museum Operations Officer; and Dale House continues as Museum Curator. We held the meeting on Wednesday with the American Legion hosting lunch. Due to the national reunion, a July meeting was not held.

We did not attend the Greeley Stampede Event as planned. Last minute changes by the organizers prevented us from attending due to available space to locate our trailer. We had two successful events: one at Bandimere Speed Way and the other at the City of Golden's 4th of July celebrations. Docents for Bandimere were; Carl and Barbara Cavaluzzi, Dale House, Bill Bates, Rick Beaver, Doug Neil, Greg Mann, Walt Wise, and Bill Robie. Docents for the 4th of July were; Carl and Barbara Cavaluzzi, Dale and Candy House and friend Trish Flaherty, Bill Bates, Rick Beaver, Doug Neil, Greg Mann and friend Debra, Cliff Lawson, George Mayl, and Bill Robie. Members Rick Johnson and Mike Silva and their spouses visited in the afternoon. Proceeds for both events were allocated to the Colorado Freedom Memorial, Aurora, CO, which was recently vandalized.

Because of the generous donation, the Chapter voted to be given to the Colorado Freedom Memorial, Rick Crandall, radio announcer for KEWZ Cruisin' 1430, invited us to ceremonies at the Freedom

Memorial in Aurora where we presented a check for \$500.

Other Chapter and Upcoming Activities:

Chapter member Cliff Lawson, a Denver area photographer, continues to provide portraits of our members. We are hoping more members take advantage of this opportunity. We will report on August 12 at the Erie Air Fair in Erie, CO and our attendance at Broomfield Days, in Broomfield, CO in the next issue of the Aviator.

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. Visit our Web site at www.RMCVHPA.com

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. 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

UTAH CHAPTER

We will be holding our first information presentation booth in conjunction with the Utah chapter of the Combat Vets Motorcycle Associations annual 'Ride to Zero' fundraiser on Aug 26th to help prevent veterans' suicides in conjunction with the University of Utah's National Center for Veterans Studies.

Several members of the chapter will man a booth at the event being held at the Legends Motorcycle Emporium in Springville, UT. This is the third year the CVMA chapter has held this fundraiser. To date, they have raised from sponsors and registrations over \$17,000; with a goal of \$30,000 towards the University of Utah's program. The UTVHPA chapter is hoping our presence will encourage all vets to help our fellow vets seek help. We have also invited a Vietnam vet who is instrumental in the Utah VA's Agent Orange program to join our endeavors.

Over 300 riders participate in the event every year. UTVHPA will be on hand to answer questions about helicopters in Vietnam and have on display various pieces of Vietnam Memorabilia. The Utah Veterans Association is providing copies of their 50th anniversary book on Vietnam veterans from Utah as well as buttons and lapel pins commemorating the 50th anniversary of Vietnam. UTVHPA will be displaying their new banner and logo which will be used for additional presentations throughout the state for other local and civic organizations. UTVHPA has been invited to present at several Civil Air Patrol squadrons in the fall. Our members are anxious to be present and provide information on helicopter usage in Vietnam. We're hoping to attract additional members to the UTVHPA chapter.

By Doug Drury, President



VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

ALASKA CHAPTER

Alaska VHPA is in full summer mode, and busy as all chapters are. A small group of us made it to Fairbanks to dine with our Northern-most VHPA buddies. Wonderful gathering and the internationally famous Mid-Night Sun Baseball game between the Fairbanks 49ers and the San Diego Waves made for a spectacular evening. Playing Baseball at Midnight without lights, wow what fun!



Setting Sail!

Of course, where would we be without our annual Halibut fishing weekend? Best fish goes to John Ulsher with a 120 pound halibut. Lots of other smaller but good eating fish made sure everyone went home with plenty of great fresh halibut! Had a nice turnout and a great time, on and off the water! This event is getting bigger every year and we are ready looking forward to it again next year.

Those who had the opportunity to be at the Reunion this year, especially David Buirge, wanted to pass on another fantastic job! The side tours were fun, hotel very nice, and just another excellent job! A big thank you to all who put on another wonderful reunion.

Meanwhile, back in Alaska, our local VA is hosting a health fair and information day on the 29th of July that includes a motorcycle rally. This is a great way to get the word out and help other Veterans with information and contacts. Probably will not get pictures in time for



this article but expect a good turnout.

Our summer picnic will be August 12th at the Palmer American Legion Post. They have really helped make this event a wonderful gathering.

We have our fall dinner the 10th of November at the Eagle River VFW and expect a large turn out as usual. If you're in the area please plan to join us. More info at www.VHPA-Alaska.org Pride in knowing we flew

**By Nomad 23, Lynn Kile,
President**



John's Big un' with George Vraniak and Tom Blake looking on



Midnight Baseball



Fishing Group

CALIFORNIA NORTH CHAPTER

CCN lost our Huey parking this past year. 563 has been parked in a friends hay barn since then, but it was time to start filling the barn up with hay again! We have had no luck finding a new home for



563. So, on 20-21 June, Ken Fritz went above and beyond to make a driveway to access the rear of his barn to park the Huey. CCN paid for 2 loads of gravel. Ken paid for one larger load. After 8 hours filling with dirt to make the road and parking spot, it took more than 10 hrs to spread, smooth, level, and compact 38.5 tons of gravel. Ken's small tractor burned about 14 gallons of diesel and his back was killing him when finished, but it looks pretty good. As Ken said, "I sort of wish I had a larger tractor, but" More final finish work will be done in July - THANKS KEN FRITZ

A few CCN members that did not make the Indianapolis Reunion made an extra special effort of firsts over the 4th of July weekend. We participated for the first time in 3 different parades, 2 of which were in the San Francisco Bay area. A lot of work, but lots of great crowd response.

First up - CCN showed off Huey 563 in the Galt Independence Day Parade on July 1. We were a feature attraction at the BBQ and display of military vehicles the day before at the Best Western Motel.



Gravel by the truck load!

Kudos to Ken Lake, Jim Stein, and Curt Knapp for making it happen. 563 then was taken back to LZ Fritz.

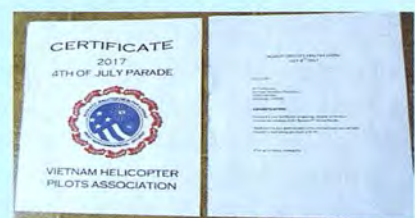
Second Parade - 563 left LZ Fritz at 2PM on 3 July to make the journey to Benicia. The city of Benicia held its annual Torch Light Parade on July 3rd at 6:30PM. Cool weather, a great BBQ dinner before the parade, and a large warm crowd greeted 563 and its crew, Dave Anderson, Jim Stein, and Curt



Galt Parade



Benicia Torchlight Parade 2017



CCN won Second Place for Best Float in the Novato 4th of July Parade

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES



Curt, Al, Ken, and Ed

Knapp. Thanks also to Ken Lake who helped escort 563 down from Sacramento. Immediately after the parade, Dave Anderson, Jim Stein, and Curt Knapp convoyed 563 to Novato for parking overnight, to be ready for the Novato parade the next morning.

Little known facts: Benicia was the first capitol of California, and the Benicia Arsenal was an active military post from 1849 to 1964.

Third Parade - 563 was a proud first-time participant in the annual Novato 4th of July Parade. A big thank-you goes out to the crew of Curt Knapp, Jim Stein, Ken Lake, and Mike Whitten. Curt was able to jump out of the pick up and take these pictures, but they do not do justice to the huge and appreciative crowd lining the street along the entire route. The Huey was then displayed with other military vehicles and then was convoyed back to LZ Fritz by Curt Knapp, Jim Stein, and Ken Lake.

To finish off July, on 29 July CCN displayed our heritage and our Huey at yet another hugely attended event, the Midnight Mass Car Show at the Yolo County Fairgrounds in Woodland. Show officials estimated the attendance at over 6,000 people and 700 vehicles. Curt Knapp drove the Huey with Ed Morris as flight lead. Ken Lake flew Tail End Charlie with his RV which provided overnight rest and recuperation for the crew since as the name implies the show did not end until midnight. Al Doucette was his usual great help with table, chairs, and Vietnam stories from an old-timer. Greg Hutson showed up after the set-up work was done of course (RLO!), but his smile and enthusiasm completed the well-qualified team of CCN volunteers. Ron and Connie Warner from the VHPA So Cal chapter even stopped by during a family visit. Our LZ was the very first thing the attendees saw coming through the gate, and that spot was absolutely the best for observing every vehicle as they entered and left the show grounds. We had many hundreds of people and families climb in the Huey. I don't think we have ever shaken more hands as people said thank you for your service. It was a long, warm and fun day.

In other news, lifetime VHPA member William John Robertson



Large crowds after dark

donated one of Joe Kline's lithographs of "Gods Own Lunatics" to VHPA-CCN. John flew this aircraft-call sign "Pollution 4", out of Bien Hoa for the 118th ASH Company. - Thanks JOHN.

