



The VHPA AVIATOR

The Newsletter of The Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association



ST. LOUIS

42ND REUNION

See You There!

August 21-23, 2025

See pages 7-20, for more details...

999

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From the Managing Editor...
 Some of our members may have noticed a change on page two of the Aviator. The **Membership Directory** and **Historical** committee categories have been removed. Going forward, these activities will be combined with **Records/Database** function.

Aviator Privacy Statement: The VHPA considers member information proprietary and confidential. Use of any information in this publication for any type of solicitation is prohibited. Member information contained in this publication shall not be distributed to non-VHPA members without the express consent of the member.

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

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

ATTENTION FELLOW AVIATORS, we need your donations to continue our effort to dedicate our Vietnam Monument at Fort Novosel.

In 2025, 10 September, the VHPA will dedicate a monument similar to our Arlington monument in the Memorial Park just outside the Army Aviation Museum at "our" old Fort Rucker (Novosel). It will mark the 50th anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War, and you and your fellow aviators will not want to miss this important and auspicious occasion.

Please note the additional message I would like for you to consider below:

**BE AN ACTIVE VOICE
IN THE VISION FOR VHPA**

Serve Our Membership On The Executive Council

Annual elections to fill the positions of VHPA Executive Council Vice President and Junior Member at Large will be held on Saturday, 23 August, 2025 following this year's Annual Business Meeting (ABM) in St. Louis.

Executive Council participation provides opportunity to serve our membership in ways that are interesting and rewarding. Basic duties include monthly attendance at a teleconference/ZOOM meeting, and an in person meeting during the reunion, as well as intervening discussions to address issues associated with our ongoing service to the organization and its membership.

We invite you to declare your intention to run by sending a short bio (one page - not to exceed 500 words) to Pat Leone, Junior Member At Large (Elections Committee Chair) not less than thirty days in advance of the ABM. (Note: Individuals seeking to run for Vice President must have served on the Executive Council in the past.) First time applicants must be dues current and a member for at least one year to be eligible. Candidates may campaign beforehand, and all are given an opportunity to address the membership for three minutes before the vote is taken.

Complete requirements and processes are available for review in the elections policy document located on the association web site. For additional information contact Pat Leone at apache046@aol.com, or 512.966.7498.

Pat Leone, Elections Chairman



Ask your Chapter Presidents/Members to donate and make a motion to donate from the chapter treasury.

Mark your donations for the VHPA "General Fund" ~We want to ensure that this historic day is planned and executed in a manner in keeping with the unique contribution Vietnam helicopter crews made in serving our country in combat and in shaping the future doctrine of Army Aviation. We look forward to seeing you there.

~ Frosty Price

**A MEMBERSHIP
FOR THOSE HONORED FEW**



**THE
DISTINGUISHED
FLYING CROSS
SOCIETY**

"...for heroism or extraordinary achievement while participating in an aerial flight."

DFCSociety.org/membership

For Your Information: The minutes of each monthly meeting of the Executive Council are available on the VHPA website.

FROM THE STAFF AT HQ!

Mark your calendars now for
R2025 in St. Louis, MO
Aug 20 – Aug 23, 2025!

We have included a preliminary schedule of in house reunion events in this issue.

Some tours & events have not been finalized at the time content was due for this issue. Please check the reunion page at www.vhpa.org/news.htm#info-events for the most current info. We anticipate opening reunion registration in May but do not have an exact date yet. An email blast will be sent out to announce registration opening.

PLEASE HELP US REDUCE
THE COSTS OF REMAILING ITEMS!

If you move, PLEASE call HQ
with an update to your address!

This is important if you head south for the winter and back north for the summer. You must call HQ to change your mailing address each time to ensure you do not miss an issue of your newsletter.

Reminders:

- The on line directory is free at <https://directory.vhpa.org>. As of the deadline for this issue, you can not make updates to your information via the on line directory. You can log in and search for members. Please call HQ with any changes to your contact info. We apologize for the inconvenience but things are taking longer than expected.

- Minutes to all EC meetings are posted in the VHPA website each month along with minutes to the Annual Business Meeting, VHPA Financial Reports and VHPA Policies. To view these documents please go to <https://directory.vhpa.org/>, click on member log in, sign in

using your member number & setting up a password, under the “Other Documents” tab on the left – click “VHPA Administration Documents”.

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 and attend reunions!

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 Business Manager

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

VHPA member Rex Gooch is writing a book about Cavalry hats. He is seeking photos and interesting stories about Cavalry hats worn during the Vietnam War. Did you lose or damage your Cavalry hat in combat? Were Cavalry hats part of your troop's initiation ceremony? Did your Cavalry hat feature any unique decorations or trimmings? Did Mama-san steal your Cav hat and sell it to a VC? If you have any Cav hat stories or photos to share, please get in touch with Rex at LK23@mac.com or 303-549-5810.



Friends of Vinh Son Orphanage (FVSO) Kontum, Vietnam



For over 20 years, FVSO donors have supplied food, medicine, dental care, education, clean water, housing and more for over 800 Montagnard children who live in eight orphanages in the Kontum/Pleiku area of Vietnam. As a Humanitarian Non-profit approved by IRS Code 501(c) (3), donations are tax deductible.

OUR MISSION

Raise resources in the form of cash and in-kind gifts to directly benefit the children of the Vinh Son and Sao Mai Orphanages. With our support the orphanages provide:

- Primary and Secondary education
- Life skills to become self sufficient
- A safe environment comprised of food, clothing, shelter & medical care



Read free monthly newsletters on our web site.



To Donate or Contact Us

Website: FriendsofVSO.org

Email: FriendsofVSO@gmail.com

Address: FVSO, P.O. Box 9322 Auburn, CA 95604-9322



Read the MHT Blog @ miltours.com Info: e-mail notify@miltours.com



MILITARY™

HISTORICAL TOURS, INC.



- ♦ Operation Market Garden Holland to Berlin: 25 Apr-8 May
- ♦ WWI Battlefields & Paris: 17-26 May
- ♦ D-Day, the Battle of the Bulge & Paris: 31 May-13 Jun & 22 Aug-4 Sep 25!
- ♦ All Germany Tour 5-18 Sept
- ♦ All England Tour 19-30 Sept
- ♦ Belgium, Waterloo & Dunkirk 1-8 Oct

The Final Mission of Seawolf 324

It's been a long journey – a very long journey for Seawolf 324 (SN 63-12923), a UH-1B “Huey” Vietnam warbird. For on the morning of Monday, October 7th it reached its final destination – the National Naval Air Museum at NAS Pensacola, Florida!

Its ultimate mission was fulfilled when a flatbed truck transporting the fully renovated helicopter from Arizona arrived at the maintenance hangar just north of Hangar Bay One where it will be displayed as the “lead in” exhibit to the museum’s Vietnam era project.

On hand to welcome its arrival were approximately 20 Seawolves/friends/family members. A loud cheer was heard – erupted when the “warbird” was unloaded and rolled into the hangar. The task to acquire this special helicopter was never easy. It was a long and arduous process met with many-a-challenge. But thanks to our project “fire team director/leader” – Ed Dyer and his team of supporters, it became a reality! A lot of “bridges had to be crossed”. A significant amount of money had to be raised in a rather small window of time. A huge heartfelt thanks is extended to those individuals who made a financial commitment!

After a short lunch, Ed and his team met with four museum officials to “iron out” the particulars in making this project a “shining star” display. The museum is hoping to complete its Vietnam era project in 2025.

The day was capped off with a celebration at Goat Lips – a “bite and brew” restaurant located on Copter Road just 300 yards from the front gate of former helicopter training field, NAAS Ellyson Field.

Over the years, Goat Lips has become a “gathering point” for Seawolf periodic celebrations.

The history of Seawolf 324 is varied and prominent! It began, of course, with its construction (1963) at Bell Textron Helicopter in Texas. From there it was delivered to the Army in October 1964. By April 1965, it was in Vietnam and experienced its “baptism of fire” when it took three hits to one of its skids. Two weeks later, it was brought down by small arms fire and incurred major damage.

It was sent back to the United States for repair and returned to Vietnam in March 1967. Serving with the 1st Cavalry Division A/1/9 (A Troop, 1st Squadron, 9th Air Cavalry) it was again damaged in February 1968. The Army said “goodbye” to this battle-weary Huey in November 1968 when they “lent” it to the U.S. Navy where it began flying with the HAL-3 Seawolves.

The last military flight of 324 occurred on February 29th, 1972, when the Seawolves returned it back to the Army. In October 1973, it was lent to NASA Langley Research Center until August 1975. This Huey, along with hundreds of others in likeness, was placed in long-term storage at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base (AFB) in Tucson, Arizona with a total of 4,390 flight hours. It would languish in the hot desert sun for the next 16 years before being rescued once more by John Boucher, president and CEO of Overseas Aircraft Support. Future Wolfgrams will have more information on the restoration and the history of the “warbird” while with the HAL-3.