We are looking forward to our CCN meeting and BBQ on 12 AUG, and six more parades and displays this year including a two-day Welcome Home Vietnam Vets event at the Red Oak Victory Ship Museum in Richmond, CA on October 7 and 8. The Red Oak is last Victory ship floating. It delivered ammunition in WWII, Korea, and Vietnam. We are also signed up for the first time at the Stockton Veteran's Day Display sponsored by the Village Barber Shop. They'll be lots of military vehicles, a band, a BBQ, and even a flyby.

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

By Dave Anderson,
VHPA-CCN webmaster



And of course Hot Rods



God's Own Lunatics



Stockton Veterans Day Flyby 2016



CCN won First Place for Best Float in Benicia Torch Light Parade



Large crowds on Memorial Day

MICHIGAN CHAPTER

The Michigan Chapter has been very busy in recent months and that promises to continue until Fall. Following are some of our activities.

Chapter Member-At-Large Bob Rich created our chapter logo and modified it for the available clothing line. At the chapter meeting on May 6th he brought a beautiful wooden plaque of the logo he made. This was at the Log Jam Restaurant in Grand Ledge which has been our "HQ" for the past several Spring meetings. The management at the Log Jam agreed to mount the plaque in the Back



Room where we meet. Many thanks to Bob for his continued support and his outstanding art work on behalf of the chapter.

The very first NW Michigan Chapter VHPA luncheon was held on Thursday the 8th of June at Bradys in Traverse City. Chapter Member-At-Large Mark Benjamin organized and hosted the event. This event was full of the usual fine fellowship and friendship typically on display in all VHPA events. This is now a regularly scheduled event at noon on the second Thursday of each month at Bradys, 401 S. Union St., Traverse City, MI.

After lunch, most of the group drove over to the Coast Guard Air

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

Station for a brief tour of this outstanding aviation unit. This distinguished group is standing directly in front of an HH-60 Jayhawk USCG variant of the Army Blackhawk. In the background is an MH-65 Dolphin. Both were undergoing extensive maintenance while the other four Air Station aircraft were out flying various Great Lakes Coast Guard missions. Missing from the photo are Ed Canright and our tour guide LT Erin Nolan. Erin completed Navy pilot training and received her wings less than a month ago. She will soon go to Mobile Alabama for a three-month HH-60 transition course and then return to the unit here in Traverse City. Thanks Erin!!



Michigan Chapter VHPA Logo by Bob Rich.

L-R Ron Meeker, Peter Fabien, Bob Matlis, John Johnson, Mark Benjamin, Walter Topp. Not pictured Barry Witt.



L-R Ron Meeker, Peter Fabien, Bob Matlis, John Johnson, Mark Benjamin, Walter Topp. Not pictured Barry Witt.

The second monthly lunch for NW Michigan VHPA was held on Thursday the 13th of July at Bradys in Traverse City.



VHPA Canopy.

The pool tournament was cancelled to allow more time for storytelling. The next lunch will be once again at Bradys at noon on Thursday August 10th. Perhaps at that time, the stories will give way to pool playing, but that's pretty doubtful.

Mark Benjamin, Tomahawk23 Member-At-Large

Mark was also the OIC for the Michigan Chapter's participation in Ramp Night. The U.S. Coast Guard Air Station in Traverse City, MI held its annual open house on June 30th. The open house has become known as "Ramp Night" within the local community. This event is held every year on the Friday night before the annual National Cherry festival Saturday and Sunday air show. This year's air show featured a US Coast Guard helicopter rescue demonstration, the USAF Thunderbirds, the US Army Golden Knights, an A-10 as well as US Marine F/A-18 demonstration teams, Canadian Forces aircraft and many civilian air show acts. All were on static display for viewing by nearly ten thousand people from the local community.

VHPA Michigan was well represented with an organization tent and several members on hand. This is an annual event and we expect to participate again next year and beyond.

Mark was also interviewed by a local radio station on the morning of the event and did an outstanding job of honoring our fallen comrades by noting their sacrifice and the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots and



Lunch Gang L-R Clay & Linda Maxwell, Ed Canright, Walter Topp, Lee & Carol Luck, Robert & Mary Matlis, Mark Benjamin



L-R Peter Fabien, Mark Benjamin, Sandy McLeod, Walter Topp.



Lee Luck presenting check to VHPA President John Shafer for the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots and Crewmembers Monument.



L-R Walter Topp, Mark Benjamin, Sandy McLeod.



Front L-R Carol Luck, Joyce Offhaus, Kathy Edlefson, Sue Opie, Leigh Opie, Back L-R Lee Luck, Larry Edlefson, Rod Offhaus, Mark Benjamin, Charles Opie, Bob Rich, Jim Opie.

Crewmembers Monument at Arlington National Cemetery. His interview also well represented the Michigan Chapter & the national VHPA while making a good plug for Ramp Night.

VHPA Reunion Attendees from Michigan Chapter: According to

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

the VHPA Reunion Morning Report, 21 VHPA members from Michigan attended. 15 of them were Michigan Chapter Members.

Chapter Member-At-Large Lee Luck AKA Capt. Lucky filed this AAR for 2017 VHPA Reunion in Indianapolis, IN:

Saturday July 1: Lee & Carol Luck arrived at the J W Marriott in the p.m. Met with Mark Benjamin and during dinner planned next day's activities.

Sunday July 2: 3:00 to 5:00 pm get together for MI Chapter Members at O'Club suggested by Bob Rich. Bob and Cpt Lucky took on the roles of hosts. Mark was the recruitment officer, having brought signup forms and the Michigan chapter banner & logo. Having a prime location at the entrance to the O'Club, we were able to meet and greet the VHPA attendees as they came in and solicited their possible membership in our chapter. The first chapter pictures were taken that night and of course the ladies were invited to be in the pictures. This first get together lasted most of the night.

Monday July 3: 3:00 to 5:00 pm. Get-together resumed at O'Club. More new faces showing up, making more recruitment opportunities available. Second chapter pictures were taken and this get-together also lasted most of the night.

Tuesday July 4: Attended HUEY 369 event in Peru, IN. Mark came up for the event and left for home in the afternoon; thanks for all your help, Mark. Bob also had to leave the VHPA reunion. He also contributed greatly to our success in growing our chapter membership. Thanks, Bob.

Wednesday July 5: VHPA annual business meeting 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. I was called forward by chapter liaison John Sorensen (now



Tour Group L-R Clay & Linda Maxwell, Walter Topp, Lee & Carol Luck, Mark Benjamin, Bob & Mary Matlis.

vice president) to present the check for \$1,750.00 raised by our Michigan chapter members for the Vietnam Helicopters Pilots and Crew Member Monument to be placed in Arlington National Cemetery. John Sorensen called for all Michigan members to stand and I handed the presentation check to VHPA president John Shafer. Before stepping down, I challenged all VHPA chapters to make contributions for monument. The South Missouri chapter presented a check for

\$700.00 after us.

Many thanks and a well-earned salute to our chapter president for all his hard work, also conceiving and heading up the effort to raise the monies for the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots and Crew Members Monument. Thank you, Richard Deer aka Blue Star Leader Captain Lucky

Michigan Chapter Members are also receiving information about a new lunch gathering with miniature golf added in Milford being hosted August 5 by Peter Holden. And Vice President Dave James is heading up our upcoming participation in Mason Aviation Days August 19 and the Maple Grove Fly In and Veterans tribute on September 10.

For any VHPA members in or near Michigan who would like to be added to our email list for updates on our activities, contact me at [REDACTED] You do not have to join the Michigan chapter to be listed as an interested party if you prefer.

Submitted by,

Rich Deer, President, Michigan Chapter

NORTH CAROLINA CHAPTER

It is hard to believe that the summer is almost gone! The Ladies and Aviators of the North Carolina Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association have had another exciting year and we are looking forward to our remaining travels.

On June 3rd Brock Nicholson, Sam McLamb and Ed Hughes took the UH-1M (Medivac) and the OH-6 Scout to Princeton, NC for their Community Days. We saw a small but enthusiastic crowd.

Then on June 24th, Jerry and Barbra Seago, Brock and Colleen Nicholson and Ed and Claudia Hughes took the UH-1M (Medivac) and the UH-1H to Lewisburg, PA for their 4th of July Parade. Yes, I know it is a week early, but all the participants want to be "off" on the 4th, so they celebrate early. What a parade, almost 200 floats, the streets are lined three deep for over a mile



Five helicopters on display at the North Carolina Transportation Museum.



Evening in Lewisburg PA.

and what patriotism. This was our third year in PA and we look forward to more.

Finally, on July 1, 2 and 3rd we took five helo's to The North Carolina Transportation Museum in Spencer, NC.



After a LOOONG day in the sun, we enjoyed an adult beverage.

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

The OH-6, AH-1, UH-1H, OH-58 and the UH-1M (Medivac) were on display. It is a great location for the family to spend the day learning about "Transportation" in NC. I think I saw the Piedmont Airplane that started me on my trip to Vietnam in 1970.

Future vents

- August 1st, National Night Out, New Bern NC.
- Oct 14th and 15th Mum Festival, New Bern, NC.
- Nov 9th thru the 13th National Archives, Washington DC for the Opening of their Vietnam Program.

By Ed Hughes, President



Jerry Seago with the UH-1M set up in one of the Sponsor's parking lots.



Oh-6 and UH 1-M at Princeton NC for Community Days.

NORTH ALABAMA CHAPTER

The summer months have seen the NAHPA at work in our community and attending the VHPA Annual Reunion in Indianapolis.

June 17th saw the chapter supporting the Redstone and NASA in the Park exhibits at Big Spring Park in Huntsville, AL. The following is the description of the event from the NAVHPA Secretary, Sam Maki, "What a day! Along with NASA and Redstone Arsenal displays, the NAVHPA Chapter was invited to display Buc-3. The day started at 9:30AM and ended about 3:30PM. To say it was a very warm, humid day would be an understatement. The temperature hit a high of 92 with a heat index of about 105 degrees. Plenty of water was sucked down and buckets of sweat released. The pictures don't show the numbers of young children and adults we put in and out of old Buc-3. But even with the heat and sweat, we old guys still find it so rewarding to see the kids and their parents having fun. For many it's the first and maybe the only time they get to have a hands-on experience with a helicopter. They get to push, pull controls and work all those knobs and switches. Good thing we don't have to fly it! After we get Buc-3 packed up and gone, and you get home and have that wonderful shower along with an adult beverage and you think back on what your day was like, it was still fun."

Later in the month, we exhibited Buc-3 in McMinnville, TN on 23-24 June. The exhibition was well received by one and all. But we have come to expect that. On our way back from a great trip up, great evening and a great event on Saturday, we packed up and hit the road back to MDQ. As we were towing our Huey in Tennessee, we got off I-24 cruising down a nice four lane and "BOOM!!". Sam Maki was trail and he could hear that tire explode. We finally found a place to pull off and evaluate our problem. Yup, a flat right front tire. Due to the fact we didn't have the support trailer with some badly needed items, we did some field expedient "Lamonting." It was a good thing we had some pieces of wood to get the one tire off the road. And what a great idea that we made the skids removable just for this situation. As you can tell, the Treasurer, Sandy Weand, was there to help with this situation. We don't have to lie to Sandy about needing a tire!!! After that, the rest of the trip was safe. We are thinking we need more tools and stuff in the tool box.

Then many from our chapter were off to Indianapolis, IN for a



14 members of the NAVHPA, and their spouses, gathered for pictures in Indianapolis.



Many children visited Buc-3 during the Redstone in the Park exhibit, this visitor was unique.



For a very hot day in June, Buc-3 was a big draw. The crowds were large and appreciative.



NAVHPA members and spouses feeding the less fortunate in July.



NAVHPA Treasurer Sandy Weand learns to change a tire (after removing a skid tube).

break and more fun. We had 17 from the North Alabama Chapter making the reunion this year. Some of us brought our RVs. The NAVHPA shared a mini-reunion suite with the 176th folks again this year. Between the scheduled activities and many, many other social get togethers, your author suspects some "Adult" beverages were consumed.

The Chapter thanks Nancy and Jim Burch, Bob Utecht and Bob Monette for serving dinner and help with the clean-up at the HSV

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

Downtown Rescue Mission Thursday, 20 July 2017. We served around 150-160 folks that evening. As always, once we start serving it moves at a pretty good pace. This is a very rewarding experience.

The chapter continues to meet at the Schnitzel Ranch, 501 Church St., Huntsville, AL 35801 on the 2nd Monday of each month at 6:30 PM (1830). Stop in when you get a chance.

If you live in the North Alabama and Middle Tennessee areas, 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. We have heard all of each other's. We need new war stories! "There I was..."

Ralph Weber

OHIO RIVER LZ CHAPTER

Our 31st Annual Reunion will take place in Frankfort, KY. The dates are the 6th, 7th, and 8th of April 2018. We have already made great progress in putting the major pieces in place for the 2018 reunion. The hotel space is set for the Capitol Plaza in downtown Frankfort, KY. Make your reservations early for there will be a choice of rooms. We have asked the Governor to address our dinner group. The menu for the dinner has not been set yet nor the venue.

These are some of the following tours and events possible for next year's reunion:

- Buffalo Trace Distillery Tour
- Keeneland Race Track
- Hero's Tour (includes 3-5 stops in Frankfort)
- Kentucky State University (Aquaculture tour and complementary lunch)
- Kentucky History Center
- Kentucky Horse Park
- Possible tour of the Governor's Mansion on April 6th



Vietnam Memorial. The shadow covers that name of the veteran on the day he was killed in Vietnam.

(we will need to determine interest prior to booking)

All schedules are tentative and there may also be a limit to total number or participants on some activities such as Keeneland, The Governor's Mansion tour and other events. Early registration may be required for the VIP area for opening day at Keeneland.

Our web site will reflect the latest information and the registration form should be available in late September or early October.

By Robert Blair

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

SoCal VHPA member Bob Piatt from Huntington Beach CA was the first to ride front seat in AH-1 Cobra 589. The Cobra is from the Army Aviation Heritage Foundation, Atlanta GA. With the help from SoCal members John Harris, Ron Warner, John Staugaard, Jim Davidson, Andy Hoder, Russ Chung and Steve Lund, Cobra 589 will be in SoCal thru the summer giving rides at air shows and aviation functions. The Cobra is nicknamed Black Pearl and is currently operating out of Yanks Museum, Chino CA. On Sep-



Bob Piatt



Static Display

tember 30 Cobra 589 will return to its base at Falcon Field, Mesa AZ with the AAHF Arizona Chapter.

SOUTH MISSOURI CHAPTER

The second quarter meeting of the South Missouri Chapter of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association was held at Uncle Buck's, located at the Bass Pro Shop in Springfield, MO. The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a period of silence in remembrance of those who fell while serving in hostile zones and those who have fallen since returning home.

Dennis Wilson, former mayor of Rolla, MO, attended the meeting



Dining at the Bass Pro Shop



Dining at the Bass Pro Shop

as a guest of Dick Elgin. Dennis is a retired Army aviator, fixed and rotary wing rated.

John Sorensen announced several activities being conducted at the

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

College of the Ozarks in the near future. College of the Ozarks will host its 28th annual Honor America Celebration on campus Sunday, June 25, 2017. A special addition this year is the United States Army Parachute Team, nicknamed and commonly known as the Golden Knights. They will perform a night pyrotechnic jump from approximately 12,000 feet, just prior to the fireworks. The College of the Ozarks (C of O) Associates BBQ is on Thursday, July 13, at 6:30 p.m., in the Good Memorial College Center, lower level.

He also announced that the commemorative monument proposal at Arlington National Cemetery has been accepted by the VHPA Executive Council. Several chapters have begun collecting donations for this Vietnam Helicopter Pilot and Crewmember Monument. He requested that any chapter members wishing to contribute to contact him with their contributions. Monies collected for this monument were presented to John Shafer, VHPA President, at the reunion in July.

The third quarter meeting is scheduled for September 23, 2017, at 11:00 a.m., at the Hy-Vee Club Room, 405 E. Nifong Boulevard, Columbia, MO. This meeting will include the election of officers. The meal at this meeting will be provided by the chapter. The featured speaker is scheduled to be COL Donald "Doc" Ballard, US Army National Guard (Ret). COL Ballard received the Congressional Medal of Honor for actions while serving as a Navy medical corpsman with the 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, 3rd Marine Division in Quang Tri province in May, 1968.

On Veterans Day, Saturday, November 11, 2017, the chapter will meet on the campus of the College of the Ozarks in Point Lookout (Branson), MO. The meeting will begin with the laying of a wreath at the Missouri Vietnam Veterans Memorial on the college's campus at

12:30. It will then move across the street to the Keeter Center for lunch and a short program. Missouri Governor Greitens and LT Governor Parson have both been invited to attend the meeting and speak. Both are military veterans. Joining the chapter will be members of the Ozark Empire Area Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA). Should you be in the Branson area over Veterans Day, contact our chapter for more information about the meeting.

Dick Elgin spoke briefly of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial State Park (Memorial) in Angel Fire, NM. The park provides a memorial to veterans and a Visitors Center that serve as a place for reunion, reflection, healing, and sharing of experiences. The memorial was originally known as the Vietnam Veterans Peace and Brotherhood Chapel and had its origins in a battle near Con Thien, South Vietnam in which 16 men lost their lives. Among the men, was David Westphall, son of Victor and Jeanne Westphall. Thanks to their vision and determination the memorial exists today to honor not only these 16 Marines but all members of America's armed forces.