Robert J. Haggerton

WRITERS GROUP INFORMATION

Open Invitation:

VHPA Writers 2025 Tom Morrissey, CW3, 117th AHC We actually did it. We were there. Get it on paper. The VHPA Writers Group. We will meet again, no pun intended. We have two gatherings scheduled for the 2025 Reunion and I know that I am looking forward to our time together. With the advent of AI, ChatGPT, CoPilot and seemingly limitless other forms of Artificial Intelligence, we need to think even more seriously about getting our recollections (imagined or otherwise) on paper and into the archive. It could mean something to someone someday. Maybe not. So, I decided this morning to ask CoPilot to "write three sentences describing a combat assault in Vietnam War from the helicopter pilot's point of view." Within less than a second, it spit out this: "The whirl of the rotor blades filled my ears as we descended into the hot zone, my heart pounding in sync with the chopper's rhythm. Below, the dense jungle came alive with muzzle flashes and explosions, the ground a chaotic tapestry of warfare. I gripped the controls tightly, navigating the smoke and chaos to deliver troops and supplies, knowing every second counted for the men on the ground." Houston, we have a problem. And, in the first place, I don't recall "gripping" the cyclic. More a gentle touch as I recall... anyway, we are being "troped" and it bothers me immensely. I don't know about you, but I'll be 77 when I next see you. I've been revisiting some old books by Tim O'Brian, Bob Mason Michael Herr and others. The ones written by hand. Makes me feel a bit melancholic while they strike deep chords within me. Maybe a bit like I'm facing a creative log-jam. I mean, we have so much more to say, to pass along to future generations than some artificial intelligence app spewing generic garbage like that don't we? You have to love Kurt Vonnegut Jr. who once said: "We are what we pretend to be, so we must be careful about what we pretend to be." (Or what we allow AI to pretend we are). What we write doesn't need to be accurate. Who gives a crap if the names dates and places are all correct? (Well, historians do/should... I guess.) Just write it down. Dictate it. If you need your batteries recharged, replaced or even installed for the first time,

you need to come to one or both of our events. Visual artists and musicians invited as well. Who knows, "We may never meet again." We plan to also have space in the vendors area where books etc can be displayed and sold. While we are a motley crew, nothing's been stolen yet! For information, email me: PilotAuthor@gmail.com So, bring your work, ideas, your thoughts (even thoughts you haven't had yet) and show up. The party is for those who attend, which reminds me: I want to welcome Tracy Smith Mathis, author/speaker. She is an ambassador with the Military Writers Society. An organization we should all be familiar with. She plans to join us in our conversation. We have no agenda, just an opportunity to make friends and find that all important motivation that we often find missing. I know I put mine around here somewhere... "And so it goes..."

~ Kurt Vonnegut, *Slaughterhouse-Five*

HELP PRESERVE YOUR HISTORY!

Unit specific items: Patches, Uniforms, Headgear, Flight Gear, Calling Cards, Souvenirs AND Captured Bad Guy Items!

WANTED

Helicopter Memorabilia from the Vietnam War

Contact: John Conway

NEW!!! 816-813-3488
JPConway@sbcglobal.net
NEW!!! Website: museum.vhpa.org

ARMY ~ NAVY ~ AIR FORCE ~ MARINE CORPS
Assault - Cavalry - Trans - Medical Rescue etc.

Fair Prices Paid. Not for profit.
References available.

VETERAN'S QUILT PRESENTATION AND QUILTERS SHOW AND TELL



I have been informed that the Quilter's Program is tentatively scheduled for August 22 from 2:00 to 4:00.

At the 2024 reunion, it was announced that I would be stepping down after 10 years of being the Quilt Coordinator. It had been most enjoyable meeting so many people, whether they stopped by in the vendor's room to inquire about the quilts on display or the ones who participated in the Presentation Program. The most honored time for me was the presentation of the quilts. Not to fear, the program shall continue. Dee Forringer has volunteered to carry on the tradition of the Veteran's Presentation and Quilter's Show and Tell. Like many of us, Dee & I met at one of the reunions many years ago. She has been quilting for several years; she even does hand quilt-

ing. She also owned her own quilt shop and I'm sure she will be a great addition to the program and will probably add her own touch. Even though I am stepping down, I will still be involved but in a different capacity. More information about Dee shall be in the next issue of The Aviator.

There is still time to donate completed quilts for this year's presentation. Any blocks received shall be used for next year's quilts.

Contact me if you have any questions.

Kathleen Sherfey
Quilt Coordinator

913-631-6811 home or 913-486-7694 cell
klskms@aol.com

Interested in Advertising in The VHPA Aviator?

*The Official Newsletter
of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association*

Prices range from \$135.00 for a quarter-page
to \$475.00 for a full-page, color advertisement.

*Our staff Graphic Designer will help
design your Aviator ad at no cost,
other price discounts are available.*

**Full Details
available at:**

Aviator@VHPA.org

Quilt block requirements continue to be:

- ~Fabric is to be prewashed
to prevent bleeding colors
(Retayne sets the colors in the fabric)
- ~Colors requested. Red, White/Cream and blue.
- ~Blocks measurement is to be:
12 1/2 inches unfinished.
Use a quarter inch seam allowance.

Marriott St. Louis Grand

800 Washington Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63101

\$132 + tax over the dates of 20 August, 2025 – 23 August, 2025 **BASED ON AVAILABILITY**
(VHPA room rate availability limited pre & post reunion dates)

Cutoff date for VHPA hotel rate is Sunday, 27 July, 2025

Hotel Reservation information will be provided with Reunion Registration confirmation email

PLEASE consult www.vhpa.org for the most current Reunion information and details.

VHPA 2025 PRELIMINARY REUNION SCHEDULE

Wednesday 20 Aug

Starting @ 4:00 PM:

Pre-Registration
Vendor Room

Thursday 21 Aug

Golf
Vendor Room
St. Louis History Tour
Welcome Reception

Friday 22 Aug

Gold Star Breakfast
Quilters Show & Tell
Vendor Room
Skyline Dinner Cruise

Saturday 23 Aug

Memorial Service
Business Meeting
Spouse Event
Closing Banquet



Skyline Dinner Cruise

Set sail along the Mississippi River in a 19th century paddle boat. One of the highlights of this dinner cruise will, undoubtedly, be the sight of the Gateway Arch shimmering against the landscape. Enjoy a relaxing evening with dinner, drinks and the views of the city skyline. This will be one unforgettable adventure for VHPA guests.

Soldiers Memorial Military Museum

Journey to the heart of military history at *Soldiers Memorial* Military Museum in downtown *St. Louis*. Soldiers Memorial Military Museum is a state-of-the-art museum facility that honors military service, veterans and their families. Soldiers Memorial shares American military history through the lens of St. Louis and a definite must see.



Anheuser-Busch Brewery Tour

The hub for innovation brewing of over 30 brands, like favorites Budweiser and Michelob ULTRA. Guests can explore the Anheuser-Busch brewery and learn why the beer is second to none. Packed with history and stunning views of the property, you'll learn all about the life of an Anheuser-Busch beer from seed to sip and to its crisp taste as the finished product!

St. Louis City Tour

This tour will give VHPA Guests all the secrets and sights that St. Louis has to offer from the beginning to present day. Packed with sights like Gateway Arch, amazing mosaics of the Cathedral Basilica, Soulard Market, Lafayette Square, Fox Theatre and much more. Guests will learn all the secret spots for local breweries and bites to eat as well.



GENERAL REUNION INFORMATION

Last updated 26 FEB 2025

DUE TO THE CUT-OFF DATE FOR ITEMS TO BE PLACED IN THE AVIATOR, THE INFORMATION BELOW IS PRELIMINARY INFORMATION THAT MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

FINAL REUNION DETAILS WILL BE LISTED AT VHPA.ORG AT A LATER DATE.

PLEASE BE SURE TO CHECK THE VHPA WEBSITE FOR THE MOST CURRENT DETAILS.

VHPA REUNION & HOTEL REGISTRATION IS ANTICIPATED TO OPEN IN MAY 2025

Reunion Hotel Info: Marriott St. Louis Grand, 800 Washington Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63101

The VHPA Group Rate is **\$132 plus tax per night** over the dates of **20 AUGUST 2025 thru 23 AUGUST 2025 (based on hotel availability)**. The VHPA room rate has limited availability pre & post reunion dates.

The cutoff date for the hotel rate is 27 JULY 2025.

Information for booking hotel rooms will be emailed to you with your reunion registration receipt & itinerary.

Transportation from/to the Airport: Several options for transportation from/to the St. Louis airport are: Uber, Lyft, taxi and the St. Louis MetroLink Light Rail.

To use the Light Rail, follow the MetroLink signs throughout the Airport to the Light Rail platform. VHPA members will be using the RED LINE from/to the airport/hotel. Tickets can be purchased at the boarding platform via ticket vending machines. Exit the Light Rail at the Convention Center Station for the Marriott St. Louis Grand, the hotel is about a block away. The estimated Light Rail time from/to the Airport/Hotel is 30 minutes.

For more information visit: <https://www.metrostlouis.org/metrolink/>

Dress Code - The dress code is casual for this Reunion, with the following reminders and suggestions:

- It is a good idea to wear your Reunion lanyard so other attendees can recognize that you are with VHPA.
- At the Closing Banquet, many men wear a suit and tie with the ladies wearing a nice dress. You will even see Dress Blues.

Wheelchair/Scooter Rentals – Wheelchair and scooter rentals can be booked with Mobility City St. Louis. They will deliver and pickup to the hotel for a fee. Reservations need to be made 6-8 weeks in advance.

For more information: Visit <https://stlouismobilitycity.com> or call 636-434-2860.