The main speaker of the day was Glen Amundsen with Honor Flight of the Ozarks, located in Springfield, MO. He discussed the challenges facing the Honor Flight programs today in dealing with the benefactors of the program, World War II, Korea and terminally ill veterans. It is an all-volunteer organization that is dependent on individual volunteers, on private donations, and on corporate sponsorship. An effort is being made to reach out to these veterans to enable them to travel to see their memorials while they are able. More information is available at their website, <http://www.honorflightoftheozarks.org/>.

By John Wilkinson, President 2015-2017

UPPER MIDWEST CHAPTER

The Upper Midwest Chapter is located in the area of Eastern Minnesota and Western Wisconsin, and includes the Minneapolis and St. Paul metro area. We are a small but growing chapter and are looking for other Vietnam helicopter pilots in to join us in fellowship and fun with a group of likeminded comrades. For more information on meeting time, location, activities, and social events, please contact Dick Anderson, our chapter Secretary, phone 763-441-5847 or email richcheranderson@hotmail.com. Information about the chapter meeting time and location can also be found at Upper Midwest Chapter Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association on Facebook. Chapter meetings occur six times a year on the third Thursday of January, March, May, July, September, and November. July and November are social dinner. Events with a spouse or significant other

On July 25th the chapter met for a social dinner cruise on the St Croix River that borders Minnesota and Wisconsin. This was our third annual boat cruise. Seventeen members and guests attended the dinner cruise.

Our next meeting will be September 21st at the New Richmond Wisconsin Airport where Chapter member Dave Schmidt hangers his flyable UH-1H helicopter. Dave and his owner partner fly the Huey to numerous aviation and veteran events during the year. They



July 25 Social



Dave Schmidt's Huey

are currently participating in the EAA Oshkosh Airshow. The chapter is fortunate to have Dave as a member. He allows



Jim Crigler

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

other members to accompany him on flying events to tell our Vietnam story. The Chapter also has access to a trailered UH-1H helicopter through a local VVA chapter. We partner with them for presentations at schools and veterans events.

Chapter member Jim Crigler is currently canoeing the length of the Mississippi River from its source in northern Minnesota to the delta in New Orleans. His mission is to honor and get better recognition for our Gold Star Families and to raise money for American Huey

369. He is currently stopped at Cape Girardeau, MO due to dangerous flooding conditions. He will attempt to start again mid August depending on flood conditions. We are all proud of Jim's dedication to his cause and determination to help the Gold Star families. Jim's adventure can be followed on Facebook at: Mission of Honor - Mississippi Gold Star Paddle.

By Bert Leach and Jim Bankston

WASHINGTON STATE CHAPTER

The Washington State Chapter of the Viet Nam Helicopter Pilots Association is actively supporting the Viet Nam recognition efforts in the Spokane, Washington area. The KSPS Public Television Station, along with Eastern Washington University, is sponsoring "The Wall That Heals", a 250-foot replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, on August 24-27, 2017 at Mirabeau Park in Spokane Valley. Additionally, a mobile education center and three public forums about the Viet Nam War, developed by Eastern Washington University, will be presented. These Programs lead up to the 10-part historical documentary series, produced by acclaimed documentarian Ken Burns, "The Vietnam War," in September.

"The Wall That Heals" will be strategically located across the street from the Spokane Vet Center. These clinicians specialize in working with combat Veterans and their families. This placement will ensure that clinical support resources will be readily available to our local combat Veterans and family members. The Vet Center, the largest in



Chapter Meeting

the nation, will be in operation 24 hours a day to assist with any support required for Viet Nam veterans who might want to avail themselves of their services.

The Washington Chapter is also bringing a UH-1 Huey to the event from the Flight Museum, Olympia, WA. It will be stationed in proximately to the Wall and staffed with VHPA members from both sides of the state. All of the sponsoring organizations were extremely happy to have the huey located with The Wall, as it is the iconic representation of the Viet Nam War.

By Jerry Mellick

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ALEXANDER, RONALD D. USA;
Flight Class: 68-22; RVN: 69-70, A/1/9
CAV 1 CAV; Callsign: Apache 37.

Roland Alexander died January 27, 2017. No obituary was posted.

Blair, John M. USA COL
(Ret.); Flight Class: 60-1;
RVN 66-67 229 AVN 1
CAV; Callsign: Shooting
Star 6.



John M. "Jack" Blair was born on September 28, 1930, in Waynesboro, PA. After suffering many medical complications, Jack passed away on July 2, 2017. Jack grew up in Quincy, PA. He attended Quincy High School and graduated from Valley Forge Military Academy in 1949. On September 12, 1953, Jack married his high school sweetheart, Joanne Aughanbaugh.

At age 17, Jack enlisted in the Army National Guard. During the outbreak of the Korean War, his unit was federalized. He was then selected for Officer Candidate School (OCS) and commissioned as a second lieutenant in 1951. He first served as a field artillery officer and later as a paratrooper with the 82nd Airborne. During the Vietnam War, he was the commanding officer of a Huey helicopter gunship battalion with the First Air Cavalry. He was heavily decorated during his 26 years of service, including a Silver Star, Bronze Star, Distinguished Flying Cross and two Purple Hearts. Jack retired from the Army as a Colonel in 1974, beginning a second career as a guidance counselor in Alaska for the Anchorage School District. Jack spent several summers flying helicopters for the Alyeska Pipeline and U.S. Forestry Service. He also pursued a third career as residential real estate agent until his final retirement in 2001.

Jack earned a Bachelor of Science in Biology from St. Benedict's College in Leavenworth, KS; a M.Ed. from the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, VA.; and a Ph.D. in Leadership and Human Behavior from USIU in San Diego, CA

Boemerman, George F.
USMC LTC (Ret.); Flight
Class: 54-14; RVN: 64-65
HMM-365.

George "Boomer" passed away peacefully, but suddenly on Thursday, July 13, 2017, in



Santa Rosa, CA. He was 84 years old. He was born on October 15, 1932. George grew up in Brooklyn, NY. Later, George moved to Greenwood Lake, NJ with his mother before enlisting in the Marine Corps in 1950. George married Shirley June Dutton in Corpus Christi on December 15, 1955.

George's 23-year military career moved his family all over the world including Japan, Florida, Hawaii, California, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, Illinois, and Texas. George and Shirley loved traveling, and later enjoyed touring the country in their motor home. George retired in 1976 from the Marine Corps. He was highly decorated for his years of exceptional service, receiving two Distinguished Flying Crosses, a Bronze Star, the Vietnamese Cross, and 35 Air Medals. He will forever hold the U.S. Marine Corps record of being the only person in history to have been a drill instructor, a paratrooper, a combat A-6 pilot, and a combat helicopter pilot. He had made more than 150 carrier landings throughout his career. After Shirley passed, George found happiness by taking Marilyn Miller Williams of Petaluma, CA as his second wife on May 3, 2014.

Davis, Charles O. USA
CW4 (Ret.); Flight Class:
58-1; RVN: 62-63 UTT,
67-68 179 ASHC; Call-
sign: Shrimboat.



Charles Oliver Davis, 84 years old, went to be with the Lord, Friday, June 16, 2017, at the VA Medical Center, in Asheville, NC. He was a dedicated husband, father, grandfather, and great grandfather and truly impacted everyone he knew. He is survived by his wife of 62 years, Geraldine Collins Davis.

Charles Davis was born in Black Mountain, NC in 1932. He entered active duty military service in 1949 and his service would span the course of 30 years. Although he held many positions, aviation would become his specialty. Davis achieved the rank of Chief Warrant Officer 4, and was awarded numerous medals including the Distinguished Flying Cross, Purple Heart, and 30 Air Medals. He also earned a Bachelor's Degree in Business. His military career began as an Army paratrooper medic, serving in Korea. In 1956, he took the opportunity to attend flight school in Ft. Wolters, TX. He eventually returned to North Carolina and was assigned

to Ft. Bragg, as an Army flight instructor. In 1961, he was re-assigned to Okinawa to the infamous UTT (Utility Tactical Transport Helicopter Company) which would play a huge role in the Vietnam War. Even before the Vietnam War started, Davis was considered a highly experienced pilot. After his military career concluded, he became involved in law enforcement in south Alabama, and worked his way to becoming a police chief before finally returning to North Carolina in 2013.

Davis, Robert L. USA
(Ret. Rank unk.); Flight
Classes: 67-9/67-7; RVN:
67-68 173 AHC, 70-71
610 TC CO; Callsign:
Friar Tuck.



Robert Davis died on May 31, 2017 in Fort Worth, TX. Robert was an honored and proud U.S. Army Veteran who retired after 20 years, served three tours in Vietnam in 1967, 1968 and 1970 flying helicopters. He was awarded the Vietnam Campaign Medal, Bronze Star Medal, Air Medal and Soldiers Medal. He was also a longstanding and involved member of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association and Fort Worth Pilots Association.

After serving in the military he went to work for Bell Helicopter in Fort Worth, served in management for Bell Helicopter Europe, Amsterdam, Holland and retired after 20+ years.

Robert is predeceased by wives Sallie Rhoads Davis and Barbara Jean Davis.

Eastman, William A.
USA (Ret. - rank unk);
Flight Class: 66-16; RVN:
66-67 334 AHC; Call-
sign: Raider 23.



William A. "Bill" Eastman passed away Friday, June 30, 2017 at his home surrounded by family. Bill was born May 25, 1943 in Sedro-Woolley, WA.

He graduated from Sedro-Woolley High School in 1961 and graduated from Washington State University in 1965, where he was a member of the Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity. On December 19, 1970 he married Linda Green in Sedro-Woolley.

Bill joined the ROTC while in college and was sent to Vietnam in November of

1966. He was a Major in the U.S. Army and served in Vietnam as a helicopter pilot. After his service in the Army, he joined the Fort Lewis National Guard, where he was active in the Mount St. Helens rescue missions. Bill was awarded numerous medals during his service, which included the Purple Heart and American Campaign Medal for heroism.

Bill worked for Puget Power for 33 years, and retired as lineman/foreman. Bill went to work for Potelco after retirement for approximately 10 years.

Bill is survived by former spouse, Linda Eastman.

Fortenberry, Richard T. USA; Flight Class: 65-4W; RVN: 65-66 117 AHC, 66 114 AHC, 68 A/82 AVN; Callsign: Cobra 3.



Richard "Dick" Terrell Fortenberry, died at age 79, (circa July 10) but not before God gave him a wonderful and exciting life. Dick was born Richard Terrell Fortenberry to Richard Franklin and Mildred Haney Fortenberry on June 4, 1938 in Coleman, TX. His mother was killed in a car accident when he was two years old, and was given to his grandparents, Baxter and Jesse Fortenberry to be raised.

In 1956, he joined the Army and went to paratrooper school with the 77th Special Forces Group at Ft. Bragg, NC. After completing individual and unit training, he attended the parachute riggers school in Ft. Lee, VA. Dick made his first free-fall on November 8, 1958 on Sicily Drop Zone. Rapidly excelling in the sport, he was one of the original seven members of the STRAC Parachute Team (later to become the GOLDEN KNIGHTS). He went on to become the first to ever win three consecutive National Championships, 1961, 1962, and 1963, and helped establish 24 world accuracy records. In 1975, he was awarded the "Leonardo da Vinci Diploma" by the Federation of Aeronautics International. This is the highest award in the world for parachuting. For his tour of duty on the Golden Knights, he was awarded the Legion of Merit.

Graduating 2nd in class 65-4W he spent the next fifteen months as a gunship pilot in Vietnam. During that period, he was award-

ed the Bronze Star and 26 air medals, two of which, were for valor.

In 2016, he was inducted into the National Skydiving Hall of Fame for his contributions to the sport. He was also inducted into the Georgia Aviation Hall of Fame this year.

He is survived by his beautiful wife of 40 years, Linda.

Gorecki, Joseph E. USA; Flight Class: 66-17; RVN 67-68 187 AHC, 70-71 D/1/1 CAV 23 INF, 71 F/8 CAV.



Joseph Edward Gorecki, Jr., a resident of Daleville, died Tuesday, June 6, 2017 at Flowers Hospital. He was 73.

Hollingsworth, Gene I. USAF LTC (Ret.); RVN: 70-71 37 ARRS; Callsign: Jolly.



Gene Irvin Hollingsworth 85 of Emmett passed away June 17, 2017 at an Eagle Assisted Living Center.

Gene was born on November 7, 1931 in Chanute, KS. He spent his early life on his grandparents' farm in rural Kansas and he loved sports, competing in track, football, and basketball.

He enrolled at Kansas State College before enlisting in the Air Force in 1954. Gene flew the B47 and the HH-53 helicopter, affectionately referred to as the Jolly Green Giant. With the 37th ARRS in Vietnam, he flew 91 total missions rescuing downed pilots under the most dangerous conditions. He was honorably discharged in 1975.

He was awarded the Air Force Commendation Medal, Air Medal and the Distinguished Flying Cross, some of the highest honors awarded by the Air Force. Gene was a loyal and fiercely protective leader and he took great pride in flying aircraft for the USAF, protecting his country and loved ones.

Gene married the love of his life, Sharron Jean Grueber, on September 7, 1958 and

together they raised three daughters. Following his retirement, Gene moved his family to Boise, ID, where he began a second career, restoring antique watches and clocks from all over the country. He also received his Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration from Boise State University.

Gene is survived by his wife of 58 years, Sharron.

Irwin, Jerry F. USA; Flight Class: 63-5W; RVN: 60-63 82 ABN, 64-65 UTT.

Mr. Jerry Franklin Irwin, 77, of Ozark, AL, passed away Thursday morning, June 1, 2017, in Noland Hospital. He was born March 28, 1940 in Cedartown, GA.

He served two consecutive tours of duty in the United States Army during the Vietnam War as a gun ship helicopter pilot. Following his military service, he worked as a test pilot with Page Aircraft Maintenance at Fort Rucker. Mr. Irwin also was the Branch Manager of The Bank of Ozark - Midland City, and worked in Iran for Bell Helicopter as a TH-55 instructor for eighteen months.

When he returned to Ozark, he worked at Fort Rucker as an instructor pilot. He later finished his career as a flight commander. Mr. Irwin was a member and past President of the Professional Helicopter Pilots Association in Daleville. He was a member of the First United Methodist Church of Ozark.

Kelly, Hilliard F. USA LTC (Ret.); Flight Class: 68-508/68-12; RVN: 69-70 238 AWC; Callsign: Gunrunner 11.



Hilliard 'Skip' Finch Kelly, Jr., 73 years, of Slidell, LA, passed away on Tuesday, June 20, 2017. He is survived by his wife of fifty years, Donna Rodwig Kelly.

Skip Kelly was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the US Army in 1967, where he served for a decade before transferring to the National Guard where he remained for the next 24 years. He was also a skilled Airborne Ranger and served as an attack helicopter pilot in Vietnam. For his years of service, fortitude and bravery in combat, Skip was awarded the Vietnam Service Medal, 2 Bronze Stars, 13 Air Medals, as well as the Legion of Merit Award and the Meritorious

Service Medal. In the Louisiana National Guard, he was the first Battalion Commander of the famed 244th Aviation Battalion. After his time in the military, Skip worked as a commercial pilot before he retired to spend more time with his family.

Maloy, Michael R. USA; Flight Classes: 68-501/67-25; RVN: 68-69 C/159 AVN 101 ABN, 69-70 C/159 AVN 101 ABN; **Callsign:** Playtex.

The following information was provided by Mike's brother:

My brother was a tough soldier and his tenacity and will to live was a reflection of his commitment to life.

Mike was diagnosed with Stage IV lung cancer in 2014. He chose to fight as hard as he could. His doctors told him he had to have chemotherapy every 3 weeks or he would die. I knew the side effects were brutal and I asked him how he could stand itches shrugged and said, "Hey, it beats the alternative."

He was an army helicopter pilot, an undercover cop, a writer, a pool shark and a cool guy. He was born in Nanking in 1947. My father was a USAF pilot and my mother was a secretary for the military when they met and married there. Mike was born 9 months to the day afterwards. Later in life, he got a small tattoo on his upper arm that said "Made in China....by Americans".

McCabe, Robert J. USA; Flight Class: 68-2; RVN: 68-69 114 AHC, 69 HHC 164 CAG; **Callsigns:** Red Knight/Road Service 6.



Robert J. McCabe Jr., 74, of Westchester, IL, former longtime resident of River Forest, passed onto eternal life on June 25, 2017. He was born March 29, 1943 in Selma, AL. He grew up in Johnstown, PA. Bob attended the University of Cincinnati, where he played football and enrolled in the Army ROTC. Upon graduating, he went on to Officers Training and Flight School. He served his country proudly in the Vietnam War where he was stationed in Vinh Long, Vietnam from 1968-69. He was a Captain and a Helicopter Pilot, and held positions including Platoon Leader in an Assault Aviation Company, Company Commander in the Army Security

Agency, and Group Aviation Maintenance Officer. Bob was awarded several medals for distinguished service, including the Bronze Star. Bob's mission was to do all he could to make sure the country he loved so much was defended. Upon returning, he married his beautiful "bride", Kathleen in 1970.

Bob was proud to be a "Coalman", brokering coal sales in the energy industry for over 40 years.

McCrary, Thomas M. USA LTC (Ret.); Flight Classes: 68-12/68-18; **Callsign:** Dustoff 98.



Thomas Michael McCrary, 72, of Fair Oaks Ranch passed away of cancer on Saturday, July 15, 2017 at home surrounded by his family.

Thomas (best known as Tom or Tommy) was born October 13, 1944 in Dallas, TX. He married the love of his life, Vicki Anne Creasey of Oklahoma City on September 2, 1967.

Tom began his Army career on September 5, 1967, reporting for duty to Fort Sam Houston, TX to the Army Medical Dept. Officer Basic Course. His next duty assignment was Fort Wolters, TX to begin his Army Aviation Training and in 1967, he then went to Fort Hunter-Stewart where he graduated as a Rotary Wing Aviator. Upon graduation, he was assigned to the 101st Airborne Division in Vietnam where he flew MEDEVAC (DUSTOFF) helicopters, risking his life to save wounded soldiers. On one of these missions, he was shot down, but his courage and strength gave him the determination to complete his missions.