Vendor Area: If you are interested or know of anyone interested in becoming a Vendor for R2025 please go to www.vhpa.org and download the Vendor/ Book Seller/ Exhibitor Contract, Waiver, and Vendor/Book Seller/Exhibitor Policy Rules & Regulations. Complete the forms and mail or email to VHPA HQ. If you know of anyone that you think would be an asset to the Reunion Vendor Area be sure to let them know or contact VHPA HQ to give us the info and we will be happy to give them a call. **Be sure to send your form in early.**

Oral History Interviews: Mike Law will be available to record and collect Oral Histories. As we have done in past years, we will be signing attendees up for slots in advance. Please contact Mike Law via email at mikelaw1943@gmail.com or visit www.vhpa.org for details about how to sign up prior to arriving in St. Louis so you can fit this history preserving event into your Reunion schedule.

Volunteers: The South Missouri Chapter is the Host Chapter this year and as such, will organize the volunteers. Volunteer opportunities are organized around stations and then shifts with the number of volunteers needed for that shift. Sounds like a Duty Roster! We've found that 3-hour shifts will not take up much of your time or make you too tired. Additionally, we can guarantee everyone is trained on their duties. Needless to say, WE GREATLY APPRECIATE having volunteers! Not only do we avoid the cost of hiring local convention bureau temps, but we get a chance to interact with each other while performing the tasks EXACTLY as a VHPA'er would have it done. As is our tradition, the Host Chapter, The South Missouri Chapter, gets "first shot" at the Duty Roster. If you are interested in volunteering, contact HQ at sherry@vhpa.org or 800-505-8472. BTW, husband and wife teams are welcome to volunteer.

Reunion T-Shirts – The T-shirts for this year will be blue and come in sizes small thru 3XL. You are welcome to order as many as you wish with your Reunion Registration by July 25 or until sold out.

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

Attendee (Member/Subscriber or Guest) Registration - The early registration fee is **\$40** through 19 August and **\$50** beginning 20 August.

Please remember that each person, regardless of age, who wants/needs an event ticket and/or a Reunion name badge and lanyard must pay the registration fee.

17 & under Guest Registration - The registration fee for someone 17 & under is **\$20**.

Please remember that each person, regardless of age, who wants/needs an event ticket and/or a Reunion name badge and lanyard must pay the registration fee.

Canceling a Reunion Registration – The VHPA Member or Subscriber who made the Reunion Registration is known as the Primary Registrant (PR). A PR may cancel all or portions of his/her registration **by notifying HQ by close of business (3:00pm Central Time) Friday, 25 July 2025**. Please contact HQ by email at HQ@vhpa.org or phone at 800-505-8472. **It is important to note that reunion registration cancellations and hotel reservation cancellations are completely separate business processes. The PR is responsible for both processes. PRs cannot assume that when they cancel their hotel reservation that the hotel will notify HQ to cancel the reunion registration or vice versa.**

Guarantee Refund Insurance (GRI) Program - It is important to note that the following reunion registration items are non-refundable even with purchase of GRI: the GRI itself, reunion registration fees, dues payments, or voluntary contributions, cancellation fees, plus any event tickets designated as non-refundable. A PR may only cancel all or portions of his/her registration with GRI **by notifying HQ by close of business (3:00pm Central time) Friday, 08 August 2025**. Please contact HQ by email at HQ@vhpa.org or phone at 800-505-8472. The GRI program covers only specific VHPA events and fees, and does not cover cancellation costs that might be associated with hotel rooms, airfares, rental cars, and other non-VHPA generated expenses.

Reunion Refunds - The Executive Council establishes the official cancellation date (OCD) for each reunion. **The OCD for this year's reunion is Friday, 25 July 2025 without GRI and Friday, 08 August 2025 with GRI.** Only cancellations received by HQ by close of business (3:00pm Central Time) on the OCD are considered for refunds. **It is important to note that the following reunion registration items are non-refundable even with purchase of GRI: the GRI itself, reunion registration fees, dues payments, donations or voluntary contributions, cancellation fees, plus any event tickets designated as non-refundable.** As a general rule, HQ starts processing refunds about two weeks after the reunion ends. No refunds are processed until after the reunion is over. For PRs receiving a refund, there is a two-step process. First, the PR receives a letter and/or a statement from HQ outlining the details of the refund including the amount. Normally this correspondence is sent from HQ by US mail but it can be via email. Second, the PR receives a check via US mail from the VHPA's bank (Chase Bank). No refunds are issued back to credit cards. The goal is to complete the entire refund process no later than one calendar month after the reunion ends. Any clerical errors in the details of the refund should be brought to the attention of HQ.

Mini-Reunions: 21 August through 23 August - Keeping in mind that one of the primary reasons for our Reunion is to reconnect with past compatriots from your RVN unit and flight school. The best way to meet up with unit members is to schedule your own Mini-Reunion. If your unit does not have a Mini-Reunion, why not take the initiative to start one up, or you could combine with other sister units you are familiar with if you wish. In addition to specific units and flight classes, we've had Mini-Reunions for such subjects as tandem rotor, Dust-off, Operation Lam Son 719, anyone who was stationed at Soc Trang, VHPA chapters, anyone interested in radio controlled aircraft models. Mini-Reunions are typically scheduled in 4-hour blocks and are available for booking on most days during the Reunion. You can also request a second four-hour block. However, this second block will be granted on a space available basis with priority for the particular space given to units requesting only one block. Due to decreased usage and increased expenses, the Reunion no longer provides AV equipment for Mini-Reunions. Once your Mini-Reunion is scheduled the details will appear on the webpage. You still should make an effort to get the word out to your buds. Use your directory to contact members (encourage them to re-up with the VHPA if they are not dues current), write a short article for the VHPA Aviator, and schedule early so we can list your unit in articles such as this.

NO OUTSIDE FOOD OR DRINKS ARE ALLOWED IN THESE ROOMS!

It is easy to schedule a Mini-Reunion. Complete the Mini-Reunion Request form available at VHPA.ORG and return by email to Sherry Rodgers at sherry@vhpa.org or mail the completed form to HQ at the address listed on the form.

KIA/MIA Gold Star Family Sponsorship - \$TBD - This item is to support costs of events for Gold Star Families to attend events. Thank you for your generosity.

PLEASE NOTE: This item does not provide you with a ticket to the Gold Star Breakfast, it helps to provide events for Gold Star Family Members.

O'Club: 20 August - 4:00pm-9:00pm / 21 August-22 August - 11:00am-9:00pm / 23 August - 12:30pm-9:00pm

In the tradition of a Vietnam Unit's Officer's Club, you can get a beer and shoot the breeze with your buddies. The O' Club will again be part of 'ground zero' - meaning the Vendor Area, Ballrooms, Registration and Pre-registration, and the O' Club are all within hand grenade range.

THURSDAY, 21 AUGUST 2025

Golf Outing at: 21 August - 6:45am - 3:30pm - \$TBD

This year we will play at Landings at Spirit Golf Club about 40 minutes west of the Downtown St. Louis area in Chesterfield, MO. The Landing at Spirit Golf Club offers a premier golfing experience in the heart of Missouri's scenic countryside. Nestled alongside the Missouri River and surrounded by lush, rolling terrain, this championship 18-hole course provides a challenging yet enjoyable round for golfers of all skill levels. Please see www.landingsatspirit.com for details about the course.

Your golf ticket includes bus transportation, green fees, carts, scorecards, complimentary range balls, one Power Pack, and lunch. Golf clubs can be rented for \$30.

Capacity: This event is limited to 50 participants.

Video Presentation #1 - Lam Son 719 - Clyde Romero: 21 August - 9:00am - 10:15am - NC

Lam Son 719: The largest single helicopter operation in the Vietnam War, 45 days of Hell in Laos!

Writer's Group: 21 August - 9:00am - 12:00pm (Actual meeting duration may vary depending on activities that day) - NC

The VHPA Writers Group will meet again, no pun intended. We have two gatherings scheduled for the 2025 Reunion. Hopefully we are all looking forward to our time together. Whether or not you have written, think about writing or just want to get a feel for what your buddies are up to, you are invited to attend.

There are several hot-button issues on everyone's minds these days for sure. With the advent of AI, ChatGPT, CoPilot and seemingly limitless other forms of Artificial Intelligence, we need to think even more seriously about getting our recollections (imagined or otherwise) on paper and into the archive. It could mean something to someone someday. We will have lively discussions no matter how you slice it.

Visit the Writers Group table in the Vendor Area and "meet and greet" folks we may not have seen in years or ever before. One of VHPA's guest speakers, Tracy Smith Mathis, (author/speaker), ambassador with the Military Writers Society, plans to join us in our conversation. The Military Writers Society is an organization we should all be familiar with if not already.

If perhaps anyone is interested in socializing, I am sure we can work that out as well. There is a lot of free time available here and there. Dinners, informal breakfast conversations, etc are all in play.

Contact me: PilotAuthor@gmail.com or tomintxk@gmail.com

St. Louis City Tour #1: 21 August - 9:30am - 12:30pm - \$TBD

Discover the heart of St. Louis on this immersive city tour, where history, culture, and stunning architecture come together. This journey will have highlights like the iconic Gateway Arch: the tallest monument in the U.S., Forest Park: a 1,300-acre urban oasis that hosted the 1904 World's Fair and houses top attractions like the St. Louis Art Museum, the Missouri History Museum, and the St. Louis Zoo. Sports fans can take a peek at Busch Stadium from the tour bus: home of the beloved St. Louis Cardinals, Souldard District: known for its blues music and bustling farmers' market, and VHPA guests will get a drive by of the world-famous Anheuser-Busch Brewery. This tour will include a stop at Cathedral Basilica with its amazing mosaics. Whether you're a history buff, foodie, or adventure seeker, this tour offers an unforgettable glimpse into the soul of St. Louis!

Capacity: This event is limited to 100 participants.

NOTE: This tour will include stops along the way and guests can stay on the bus if they do not want to disembark.

Anheuser Bush Day Tour & Tasting #1: 21 August – 9:30am – 1:00pm - \$TBD

The Anheuser-Busch Day Tour offers an exciting and immersive experience into the world of brewing excellence. This guided tour takes you through the historic brewery in St. Louis, where you'll learn about the rich history of Anheuser-Busch, the brewing process, and the company's iconic beers. Explore the brewing facilities, discover the secrets behind the craftsmanship of their signature brews, and even meet the famous Clydesdale horses that have become a symbol of the brand. Along the way, enjoy a sampling of Anheuser-Busch's finest beers and learn from knowledgeable guides about the legacy of one of the world's largest breweries. This tour does include one beer at the conclusion of the tour. Guests will have time to grab lunch and grab some drinks on their own at the Biergarten and browse/shop at the Beer Gift Shop.

Capacity: This event is limited to 50 participants.

NOTES: Purchase of lunch IS NOT included in price of event.

This experience is 1.25 hours long and consists of 7 BLOCKS of downhill walking. This tour is ADA accessible and includes inside and outside walking. All guests are required to wear flat, closed-toe shoes and no bags larger than 8x10x8 or backpacks allowed on tour.

St. Louis History Museum #1: 21 August – 9:45am – 12:45pm - \$TBD

Step back in time with a visit to the St. Louis History Museum, where the rich and vibrant past of the city comes to life. This engaging tour takes our guests through a comprehensive collection of exhibits showcasing St. Louis' pivotal role in American history. Explore the stories of the city's founding, its significant cultural contributions, and its evolution from a frontier town to a bustling urban hub. Highlights include artifacts from the 1904 World's Fair, interactive displays, and exhibits on St. Louis' diverse communities, innovations, and historical milestones. The St. Louis History Museum offers a captivating journey through the city's fascinating heritage for our VHPA Guests. This is a self-paced tour.

Capacity: This event is limited to 100 participants.

St. Louis Shuttle: 21 August – 9:45am – 5:30pm - \$TBD

The St. Louis Shuttle offers a convenient and scenic ride through the heart of the city, with stops at some of the most iconic attractions. VHPA Members can journey to the Soldier's Memorial Military Museum, where you can explore the rich history of America's armed forces. Visit the Blues Museum, celebrating St. Louis' deep musical heritage and its connection to blues music. The shuttle route will include the iconic Gateway Arch, a symbol of American expansion and an unforgettable sight. Finally, the shuttle stop at Ballpark Village, where you can soak in the excitement of a sports district filled with restaurants, shops, and entertainment. Perfect for VHPA guests, this shuttle offers an easy and fun way to explore St. Louis' cultural and historical landmarks.

Capacity: This event is limited to 300 participants.

NOTES: This ticket does not include any admissions for any attractions. It is for the shuttle only and can be used as many times as you like during the reunion.

This is the only transportation to the Gateway Arch, which is a much see attraction in St. Louis. Visit www.gatewayarch.com for more information regarding this attraction.

Video Presentation #2 – Library of Vietnam Project, Inc. – Chuck Theusch: 21 August – 10:30am – 11:45am – NC

The idea of building a Library by the 61st AHC was completed on December 9, 2011. The Bong Son School Library was handed over to the teachers in a celebration of hope between past enemies, now friends. Now 15 years later, the Library continues bringing the hopes and dreams of the children of Bong Son to life, with computers, books and more. The Library Project's friends continue to visit with annual scholarships, English Language support, and most importantly, outstretched hands of friendship. This is the legacy of Vietnam Veterans, joined by the Helicopter pilots and crewmen. Their story inspires, we hope, another Library at Phu Cat. Hue or Quang Tri, Vietnam as a treasured Legacy, known to all the locals for having "Always Come Back." This is our story and an invitation to join our legacy.

Anheuser Bush Day Tour & Tasting #2: 21 August – 11:00am – 2:30pm - \$TBD

See Anheuser Bush Day Tour and Tasting #1 for details.

Capacity: This event is limited to 50 participants.

NOTES: Purchase of lunch IS NOT included in price of event.

This experience is 1.25 hours long and consists of 7 BLOCKS of downhill walking. This tour is ADA accessible and includes inside and outside walking. All guests are required to wear flat, closed-toe shoes and no bags larger than 8x10x8 or backpacks allowed on tour.

Video Presentation #3 – Pennies from Vietnam – Tracy Mathis Smith: 21 August – 12:00pm – 1:15pm – NC

After a career in commercial real estate development, Tracy Smith became a freelance columnist, author, and public speaker. She completed broadcasting school and worked as an Associate Producer with Naka Productions on the Telly Award-winning documentary "Moving America's Lighthouse" with Walter Cronkite. Decades later, Mr. Cronkite plays a pivotal role in Tracy's debut book, *Pennies from Vietnam. A Sister at Home, a Brother at War*, published by McFarland Books in 2024. Several Helicopter pilots were located in her extensive search that served with her brother Larry, some that were shot down with Larry and others that rescued him! Through storytelling, Tracy has seen much healing, both in herself and in her readers. She shares family stories and personal experiences with grief and PTSD, to promote healthy discussion about generational trauma.

Video Presentation #4 – Wes Sheffield: 21 August – 1:30pm – 2:45pm – NC

"The Legacy of Fort Wolters, U.S. Army Primary Helicopter School, Mineral Wells, Texas, 1956-1973"

Wes J. Sheffield is the author of the book, "Helicopter Training at Fort Wolters, Mineral Wells and the Vietnam War" published in July 2024, Arcadia Publishing and an aviation/aerospace professional and historian. He has taught history at Dallas Baptist University and is an active member of the West Texas Historical Association, serving as the organization's social media editor. His interest in Fort Wolters began while employed with Bell Helicopter, where he met and later interviewed former Vietnam War helicopter pilots while writing a narrative history of Fort Wolters, US Army Helicopter School.

The presentation will cover the beginning of the U.S. Army Primary Flight School in 1956, until its closure and deactivation of Fort Wolters in 1973.

Originally a World War II infantry training center, followed by a brief stint as a US Air Force base, Camp Wolters was redesignated a US Army installation in July 1956, and its primary mission was to train helicopter pilots.

Mineral Wells offered an ideal climate and terrain for flight training with predominately clear skies, rolling open ranch land, high bluffs, and the Brazos River valley. An integral part of Mineral Wells' economy, the flight school expanded in the 1960s due to escalation of the Vietnam War. During the war, with the exception of the US Navy, all helicopter pilots receiving primary flight training passed through Fort Wolters. During its 17 years of operation, over 40,000 pilots were trained, which included international students from 33 countries. The last Fort Wolters pilots graduated in 1973, and it was formally closed in 1975 and was converted into an industrial center.

St. Louis City Tour #2: 21 August – 1:30pm – 4:30pm - \$TBD

See St. Louis City Tour #1 for details.

Capacity: This event is limited to 100 participants.

NOTE: This tour will include stops along the way and guests can stay on the bus if they do not want to disembark.

Anheuser Bush Day Tour & Tasting #3: 21 August – 1:45pm – 5:15pm - \$TBD

See Anheuser Bush Day Tour and Tasting #1 for details.

Capacity: This event is limited to 50 participants.

NOTES: Purchase of lunch IS NOT included in price of event.

This experience is 1.25 hours long and consists of 7 BLOCKS of downhill walking. This tour is ADA accessible and includes inside and outside walking. All guests are required to wear flat, closed-toe shoes and no bags larger than 8x10x8 or backpacks allowed on tour.

St. Louis History Museum #2: 21 August – 2:00pm – 5:00pm - \$TBD

See St. Louis History Museum #1 for details.

Capacity: This event is limited to 100 participants.

Video Presentation #5 – Remembering CPT Scott Alwin – Pamela Fullerton: 21 August – 3:00pm – 4:15pm – NC

Honor in the Air is a documentary for all who love Aviation, the Military, and the Heroes who have flown in service to our nation. The film focuses on the life of Captain Scott R. Alwin, a helicopter pilot who served five tours during the Vietnam War with the 68th AHC (1967-1972). Scott, a Wisconsin native and one of 16 siblings (all preacher's kids), was awarded more Combat Air Medals than any aviator in military history from any branch of service. He was also awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, Silver Star, multiple Bronze Stars, Purple Hearts and the Vietnam Cross of Gallantry. The story also reflects the true valor and determination of those with whom Scott fought and serves as an example to be shared with our children and grand-children and as a touchstone for all of us who want to honor the unsung heroes in our own lives. The story is told thru interviews with fellow veterans, siblings, archival film, and personal letters.

The in-person introduction by HIA Co-producer, Pamela Fullerton and contributor, Penny Alwin Kleinhans, reveals the behind-the-scenes story of Scott's life, his accomplishments, and the making of the documentary. It's an interesting glimpse into the creation of a flyer's passion. There will be a Q & A after the film.