Tom returned to the U.S. and went on to various duty assignments with his wife, Vicki. Tom accomplished a great deal throughout his military career and was recognized for his outstanding achievements. He was a Battalion Commander, a Medevac Detachment Commander, and an instructor at Fort Sam Houston. He received many awards including the Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star Medal, Purple Heart, Meritorious Service Medal (1st Oak Leaf Cluster), Air Medal (17), and National Defense Service Medal among many others. He also received his Senior Army Aviator

Badge and went to Air Assault School and Armed Forces Staff College. He retired in September 1989 after 22 years of service.

After his illustrious military career and short time as an outstanding realtor, he officially retired. He is survived by his loving wife, Vicki.

Miller, Harold F. USA; Flight Class: 65-10; RVN: 65-66 118 AHC; **Callsign:** Bandit 34.

Harold was born January 24, 1941 in Stockton. He passed away at home on May 9, 2017, after battling cancer, with his wife Annette, love of his life, by his side. He is survived by his wife, Annette.

He grew up in the Lodi/Stockton area and graduated from Oregon State College with his commission to the Army. He served in Vietnam as an armed helicopter pilot and later was a flight instructor in Texas. He then went on to teach high school in the Stockton area for 36 years and coached football for many years.

Merritt, Robert J. USA CPT (Ret.); Flight Classes: 68-520/68-34; RVN: 69 227 AHB 1 CAV; **Callsign:** Pegasus 3.



Robert J. Merritt passed away on June 22, 2017, after a long battle against overwhelming illnesses. He was born February 12, 1938 in St. Louis, MO. Bob graduated from Christian Brothers College Military High School (CBC) in 1956 and attended St. Louis and Washington Universities. During college, he joined the Missouri National Guard. Following a long-held dream, he earned a pilot license. After his father's death, he took over management of the family business, Merritt's Market. In 1963, he volunteered for active duty with the U.S. Army and served at Forts Ord, Benning, Rucker, Leavenworth and Riley, and in Vietnam. He sustained serious injuries during his tour after his helicopter was shot down. After a long recuperation period, he was able to return to active duty, before reverting back to the National Guard. He retired from the military in 1980 having achieved the rank of Captain. He was awarded the Air Medal, Silver Star, Vietnam Campaign Medal, National Defense Medal, Meritorious Service Medal and the Purple Heart. In 1980, he began a

TAPS

20-year career as a logistics engineer with McDonnell Douglas (now Boeing). In 2005, Bob was inducted into the CBC Hall of Fame. He is survived by his special friend Lynne.

Moore, Donald E. USA LTC (Ret.); Flight Class: 63-1A; RVN: 63 57 TC CO, 63-64 120 AVN, 67-68 1 SIG BDE; Callsign: Dean.

Donald Eugene Moore left this earth to be with his Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, on Saturday, June 3, 2017 at the age of 78 surrounded by his family at the Huntsville Hospital. Donald was born September 26, 1938 in Winnemucca, NV. He graduated high school in 1956 and received a BS in mathematics from the University of Nevada. Later he earned a MBA (business) from Texas Tech University while in the Army. He accepted a commission as 2nd LT into the US Army, Signal Corps after graduation. He completed parachute training and helicopter flight school. He served two years in Vietnam as well as a year in Korea in 1978. During this time, he performed aviation assignments. He flew the Cobra helicopter and served as a helicopter flight instructor for two years at Ft. Rucker, AL. He received the following awards: The Bronze Star Award for Meritorious Service, Vietnam 1964; Ten plus Air Medals for combat flights in Vietnam, 1964, Army Commendation Medal for Meritorious Service, Vietnam 1968, and Joint Commendation Medal for Meritorious Service 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, NC, 1975.

After a successful Army career of 22 years and retirement, Donald accepted the call to North Alabama and the Space Program in January 1991. He was employed at Tele-dyne Brown Engineering and Engineering Management Concepts which transitioned into the Government Missile Defense Agency, C2 BMC Program Office. He was a key contributor at the MDA.

He is survived by his wife of 52 years, Judith Yarbrough Moore.

Ozgowicz, Richard S. USA; Flight Classes: 67-1/66-23; RVN: 67 A/7/17 CAV, 68 119 AHC; Callsigns: Ruthless Rider/Alligator.

Richard Stanley Ozgow-



icz, 72, died after a long battle with Parkinson's disease on July 21, 2017 in Tallahassee, FL. He is survived by his wife, Shirley Ozgowicz of Tallahassee, FL.

Richard graduated from Vero Beach High School and served in the Army as a helicopter pilot in Vietnam. After the Army, he was employed as an air traffic controller until retirement.

Perry, Ronald C. USA; Flight Class: 69-15; RVN: 69-70 C/101 AVN 101 ABN.

Ronald C. Perry, 71, passed into the arms of Jesus on Saturday, June 17, 2017. Ronald was born May 12, 1946, in Oklahoma City, OK.

He was a CW2 Cobra helicopter pilot in the United States Army and a dentist in Keller for 36 years. Ronald is survived by his wife of 51 years, Joan.



Rampone, Albert G. USA MAJ (Ret.); Flight Classes: 66-23/66-21; RVN: 67-68 281 AHC, 70-71 1 BDE 101 ABN.

Albert G. Rampone was born on June 12, 1946, in Warrensburg, IL. He passed away on Sunday, July 23, 2017.

Albert graduated from Schlarman High School in Danville, IL. Albert served in the US Army from 1965-72 as a helicopter pilot.

He received many awards including two Distinguished Flying Crosses, 55 Air Medals (four for valor in combat), and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry for Heroism. He was a member of the Missouri Army National Guard 135th Attack Helicopter Battalion from 1972-96. He was a graduate of the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, KS.

Albert is survived by his wife, Barbara.



Robbins, James D. USA CW4 (Ret.); Flight Classes: 67-19/67-17; RVN: 67-68 2 BDE 1 CAV, 68 11 CAG 1 CAV; Callsign: Native Dancer 26.

James D. (Jim) Robbins, age 78, left this Earth to close ranks and enlist to be with our Lord and His Army.



Jim's departure was on Tuesday, July 18, 2017.

Jim was born in Big Spring, TX, on December 29, 1938. He was a graduate of W.B. Ray High School in Corpus Christi, TX. He was a York Rite Master Mason, and 32nd Degree Scottish Rite Mason. Jim graduated from North Lake College, Howard Payne University, Federal Aviation Administration Academy and the US Army Aviation School. From January 7, 1957 to May 2, 1995, he served in the United States Marine Corp, US Army, and other Federal jobs. His service to country occurred in many countries, such as Germany; Vietnam, El Salvador, and Saudi Arabia. Jim Retired from Federal service as an Army Aviator, Aviation Safety Officer, and Air Traffic Controller. He was a member in long standing of Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association, and he was a member of American Legion Post 159. Jim was an endowed member of Sul Ross Lodge 1300 and Cedar Creek Lodge 300. He was also a Gideon.

Jim enjoyed serving his Lord on short term church mission trips to Peru, Costa Rica, Turkey, Brazil, and Vietnam. Jim was a volunteer Chaplain during his retirement focusing on hospital ministry. He was Ordained at Calvary Chapel, Corpus Christi, TX.

Smith, Earl C. USA MAJ (Ret.); Flight Class: 67-11; RVN: 67-68 121 AHC; Callsign: Tiger 4.

Earl C. Smith, Of Callawassie Island Okatie, SC formerly of Leesburg, VA passed away on May 14, 2017 while under hospice care in Beaufort Memorial Hospital. He was born on July 12, 1943 in Elizabeth City, NC.

He began his military career in the US Navy and continued his service with the US Army. Earl served as a helicopter pilot with the 9th Aviation Battalion and Rucker 121 Aviation Company. In addition, he was an Instructor Pilot, Commander and Staff Officer. He served multiple tours of duty in Vietnam; he also served in Germany. He retired from the US Army in 1982, after 20 years of distinguished military service. Earl graduated from the University of Southern Mississippi and pursued a second career as a financial advisor retiring from Well Fargo



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Starkey, Perry F. Jr. USA; Flight Classes: 68-44/68-524; RVN: 69-70 B/3/17 CAV, 70 3/17 CAV; Callsign: Stogie 07.



Perry was born March 21, 1946; he passed on June 29, 2017. He is survived by his wife of 50 years, Lynn.

Perry was a graduate of Putnam City High School Class of 1964. Perry fell in love with aviation at a young age and was lucky enough to enjoy a long and successful career in the field. He began his career 6 months after marrying Lynn by enlisting in the US Army at the height of the Vietnam War. Perry graduated from the Field Artillery Officer Candidate School, Ft. Sill, OK and was commissioned as a 2LT. He then completed Rotary Wing Flight Training and Aircraft Maintenance Officer School prior to being deployed to South Vietnam. He flew over 900 hours first as a lift pilot, then maintenance officer. He finished his tour as the Squadron Maintenance Officer.