Welcome Reception: 21 August – 7:00pm – 9:00pm - NC

Traditionally this reception was the first official event for everyone to get together at the Reunion. This year's reception is not only a social get together, but will bring the laughs with a small comedy act to start the reception off. Cash bars will be positioned to make certain no one has to stand in a long line.

FRIDAY, 22 AUGUST 2025

KIA/MIA Gold Star Breakfast: 22 August - 7:30am – 9:00am - STBD

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

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

Have you been emailing back and forth with Bob's brother for years, but just never got a chance to shake his hand? This is the opportunity to do that. Invite them to attend the reunion and bring them to the Gold Star Family Breakfast. I'm happy to answer questions about the breakfast, as details get confirmed, or about how to connect with a buddy's family. Little sister, Julie Kink, sister of WO David Kink C Troop 1/9th CAV KIA 8-3-1969. I am also a member of VHFCN Family Contacts Committee. Visit www.VirtualWall.org/contacts or email me at Kink100@att.net.

Writer's Group: 22 August – 9:00am – 12:00pm (Actual meeting duration may vary depending on activities that day) – NC

See Writer's Group on 21 August for details.

St. Louis City Tour #3: 22 August – 9:30am – 12:30pm - STBD

See St. Louis City Tour #1 on 21 August for details.

Capacity: This event is limited to 100 participants.

NOTE: This tour will include stops along the way and guests can stay on the bus if they do not want to disembark.

Anheuser Bush Day Tour & Tasting #4: 22 August – 9:30am – 1:00pm - STBD

See Anheuser Bush Day Tour and Tasting #1 on 21 August for details.

Capacity: This event is limited to 50 participants.

NOTES: Purchase of lunch IS NOT included in price of event.

This experience is 1.25 hours long and consists of 7 BLOCKS of downhill walking. This tour is ADA accessible and includes inside and outside walking. All guests are required to wear flat, closed-toe shoes and no bags larger than 8x10x8 or backpacks allowed on tour.

St. Louis History Museum #3: 22 August – 9:45am – 12:45pm - STBD

See St. Louis History Museum #1 on 21 August for details.

Capacity: This event is limited to 100 participants.

St. Louis Shuttle: 22 August – 9:45am – 5:30pm - STBD

See St. Louis Shuttle on 21 August for details.

Capacity: This event is limited to 300 participants.

NOTES: This ticket does not include any admissions for any attractions. It is for the shuttle only and can be used as many times as you like during the reunion.

This is the only transportation to the Gateway Arch, which is a much see attraction in St. Louis. Visit www.gatewayarch.com for more information regarding this attraction.

Anheuser Bush Day Tour & Tasting #5: 22 August – 11:00am – 2:30pm - STBD

See Anheuser Bush Day Tour and Tasting #1 on 21 August for details.

Capacity: This event is limited to 50 participants.

NOTES: Purchase of lunch IS NOT included in price of event.

This experience is 1.25 hours long and consists of 7 BLOCKS of downhill walking. This tour is ADA accessible and includes inside and outside walking. All guests are required to wear flat, closed-toe shoes and no bags larger than 8x10x8 or backpacks allowed on tour.

St. Louis City Tour #4: 22 August – 1:30pm – 4:30pm - \$TBD

See St. Louis City Tour #1 on 21 August for details.

Capacity: This event is limited to 100 participants.

NOTE: This tour will include stops along the way and guests can stay on the bus if they do not want to disembark.

Anheuser Bush Day Tour & Tasting #6: 22 August – 1:45pm – 5:15pm - \$TBD

See Anheuser Bush Day Tour and Tasting #1 on 21 August for details.

Capacity: This event is limited to 50 participants.

NOTES: Purchase of lunch IS NOT included in price of event.

This experience is 1.25 hours long and consists of 7 BLOCKS of downhill walking. This tour is ADA accessible and includes inside and outside walking. All guests are required to wear flat, closed-toe shoes and no bags larger than 8x10x8 or backpacks allowed on tour.

Veteran's Quilt Presentation & Quilter's Show & Tell: 22 August – 2:00pm – 4:00pm – NC

This special event is **free and open to all reunion guests**. Our quilting program, a tradition started on or before 2010, is divided into two sessions. The **first, and our most important**, is the presentation of personalized American flag themed quilts to randomly selected VHPA aviators. After our presentation program, quilters and other interested attendees are invited to remain for the "show and tell" session where quilters display and discuss their on-going and finished masterpieces. Also, during this session we will have a sneak preview of the quilting blocks being donated for inclusion in next year's quilts.

St. Louis History Museum #4: 22 August – 2:00pm – 5:00pm - \$TBD

See St. Louis History Museum Tour #1 on 21 August for details.

Capacity: This event is limited to 100 participants.

Dinner Cruise: 22 August – 6:15pm – 9:30pm - \$TBD

Step aboard a luxurious riverboat for an unforgettable St. Louis Dinner Cruise, where breathtaking views, delicious cuisine, and live entertainment come together for a magical evening. As you set sail along the mighty Mississippi River, take in stunning panoramic views of the Gateway Arch and the twinkling city skyline. Enjoy a carefully crafted multi-course dinner featuring a selection of gourmet dishes, with options to satisfy every palate. Sip on a refreshing cocktail or a glass of fine wine as you relax with a cash bar for our guests.

Capacity: This event is limited to 300 participants.

SATURDAY, 23 AUGUST 2025

Pre-Memorial Service Breakfast: 23 August – 7:30am – 8:30am - \$TBD

This is the final breakfast offered at this Reunion. The Memorial Service, scheduled to begin at 8:45am is primarily a time to honor the several hundred VHPA members and potential members who passed away since the 2024 Reunion in Reno, NV

Memorial Service: 23 August – 8:45am – 9:30am - NC

The Memorial Service has been part of the "Reunion's Fabric" for at least nineteen years. It has evolved into the perfect setting/opportunity to reflect and remember our fallen brothers and friends. Since the KIA/MIA Gold Star Family Breakfast is dedicated to our KIA/MIA brothers, this Memorial Service is dedicated to those who passed away after their service in Southeast Asia with SPECIAL EMPHASIS on those who have passed SINCE THE LAST VHPA REUNION. The VHPA often uses the term DAT (Died After Tour) to refer to those who served in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War era, survived the War, and then passed away.

It is important to note that no financial donations or contributions are requested or accepted during the Memorial Service. Questions concerning this event should be directed to VHPA Executive Council Member John Powell or by contacting VHPA HQ.

Annual Business Meeting: 23 August – 10:00am – 12:30pm - NC

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

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

Spouse/Guest Murder Mystery Event: 23 August – 10:00am – 12:30pm - \$TBD

This will be a fun filled event for our ladies of VHPA to step into a world of mystery, deception, and suspense with an exciting Murder Mystery experience with Jest Murder Mystery! As the morning unfolds, you'll become part of a thrilling story where secrets lurk, motives emerge, and a shocking crime must be solved. Enjoy an event of immersive entertainment as you interact with intriguing characters, gather clues, and piece together the puzzle to uncover the culprit. Whether you're playing detective, a suspect, or simply soaking in the drama, each twist and turn will keep you on the edge of your seat. Take a break during the event to enjoy appetizer stations before diving back into the mystery.

Capacity: This event is limited to 75 participants.

NOTE: Lunch IS NOT included but appetizers will be included in the program.

St. Louis Shuttle: 23 August – 12:00pm – 5:00pm - \$TBD

See St. Louis Shuttle on 21 Aug. for details.

Capacity: This event is limited to 300 participants.

NOTES: This ticket does not include any admissions for any attractions. It is for the shuttle only and can be used as many times as you like during the reunion.

This is the only transportation to the Gateway Arch, which is a much see attraction in St. Louis. Visit www.gatewayarch.com for more information regarding this attraction.

St. Louis Sightseeing Cruise: 23 August – 12:45pm – 3:00pm - \$TBD

Experience St. Louis from a whole new perspective on a scenic sightseeing cruise along the mighty Mississippi River! Step aboard a classic riverboat and set sail past some of the city's most iconic landmarks, including the stunning Gateway Arch, the historic Eads Bridge, and the bustling riverfront district. As you glide along the water, listen to live narration from expert guides who share fascinating stories about St. Louis' rich history, from its days as a frontier trading post to its role in westward expansion. Marvel at the breathtaking views of the skyline, spot local wildlife along the riverbanks, and capture unforgettable photos of the city's most famous sights.

Capacity: This event is limited to 100 participants.

NOTE: There is food and drinks on board for purchase and IS NOT INCLUDED in ticket price.

St. Louis City Tour #5: 23 August – 1:00pm – 4:00pm - \$TBD

See St. Louis City Tour #1 on 21 August for details.

Capacity: This event is limited to 100 participants.

NOTE: This tour will include stops along the way and guests can stay on the bus if they do not want to disembark.

Closing Banquet: Registered Adults – 23 August – 6:00pm – 10:00pm - \$TBD

This ticket is for an adult banquet meal for someone who has also paid the adult reunion registration fee.

The highlight for most reunion attendees is our closing banquet. This is the only "dress up" occasion of the reunion. It is a celebration of our time together opening with a tribute to our missing men and closing with the change of command from our current president to the new one after the meal.

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

DOORS OPEN AT 5:30pm and PROGRAM BEGINS AT 6:00PM

Closing Banquet: Registered Child <12 – 23 August – 6:00pm – 10:00pm - \$TBD

This ticket is for a "kid's meal" for the closing banquet. A word of warning is appropriate here. This meal is designed for children under the age of 12 years old. Trust us when we say that this meal will **NOT MAKE** a teenager happy at all!

Closing Banquet: Non-Registered Guest – 23 August – 6:00pm – 10:00pm - \$TBD

This ticket is for an adult banquet meal for someone who has **NOT PAID** the adult reunion registration fee. Please review the Non-Registered Banquet Guest (NRBG) details in the Reunion Information at www.vhpa.org.

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

DOORS OPEN AT 5:30pm, PROGRAM BEGINS AT 6:00PM

R2025 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

All events & times are subject to change

Updated 2.26.25

Time	Event
WEDNESDAY, AUG 20	
4:00 pm - 8:00 pm	HQ Registration Desk
4:00 pm - 8:00 pm	Pre-Registered Packet and Tshirt Pickup
4:00 pm - 8:00 pm	Welcome Desk
4:00 pm - 8:00 pm	Vendor Room Open
4:00 pm - 8:00 pm	Oral History Interviews
4:00 pm - 9:00 pm	O' Club Open
THURSDAY, AUG 21	
6:45 am - 3:30 pm	Golf
8:00 am - 7:00 pm	Pre-Registered Packet and Tshirt Pickup
8:00 am - 7:00 pm	Welcome Desk
8:30 am - 11:30 am	HQ Registration Desk
9:00 am - 10:00 am	Oral History Interviews
9:00 am - 10:15 am	Presentation #1- Lam Son 719 - Clyde Romero
9:00 am - 12:00 pm	Writers Group - Tom Morrissey
9:00 am - 6:00 pm	Vendor Room Open
9:00 am - 10:00 pm	Mini Reunions / TOCs
9:30 am - 12:30 pm	St. Louis City Tour #1
9:30 am - 1:00 pm	Anheuser Bush Day Tour and Tasting #1
9:45 am - 12:45 pm	St. Louis History Museum #1
9:45 am - 5:30 pm	St. Louis Shuttle
10:30 am - 11:45 am	Presentation #2 - Library of Vietnam Project - Chuck Theusch
11:00 am - 2:30 pm	Anheuser Bush Day Tour and Tasting #2
11:00 am - 9:00 pm	O' Club Open
12:00 pm - 1:15 pm	Presentation #3 - Pennies from Vietnam - Tracy Mathis Smith
12:30 pm - 7:00 pm	HQ Registration Desk
1:30 pm - 2:45 pm	Presentation #4 - The Legacy of Fort Walters - Wes Sheffield
1:30 pm - 4:30 pm	St. Louis City Tour #2
1:45 pm - 5:15 pm	Anheuser Bush Day Tour and Tasting #3
2:00 pm - 5:00 pm	St. Louis History Museum #2
3:00 pm - 4:15 pm	Presentation #5 - Remembering CPT Scott Alwin - Pamela Fullerton
3:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Banquet Seating - questions or changes
7:00 pm - 9:00 pm	Welcome Reception
FRIDAY, AUG 22	
7:30 am - 9:00 am	KIA/MIA Gold Star Breakfast
8:00 am - 5:00 pm	Pre-Registered Packet and Tshirt Pickup
8:00 am - 5:00 pm	Welcome Desk
8:30 am - 11:30 am	HQ Registration Desk
9:00 am - 10:00 am	Oral History Interviews
9:00 am - 12:00 pm	Writers Group - Tom Morrissey
9:00 am - 6:00 pm	Vendor Room Open
9:00 am - 10:00 pm	Mini Reunions / TOCs
9:30 am - 12:30 pm	St. Louis City Tour #3
9:30 am - 1:00 pm	Anheuser Bush Day Tour and Tasting #4
9:45 am - 12:45 pm	St. Louis History Museum #3
9:45 am - 5:30 pm	St. Louis Shuttle

R2025 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

All events & times are subject to change

Updated 2.26.25

FRIDAY, AUG 22 ~ Continued

11:00 am - 2:30 pm	Anheuser Bush Day Tour and Tasting #5
11:00 am - 9:00 pm	O' Club Open
12:30 pm - 6:00 pm	HQ Registration Desk
1:30 pm - 4:30 pm	St. Louis City Tour #4
1:45 pm - 5:15 pm	Anheuser Bush Day Tour and Tasting #6
2:00 pm - 4:00 pm	Veterans Quilt Presentation and Quilters Show & Tell
2:00 pm - 5:00 pm	St. Louis History Museum #4
3:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Banquet Seating-questions or changes
6:15 pm - 9:30 pm	Dinner Cruise

SATURDAY, AUG 23

7:30 am - 8:30 am	Pre-Memorial Breakfast
8:45 am - 9:30 am	Memorial Service
8:30 am - 11:30 am	HQ Consolidated Reg, Pre-Reg & T-Shirts
10:00 am - 12:30 pm	Annual Business Meeting
10:00 am - 12:30 pm	Spouse/Guest Event
12:00 pm - 5:00 pm	St. Louis Shuttle
12:30 pm - 3:00 pm	Consolidated Reg, Pre-Reg & T-Shirts
12:30 pm - 9:00 pm	O' Club Open
12:45 pm - 3:00 pm	St. Louis Sightseeing Cruise
1:00 pm - 4:00 pm	St. Louis City Tour #5
1:00 pm - 4:00 pm	Vendor Room Open
1:00 pm - 4:00 pm	Mini-Reunions / TOCs
4:00 pm - 6:00 pm	Banquet Seating-questions or changes
6:00 pm - 10:00 pm	Closing Banquet w/Entertainment

Items in RED are outside events

Items in GREEN are inside events

Items in BLACK are general events or tasks

St. Louis Shuttle

Shuttle Included Stops:

- ✓ Blues Museum
- ✓ Arch and Museum
- ✓ Soldiers Museum
- ✓ Ballpark Village & Cardinals Hall of Fame

NOTE: Shuttle will be the only form of transportation to the St. Louis Arch and tram rides to the top are not included. Members need to book tram rides on their own.



VHPA MINI REUNION REQUEST

If you would like to hold a mini reunion at the 2025 VHPA Reunion in St. Louis, MO, space will be provided for you. Please complete this form and be sure to include any special requests you may have for your reunion.

Reserve your group reunion space now by providing the following info:

Reunion Name: _____

Primary Contact Name: _____

Phone #: _____ Cell #: _____

Email: _____ Estimated Number of Attendees: _____

Do you have a JPG File of your unit patch or logo? _____ If yes, please send with your request form.

What would you like printed on the sign to be placed in front of your room:

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

VHPA is providing a complimentary room for your mini reunion. The mini reunion rooms range in size from 756 to 1804 sq. feet. We will provide the tables and chairs (please indicate below what type of tables you are interested in having).

VHPA will NOT provide any audio visual or food for mini reunions. If you are interested in ordering audio visual or food, call HQ for contact info. Your organization is responsible for the costs of these items.

No outside food or drinks are allowed in the meeting rooms per hotel contract.

Mini reunion coordinator must be registered to attend the reunion. Should the coordinator cancel his registration, the mini reunion request will also be cancelled.

*****VHPA may need to limit the days and times a group may reserve a mini reunion and a request is subject to demand and availability*****

Hospitality Room Set up Requirements: Please indicate any specific set up requirements (round tables, long tables, trash cans, etc....):

Please send this completed form with the attached schedule to:

VHPA HQ, 1601 E Lamar Blvd, Suite 117, Arlington, TX 76011

Questions? Please contact Sherry Rodgers with HQ at the following email address or phone number:

sherry@vhpa.org

Phone: 800-505-8472

PLEASE COMPLETE THE ATTACHED SCHEDULE WITH REQUESTED DATES AND TIME SLOTS

Strategic Partners: AAAA & VHPA

Art Jacobs, Past President, Legacy Chair and AAAA Liaison, along with CW4 Don LeMaster Past President, Legacy Committee, and VNCA Liaison were instrumental in sustaining and redefining that affiliation.

Through their efforts, and in collaboration with MG Tim Crosby, AAAA Past President, AAAA Executive director Bill Harris, AAAA Editor CW4 Joe Pisano, and CW4 Tom Kirk, Editor VHPA Aviator. articles and "War "stories, are taken from the chronicles of the VHPA Aviator, and published in the AAAA magazine. I, personally and professionally, have really enjoyed them and I hope that our Jr. Aviation soldiers benefit and learn from them as well. I believe this is a significant and historic relationship and these stories need to be told and celebrated, by not only the Army aviation community but the entire Army.

As many of you know, the Legacy Committee was instrumental in establishing the VHPA Pilot and Crewmember Memorial at Arlington National Cemetery. Currently, they are culminating efforts to place an additional monument at the U.S. Army Aviation Museum at Ft. Novosel.

Another contribution I would like to highlight is the VHPA Scholarship program at AAAA. Scholarship Committee, along with Legacy has worked tirelessly to sustain and expand the program.

In addition to the afore mentioned, while Don was the VHPA President, I was the President and CEO of the Army Aviation



Heritage Foundation (AAHF). We worked very closely with the Executive Council to successfully support their reunions, with UH-1 and AH-1 rides. Through that effort the VHPA was able to donate to AAHF's ongoing operation.