Upon his return, he commanded the 154th Transportation Detachment at Fort Sill, OK. From there he moved to the 1st Aerial Field Artillery Battery where he was a maintenance officer and instructor pilot. Perry rose to the rank of captain prior to leaving active duty.

Following his active duty, he took an appointment as Chief Warrant Officer in the Oklahoma Army National Guard where he worked for 5 years as the maintenance supervisor for the OKARNG Army Aviation Support Facility. During this time, Perry received his FAA civilian ratings as a commercial instrument pilot in helicopters and fixed wing aircraft. While with the

National Guard Perry logged over 2,000 hours of accident free flying.

Leaving the cockpit, he joined the FAA as air traffic controller where he worked for 22 years retiring in 1999. Within months, he returned to the FAA this time as a contract instructor teaching newly hired controllers at the FAA's Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center. Perry left his instructor position to return to work as an air traffic controller at Kandahar International Airport, Kandahar, Afghanistan and Qarshi-Kannabad Airport, Qarshi, Uzbekistan.

Steele, Bob D. USA; Flight Class: 64-1; RVN: 65-66 HHC 1 BDE 101 ABN; Callsign: Eagle 13.



Bobby Doyle Steele, 83, passed away Tuesday, June 13, 2017, while surrounded by his loving family.

Bob was born June 2, 1934, in Caretta, WV. After graduating from high school, he enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps and was assigned to the 1st Marine Division. He received an honorable discharge from the Marine Corps after having served in the Korean War. After a short time, he enlisted in the U.S. Air Force where he was a welding specialist. He pursued his love for flying light aircraft through military "aero clubs". From his first FAA certification as a private pilot, he quickly obtained more advanced training to become an FAA certified commercial pilot, instrument instructor and ground school instructor. In 1963, the U.S. Army offered Bob a direct appointment as a warrant officer where he was trained to fly helicopters.

After his flight training in Mineral Wells, TX, and Fort Rucker, AL, he was assigned to the 101st Airborne Division at Fort Campbell, KY. In June 1965 he, along with the entire 101st Airborne Division, was deployed to Vietnam. While serving there, he was awarded four Air Medals for Valor, submitted for a Bronze Star for a ground action and was awarded The Distinguished Flying Cross. After returning from Vietnam, his love for flying led him to be hired by American Airlines as a pilot. He retired after 28 years with American Airlines as a Boeing 767 captain.

Toth, John E. USA; Flight Class: 67-9/67-7; RVN: 67 170 AHC, 67-68 120 AVN.

John was born on July 30, 1943 and passed away on Saturday, July 22, 2017. John was a resident of Hilton Head, SC at the time of passing.

Following his military tenure, he attended and was a graduate of Pembroke State University. He was a veteran of the United States Army, serving during the Vietnam War as a helicopter pilot.

Thompson, James A. USA LTG (Ret.); Flight Classes: 67-501/67-21; RVN: 68-69 B/101 AVN 101 ABN; Callsign: Kingsman 22.



James Edward Thompson Jr., 81, of Saint Simons Island, GA entered peacefully into eternal rest on Thursday, June 8, 2017 in Brunswick, GA with his family by his side.

He was born October 13, 1935 in Durham, NC. Gen. Thompson was a graduate of the University of Florida with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Education and played football on a four-year athletic scholarship. During his four years at the University of Florida he completed the Reserved Officers' Training Corps program and was commissioned a second lieutenant of Infantry in the United States Army.

He was a highly decorated Vietnam War veteran seeing significant combat time as an Army Aviator. His military command assignments included the 162nd Aviation Company (Assault Helicopter) in Vietnam, the 1st Battalion, 5th Infantry Regiment, and the 3d Brigade Commander of the 101st Airborne Division.

In 1983, General Thompson served as the Division Commander of the "famed" 101st Airborne Division "Screaming Eagles" at Fort Campbell, KY. Additionally, he served as Commander at the United States Army War College in Carlisle, PA., and as Commander of the 1st United States Army, Fort Mead, MD. His military education included the Infantry Officer Basic Course, Infantry Officer Advanced Course, Air Command and Staff College, and United States Army War College. General Thompson furthered his education while serving in the United States Army and attended

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Auburn University where he received his Master of Arts Degree in Political Science. His military awards and decorations included: The Vietnam Service Medal (5 stars), Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Distinguished Flying Cross (with two oak leaf clusters), Soldier's Medal, Bronze Star (with two oak leaf clusters), Purple Heart, Air Medals (multiple awards), and The Army Commendation medal (with "V" device for valor and oak leaf cluster).

He is survived by his loving wife of sixty-three years, Patricia Cofer Thompson.

Trombley, Thomas H. USA COL (Ret.); Flight Class: 62-10; RVN: 66-67 A/1/9 CAV 1 CAV, 69-70 A/2/17 CAV 101 ABN; Callsigns: Red 25/Assault 6.



Thomas Trombley died on May 29, 2017. No obituary was provided.

Vehlow, Charles A. USA; Flight Class: 70-20; RVN: 70-71 C/2/17 CAV 101 ABN; Callsign: Condor 26.



Charles A. "Chuck" Vehlow died peacefully at his home in Scottsdale, AZ on July 8, 2017. Born and raised in Waukesha, WI. Chuck distinguished himself during a 46-year career as a military and civilian pilot, aeronautics scholar and professor, and aerospace executive. As an Army combat pilot, he was highly skilled and highly decorated, including the Silver Star, three Distinguished Flying Crosses, and the Bronze Star. Of his 1900 hours of military flying, 715 were in combat in Vietnam.

Chuck also demonstrated exceptional aeronautics scholarship, first at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology where he earned a Master of Science degree in Aeronautical Engineering, and then at the United States Military Academy, where he served as an Assistant Professor of Aeronautics. Additionally, he earned a Master of Business Administration degree from Long Island University; he also graduated from both the United States Army War College and the United States Naval War College. In aerospace

companies, Chuck held top positions, including Vice President for the Apache Programs at McDonnell Douglas/ Boeing Helicopter and Vice President and General Manager of the Boeing Helicopter Division. In these positions, he was responsible for major defense aviation programs, including the Apache Longbow, Chinook, Comanche, and the V-22. As a commercial pilot and flight instructor, Chuck flew over 3,200 hours in thirty different aircraft and certified twenty-six private, commercial, and instructor pilots. In recognition of his distinguished career, he was inducted into the Wisconsin Aviation Hall of Fame in 2014.

Chuck graduated from Waukesha South High School in June 1964. His Army career began when he graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1968. He is survived by his wife of 49 years, Kathryn D. (Katy, "Gigi" Gollwitzer).

Wagner, Jerry T. USA COL (Ret.); Flight Class: 64; RVN: 66-67 187 AHC, 68 118 AHC, 70 119 AHC, 71 57 AHC; Callsigns: Blackhawk 60/Alligator 6.



Jerry Thomas Wagner died on April 23, 2017. He was born on December 19, 1939 in Roanoke, VA but his childhood was spent in Front Royal, VA. He attended Randolph Macon Academy, in Front Royal, VA; followed by attendance at VMI, in Lexington VA. He graduated as a Distinguished Military Graduate with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in 1962. Jerry later obtained his Masters of Science Degree from Shippensburg University in 1984.

Following his VMI graduation he married Candace Monroe.

Jerry was commissioned in the US Army in 1963 as an Infantry Officer. After attending Army Flight School, Jerry accumulated over 4,600 flight hours 1800 hours of which were logged in Vietnam while serving two tours.

On his last assignment, Jerry had the distinction of being one of only a few Colonels to fly the AH-64 Apache helicopter. He attended all levels of schools

from Officer Basic Course to the War College and commanded aviation units at every level.

Jerry's decorations and awards include the Silver Star, Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star w/ Oak Leaf Cluster, Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal w/"V" & 43 Oak Leaf Clusters, ARCOM w/"V" & 2 Oak Leaf Clusters, Purple Heart w/Oak Leaf Cluster, Master Aviator Wings, Parachutist Wings, The Air Assault Badge and several service and foreign decorations.

After retiring from the Army in 1988, Jerry became a Registered Financial Advisor for USPA & First Command Financial Planning in Killeen, TX servicing the Fort Hood Army Post. In 1993, he was promoted to District Manager.

He retired in January 2015. He is survived by his wife Candace.

Zeller, Donald F. USMC; Flight Class: 69-28; RVN: 70-71 HMM-263; Callsign: Peach Bush 18.



Donald F. Zeller, Sr., "Don," age 71, died at his home in east Louisville, on May 26th. He was born in South Louisville. Don attended St. Thomas Moore grade school, DeSales High School ['64], and accepted a President's Scholarship to the University of Louisville, where he received both his undergraduate ['68] and law degrees ['77], and was a member of the Lambda Chi fraternity and the Naval ROTC.