I hope to see the AAAA, AAHF, Museum Foundation, VNCA and the Aviation Branch continue to work with and recognize the dwindling VHPA community to preserve their history and legacy.

Thank you once again, I appreciate the work and all that you do to further the ever evolving aviation story.

By BG Stephen E. Joyce

Colonel Matt Jackson has catalogued the process of reporting to the Induction Center to earning his Army Aviator wings in a way which reveals the long road (in effort – not time) many will find both entertaining and informative. For those unaware of the journey from young man to combat seasoned veteran it is a fascinating tale. For those who have made the journey it is a poignant reprise of a time long ago and a proud achievement.

His brothers in arms will find it accurate and well... nostalgic.

AVAILABLE ON: amazon.com
in paperback and Kindle



Book Reviews *by Phil Marshall*

Phil Marshall, is a Life Member and was President of the VHPA in 1994. He flew Dustoff in 1969 in Northern I Corps and he is also a Life Member of American Huey 369. He has authored over 25 books to include 19 books documenting the rescues missions that we all flew in Vietnam. *You can contact Phil at dmz.dustoff@yahoo.com*



"Ace" Second Edition by Rex Gooch ISBN 979 8991 628 709

Whether you have read the "First Edition" of "Ace" or not, you will enjoy Rex Gooch's Second Edition of "Ace", "The Story of Lt. Col. Ace Cozzalio".

I read Gooch's original book about Ace a few years ago and thoroughly enjoyed it. I was amazed at chapter after chapter of not only Ace's "exploits" as I would call them but also amazed by his many accomplishments both in and out of the cockpit. A true hero by any definition but a humble yet extremely talented man, an admired leader who happened to be a Vietnam helicopter pilot. He was a "Cav" pilot who enjoyed looking the part of a Cavalry Pilot and dangled proud to be one!

Not surprisingly, this Second Edition is even better than the Original; it's new and improved with lots of added material. The additional information that the Author

gleaned from more research and interviews has only enhanced the stories. In fact, in my opinion, the Chapter documenting the Battle of Phu My is well worth a Second Edition even if it was the only added material. But it's not the only addition; the enhanced Battle documentation of Phu My is only the tip of the Cavalry Saber. Rex Gooch has wisely enhanced his first effort and the absolutely true stories only get better.

If you want your "non-Veteran" friends and neighbors to have an idea of what it was like to fly helicopters in Vietnam, buy an extra copy of the book and give it to them. Point out to them that not one Chapter starts with "Once upon a time...". Highly decorated Ace Cozzalio was a man's man and a pilot's pilot; I'm privileged to have read both volumes to get to know so much about him and his accomplishments.

After I finished this book, I Googled "Amazing Vietnam Helicopter Pilot". Ace Cozzalio's photo popped up...not really, but it should have.



Jersey Boy Takes Flight By Frank Fox ISBN 979 8 8229 5316 1 Paperback

Frank Fox recalls a lot of details! From his early days in "Jersey" until he arrives home from Vietnam, we're talking a LOT of details remembered. But don't be distracted by the details, by the end of the book he ties virtually all of them together.

Frankly, the book started off a little slow for me, but it picked up speed as we went along for the ride. Frank Fox documented a lot of information from his "formative" years that will influence his decisions later in life; information that his descendants will mostly appreciate but also information that the reader will appreciate later in the book. We are talking about Frank Fox's trials, tribulations and accomplishments...what he learned from them and applied later to his career as an Army Aviator.

Frank is no different from the rest of us in that every Vietnam helicopter pilot has many war stories to share and none of the War Stories in this book are Fairy Tales. For instance, one amazing helicopter rescue that the

Author is involved with is described in great detail, but it has a bittersweet ending. Bittersweet, but even so, it was a rescue and lives were saved. Fast forward several years, guess who Frank meets quite by chance. Aw, you guessed it! And those rescues we flew as aviators? Wasn't that one of the main reasons we were there as helicopter crews?

Frank Fox also includes lots of what I call "factoids" throughout his book and information that I saw as interesting aviation snippets. Finally, in the closing chapters, the Author shares his opinions as to why we were really in South Vietnam to begin with. His insights and the knowledge he gained throughout his military career lend credence to what he writes about, including the reasons for us being in Vietnam. He offers some very convincing facts about why we were there and I very much appreciated his being candid.

Finally, frankly, I did not see the surprise at the end of the book coming, I had no clue. No spoiler alert from me, but it did put a big smile on my face. You will have to read the book cover to cover for yourself if you want a smile on your face as well. Frankly speaking, of course!

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 (8472).

AVIATOR REPORT completed for 12 New Members and covers the period of: 8.24.24-3.25.24

Line 1 has the last then first names plus middle initial or name with the nickname in quotes VHPA Life Members have ** at the end of line 1, Line 2 has his city and state, Line 3 has his military branch of service, Line 4 has his flight school number or wings date, Line 5 has his Southeast Asian tour information where the unit abbreviation is followed by the YEAR(s)

This roster is presented in alphabetical order by last name

Beebe Ronald T. **
San Antonio Texas
Army
70-48
HHT 2/17 CAV in 71-72;
388 TC CO in 72

Cornell Robert N. 'Bob' **
Coventry Connecticut
Army
69-17
F/8 CAV in 69-70

Everett Mark D.
Swansea Illinois
Army
66-8 66-7WF
121 AHC in 66-67

Haggerton Robert J
Pensacola Florida
Navy
66-29
HA(L)-3 in 68-69

Henning James E. **
Itasca Illinois
Army
71-12
B/7/17 CAV in 71-72

Hoer Thomas E **
Mexico Missouri
Army
69-15
128 AHC in 69-70

Leith Fredrick W. 'Fred' **
Cordova Tennessee
Army
69-23
187 AHC in 69-70; HHC 269
CAB in 70; HHC 145 AVN in
70-71; OH-58 NETT in 71;
25 CAC in 71

McClain Edwin E. **
Bloomington Indiana
Army
68-509 68-13
271 ASHC in 68-69; 178
ASHC in 71-72

Nelson John J. **
Ypsilanti Michigan
Army
69-37 69-35
170 AHC in 70

Scott Roland B. 'Scotty'
Long Beach California
Marine Corps
HML-367 in 69-70

Sorenson William P. **
Rogers Arkansas
Army
69-15
A/7/1 CAV in 69-70

Soukup Jerry W. **
Jelm Wyoming
Marine Corps
68-7
HMM-364 in 69;
3 MAW in 69-70



'Preserving the Legacy', all combat helicopter aircrews, all eras of warfare!



If you were a US military pilot or crewmember in combat or in an imminent danger area, in any conflict,

you should be a member of the Combat Helicopter Pilots Association!

Be sure to order your new CHPA aircrew gear online at: <https://fanmadefits.com/chpa-aircrew-gear>

Join the 2023 CHPA Memorial Day 5K Challenge at:

<https://www.goneforarun.com/virtual-race-chap-memorial-day-5k-2023/chp-0001.html?cgid=gfar>

Website: www.chpa-us.org / Email: hq@chpa-us.org / Phone: 800-832-5144

VHPA Chapters

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Facebook: Old Dominion Chapter VHPA

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Email: RMC.mailbox@yahoo.com

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Kirkwood, MO 63122

South Carolina Chapter
(Celebrate Freedom) Chapter
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West Columbia, SC 29170
Phone Office 803 822-8812
Cell 760 851-5220
Email: rdlone@hotmail.com

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Cell: 909-633-4427
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Upper Midwest
Donald Abrams, President
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Utah Chapter
Doug Drury, President
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lama527@comcast.net

Washington State Chapter
Alex Bromen
Email: alexbromen1@comcast.net

Notice to all Members of the VHPA

The liaison between the national HQ of the VHPA and the independent Chapters has reverted to Tom Payne of the Chapter Liaison National Committee. Tom can be reached at 918-813-5132 (cell) or 918-298-5132 (home) or via E-mail at ka5hzd@att.net. Feel free to contact Tom, 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 Chapters



Alamo Chapter

Winter weather finally made its way to south central Texas. Temperatures dropped to the lower 20's and a rare snowstorm hit many of us. Black ice on the roads challenged some drivers, but not many as south central Texas pretty much shut down for 36 hours. The chapter was not very active during these days. No big deal to you northern folks but the transportation infrastructure in our area is not equipped to deal with snow and ice.

A local ladies quilting group is finalizing the presentation of Quilts of Honor quilts to recognize several of our chapter members. We are very excited about the opportunity to recognize and are indeed humbled that the ladies have reached out to the chapter.

Our monthly luncheons/dinners continue. This January President Mike Law hosted a dinner at the



Army Residence Community. Mike outlined his vision for the coming year and highlighted a very interesting presentation on a remarkable helicopter pilot.

The chapter continues to support the Huey 369 Project and the Vietnam Archive Center and Museum at Texas Tech University.

The chapter is alive, well, and active. President Mike

Law now occupies the left seat and will lead the chapter to a successful year.

Visit us at our web site:

www.vhpa-alamo.com for more information about the Alamo Chapter.

Until next time, stay happy and healthy.