In service to his country, Don was a decorated Marine helicopter pilot during the Vietnam War, where he served in 1970, flying countless support missions for Marine troops as well as medevac operations. He was a long-time member of the Army Reserve, a mentor, member, and leader of multiple local and national veterans' groups, and took great pride when identifying himself as a Marine. Don's legal career included significant time working in the Jefferson County Attorney's Office, followed by the Kentucky state department of Alcohol Beverage Control, and later private practice. He also held a post-first-retirement stint with Kroger. He was a life-long resident of Louisville.

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Zink, Timothy R. USA;
Flight Classes: 67-501/67-21; RVN: 68-69 A/123 AVN 23 INF, 71 B/228 ASHB 1 CAV; Callsigns: Warrior/Pelican.



Timothy Richard Zink, age 69 passed away from Lewy Body Dementia and Parkinsonism on June 3, 2017. He was born December 12, 1947 in Massillon,

OH. He is survived by his wife of 33 years, Beth Watkins Zink.

Tim grew up in Canton, OH and attended Jackson High School. At the age of 19, he joined the US Army and became a helicopter pilot. As a Chief Warrant Officer he flew rescue missions during his two tours in Vietnam. After a ten-year career in the Army, Tim attended The University of Akron and graduated with a

business degree before starting his business career at Monsanto in St. Louis. Through the years he also worked for Sandoz Ag, American Cyanamid and Amerigas as a marketing executive. He finished his career in Charlotte, NC with Conclusive Analytics, and then Tim and his wife, Beth, moved to Southport, NC. Tim was diagnosed with Lewy Body Dementia in January 2016 which eventually claimed his life.

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.

Alger, Thomas B. USA; Flight Classes: 68-14/68-22; died July 11, 2017 (no other data).

Asbury, Harold D. USA LTC (Ret.); died May 30 (no other data).

Bishop, Patrick C. USA; Flight Class 71-9 died June 26, 2017 (no other data).

Bucy, Gregory S. USA; Flight Classes: 68-505/68-5; died June 21, 2017 (no other data).

Dyer, Gerald D. USA; died July 22, 2017 (no other data).

Franklin, Ray M. USMC MG (Ret.); no date of death provided (no other data).

Giella, Guy USA (Ret., rank unk.); Flight Class: 67-11; died May 30, 2017 (no other data).

Henderson, Thomas A. USA CPT (Ret.); Flight Classes: 68-516/68-28; died July 21, 2017 (no other data).

Horne Harley W.; died June 27, 2017 (no other data).

Kaye, James J. Jr.; Flight Class: 67-13; RVN: 68-334 AWC, 69-271 ASHC; died July 23, 2017.

Lawler F. Gatlin USMC; died July 23, 2017 (no other data).

Lewis, Daniel R. USA; Flight Classes: 70-5/70-3; died September 23, 2016 (no other data).

Logan, Roy E. USA; Flight Class: 69-42; died June 5, 2017 (no other data).

Mayhew, Lee F. USA; Flight Class: 69-10; died July 25, 2017 (no other data).

Moore John S. USA; Flight Class: 71-9; died June 3, 2017 (no other data).

Norris, Bruce D. USA; Flight Classes: 66-23/66-21; died June 2, 2017 (no other data).

Raines, Austin M. USA; Flight Class: 65-20; died June 19, 2017 (no other data).

Rainville, Morris A. USA; Flight Class: 51-B; died May 27, 2017 (no other data).

Richard D. Shapiro USAF; COL (Ret.) died July 29, 2017 (no other data).

Shoemaker, Robert N. GEN (Ret.); RVN: 65-66 HHT/1/9 CAV 1 CAV, 69-70 HHC/1 CAV; died June 21, 2017 (no other data).

Snowden, Braxton W. USA CW4 (Ret.); Flight Class: 62-2W; died November 22, 2014 (no other data).

Spencer, Lee I. USA; Flight Classes: 70-31/70-29; died July 3, 2017 (no other data).

Thiem, Kenneth E. Flight Class: 69-23 died June 4, 2017 (no other data).

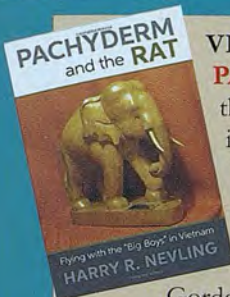
Wilkie, Prescott E. USA; RVN: 65-66 C/227 AVN 1 CAV; died 17, 2017 (no other data).

Winslow, Francis J. USA LTC (Ret.); died in 2017 (date unspecified, no other data).

Yaskovic, Robert A.; Flight Class: 3-70; RVN: 70-71 HML-367; Callsign: Scarface; died February 28, 2017.

BOOK REVIEWS

By VHPA Life Member: JOHN PENNY



VHPA member Harry Nevling has written **PACHYDERM AND THE RAT**: Flying with the Big Boys in Vietnam, a memoir of his time in the Army as an enlisted man serving in Vietnam and later as a WO in Vietnam flying Chinooks. Nevling's enlistment in the Army in 1965 took him from his home town of Rochester, MN to Ft. Leonard Wood, Ft.

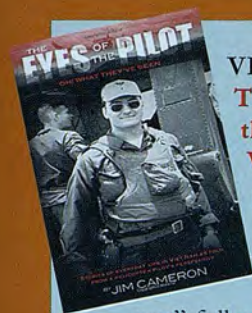
Gordon, and Ft. Lewis where he and his unit boarded a Liberty ship for Vietnam.

After his first tour, he returned to the US, and was posted to Ft. Wolters, and then on to Ft. Rucker where he received his Warrant Officer rating and his wings. He was then sent to Ft. Sill for a transition to the CH-47 Chinook. Following that he made a second trip to Vietnam which was by air and far more pleasant than his first trip.

Arriving in Vietnam he was assigned to A Company, 159th ASHB, call sign Pachyderm, at Phu Bai near Hue. Nevling soon found himself flying into the cloud shrouded mountains of South Vietnam delivering supplies and extracting the wounded from isolated firebases. One extraction included a flight to the hospital ship Repose, no easy task for a Chinook.

Nevling has done well with his book and dedicated this book to all his classmates from Ft. Wolters and Ft. Rucker who did not return from Vietnam. I highly recommend this book.

Pachyderm and the Rat (348 pages, \$14.95 paperback) with photos by Harry R. Nevling, ISBN-1539949787 is available from Amazon and other book suppliers.



VHPA Member Jim Cameron has written **THE EYES OF THE PILOT** Oh! What they've seen, Stories of everyday life in Viet Nam as told from a helicopter pilot's perspective, drawing on his 18-month Vietnam tour with the 176th AHC, 23 INF, and A/123 AVN, 23 INF in 1969-70. His journey to the front seat of "the helicopter

war" followed the predictable order: a recruiter's office, basic at Fort Polk, a bus ride to Ft. Wolters and a ticket to Hunter Army Airfield, with his final destination Cam Ranh Bay.

He began flying "peter pilot" and learning the skills and the team work needed to become an AC in an active and

challenging combat zone. Quickly, experience in the Huey became an extension of mind and body. Every day was a challenge, LZs were often tight and "hot" and no situation was exactly the same. No assumptions could be made.

Cameron has done well with this book. The stories take readers back five decades when young men took helicopters into impossible situations, and lifted young soldiers from deadly situations. I recommend this book. I hope you enjoy it.

The Eyes of the Pilot: Oh! What they've seen (with photos) 103 pages, \$6.99 Kindle; \$8.99 paperback by Jim Cameron ASIN: B01MYDPGUA Amazon currently has this book available to read on their web site.



VHPA Life Member John Bercaw has written **THE MIGHTY JUNGLE**, a compelling fictional story of an orientation flight for newly arrived officers that is shot down deep in the jungle of Vietnam. The only two survivors were a warrant officer pilot counting the days to his DEROS and an inexperienced "green horn" 2nd Lieutenant. It was

an orientation flight over their new AO and supposed to be an easy mission for sure!

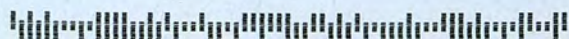
Unfortunately, the enemy had other ideas and the WO has doubts about the 2nd Lieutenant in their struggle to survive the challenges before them. The reader is taken on a trek through the jungle that makes the E and E exercises at Fort Rucker look like a walk in the park. Circumventing and

avoiding local villages whose loyalties were uncertain required stealth. Food was always on their minds and they could not be fussy to say the least. Worms were often on the menu and leeches made a nice side dish.

I highly recommend this book. It is a page turner for sure. John Bercaw has served in the US Marine Corps, The US Army, and the US Army National Guard. He used his experiences in Vietnam with D/1/4 CAV 1 INF, and A/101 AVN ABN to write this book. He is also the author of A Pink Mist, a memoir of his time in Vietnam.

The Mighty Jungle (154 pages, \$8.75 paperback) by John A. Bercaw, ISBN: 978-1544188003 is available on Amazon, and other book suppliers.

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