Mike Clark
Chapter Secretary

Georgia Chapter



Attached are copies of our slides from last Tuesday's luncheon. It was outstanding with one of the highlights being an award presentation to The Georgia Chapter of VHPA by

The Georgia Veterans Day Parade Association. Former Special Forcers Veteran Brett Stroney with GVDA declared that our participation in the Georgia Veterans Day Parade

with UH1, Hollywood, merited this award for "Most Patriotic Entry".

Congrats to all for your participation and dues which help support the operational costs. This bird is becoming a touch stone for so many Georgia Veterans who have and will see her as an icon of their participation in a crucial chapter in our Country's history.

Also, new Officers were elected for our Chapter! We are excited about this new leadership group and all of the opportunities which are in front of us for 2025!



Jim Crawford,
Pres.



George Murray,
V.P.



Chuck Bayless,
Sec/Treas.

VHPA Chapter Activities



Michigan Chapter

The Michigan Chapter continues event participations and holding gatherings to keep the chapter going.

An end of the year report for 2024 was sent out to all the Michigan Chapter members and associates by chapter president Rich Deer. Some excerpts included that the Michigan Chapter remains strong with 130 members and associates on our Michigan Chapter roster: 102 members and 28 associates. Unofficially there are 118 Army, 8 Marines, 3 Air Force, 1 Navy, and 1 Coast Guard within our ranks. We added 8 new members in 2024, with several of them “drafted” as part of Quilt of Valor proceedings.

With notable additions, our primary activities in 2024 included monthly gatherings in Traverse City and a number of Quilt of Valor presentations. Added activities continual updates on our website by Bob Rich, intelligence received on various events from Glen Veno and



Cassandra McMillen John Johnson Jim Ausdemore Dave Irwin Mark Crawfis



Making Quilts of Valor

Sandy McLeod, a “reconnaissance” visit to the Mason Aviation Day activities by Ken & Beth Hand, numerous Memorial Day & Veterans Day participation by several Michigan Chapter Members, induction of Gary Copp into the Michigan Aviation Hall of Fame, USCG Open Ramp headed up by Mark Benjamin, attendance at a Michigan Helicopter Association meeting by Bob Rich and Glen Veno, Walter Topp representing our Michigan Chapter in the Northwest Michigan Veterans Coalition, and many more large and small activities. This Chapter is blessed to have the support and participation of many members and associates who help keep it alive.

The Traverse City lunch gatherings hosted by Mark Benjamin became brunch gatherings in June at Willies Rear and draws good attendance each month. The AARs of each gathering have been sent out and added to our submissions in the VHPA Aviator.

The May business meeting was well attended with keynote speaker and Michigan Chapter member John Wemlinger giving a quality presentation while describing his work as an author of many books related to military service. Planning is underway to hold another business meeting in May of 2025 and John has been invited back for another presentation – watch your emails for updated information.

At that May business meeting and at several of the Traverse City gatherings, Quilts of Valor have been presented to Michigan Chapter members and associates. Mark Benjamin in coordination with Jean Perkins, NW Michigan Rep for the Quilts of Valor Foundation in Traverse City and Gary Copp in coordination with Ann Booren of the Prayers and Squares Ministry in East Lansing have led the charge on arranging these presentations with these extremely generous quilt ministry organizations. Through 2024 Michigan Chapter members and associates Lee Luck, Al Peterson, Noah South, Roger Blaha, Ken Hand, Mark Cosgrove, Peter Fabien,

VHPA Chapter Activities

Ed Canright, John Johnson, and Rich Deer have received Quilts of Valor in addition to other veterans. Gary Copp is actively recruiting more recipients with presentations expected next year and Mark Benjamin is always on the lookout for more as well.

On October 29 a ceremony was held presenting Quilts of Valor to veterans Jim Ausdemore, Mark Crawfis, Dave Irwin, John Johnson, and Cassandra McMillen. Member At Large Gary Copp nominated most of the recipients and coordinated with Ann Booren of the Prayers and Squares Ministry to hold the ceremony at the University Lutheran Church in East Lansing. Members of this chapter with ties to the Michigan National Guard will remember several of the honorees. The event was viewed by a sizeable number of the recipients' family members as well as church members involved with the quilt activity. Along with Gary, chapter president Rich Deer represented the Michigan Chapter for the ceremony.

The Prayers and Squares Quilt Ministry is very active in making the quilts with much of the work in progress as attendees arrived. Ann Booren gave tours of some of the work areas as well as covering the efforts of the church beyond the Quilts of Valor efforts during the presentations.

On November 13th a brunch gathering hosted by Mark Benjamin was held in Traverse City. Attending were Walter Topp, Paul Fitzsimons, Bart Halliday, Mark Benjamin, new attendee Jerry Straw, & Bob Matlis.

Since Jerry was new, Mark went around the table and had everyone tell their story. He wished he had recorded



Walter Topp, Paul Fitzsimons, Bart Halliday, Mark Benjamin, Jerry Straw, Bob Matlis

November 13, Traverse City

the entire thing to document the wealth of information from these veterans.

Jerry joined the Army and many months later someone recommended that he apply for OCS. He got it, was

commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the Infantry and off to Flight School and Vietnam. Mark noted that this was a diverse and interesting group. But then, all of us who experienced this thing called The Army, Army or Marine Aviation, Vietnam, and were lucky enough to experience life afterward, are achievers, contributors and, for the most part, highly successful people. Mark said he won't stop doing this until, eventually, no one shows up.

The December 11th brunch at Willies Rear in Traverse City drew some of the usual suspects. Mark Benjamin reported: Lots to talk about. Started with target shooting then went on to the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) and their upcoming dinner meeting which includes scholarship awards to local students. Then on to Families and elder care and memory care issues. Walt Topp, retired chief pharmacist at Munson Medical Center, briefed us on recent drug recalls and the need to continue our vaccines for ourselves and loved ones.

Then went on to "Radar O'Reilly" stories and discussed how every unit seems to have had one. Seems they finagled everything from aircraft parts to jeeps to alcohol. Those were the days.

In the December 11th Traverse City photo are left to right clockwise: Bob Matlis, Paul Fitzsimons, Walter Topp, Mark Benjamin, Bart Halliday. Not pictured: Barry Witt.



December 11th, Traverse City

January 8th brunch in Traverse City as reported by Mark Benjamin: Yet another month has gone. Topic of discussion centered on the future.

We discussed the VFW Post 2780 here in Traverse City. They need more members and I encouraged everyone to join. This Post is more than a cheap place for lunch and a beer. Rather, the organization is really reaching out to all veterans and veterans groups in the area to provide information, services and a facility for their use as needed.

Buckley Old Engine Show, 14-17 August. Post 2780 operates the food concession at this event attended by

VHPA Chapter Activities

thousands of people every year. This is THE major fund raiser for the Post. Help is wanted.

Open Ramp at the Coast Guard Air Station, July 4th. More information to follow but we will once again be participating.

Fund raiser for Reining Liberty Ranch, 27 June. This will be the second annual golf outing to raise money for the Ranch. Many Gulf War era veterans are receiving PTSD treatment at the ranch which provides equestrian experiences as well as other support animals. Even if you don't golf: help wanted.

The Traverse City VHPA group plans to participate in all of these various events throughout next summer.

In the January 8th Traverse City photo from Right to Left counter clockwise: Clay Maxwell, Linda

Maxwell, Paul Fitzsimons, Mason Grahl, Mark Benjamin, Walter Topp, Barry Witt.

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 richdeer@att.net. We have several non-Michigan residents on our roster so don't let that stop you from joining us.

More information on our chapter can be found online

at vhpami.wordpress.com and on Facebook at Michigan Chapter of the VHPA.

Submitted by
Rich Deer,
President



January 8th, Traverse City

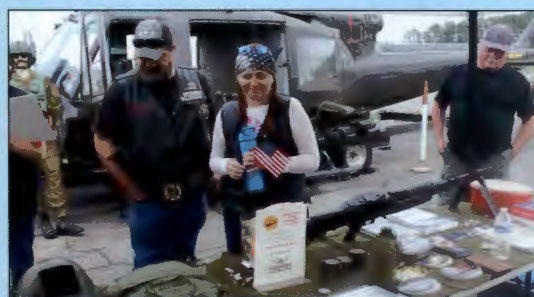
North Alabama Chapter, VHPA (NAVHPA)

On November 1st the NAVHPA tow team pulled BUC-3, our UH-1C/M gunship, to Cullman, AL for the 2024 Cullman Veterans Day Celebration which was scheduled for November 2nd. This celebration was held at the Cullman Regional Airport and consisted of many great activities. Some things to do were: static displays (Huey, Chinook, AT-11 Bomber, P-51, F-4 Phantom cockpit, and many others), Vintage Classic Car show, aircraft rides (Huey, T-6 Texan), flyovers (KC-135), skydivers, military vehicles, movies, re-enactors, free lunch for vets and families, and much more. This is an all-out veteran's celebration and one of our BUC-3 display highlights each year. About a dozen NAVHPA members attended as Docents for our display. Veterans, especially Vietnam vets, enjoyed talking about and sitting in BUC-3's cockpit. Our copy of the VHPA membership directory was always useful when someone asked about a family member or friend who flew in Vietnam. BUC-3 was back home in Huntsville before sunset.

NAVPHA was invited to present a Veterans Day program at Huntsville's Lakewood Elementary School on



BUC-3 ready for the public on a foggy morning in Cullman, AL



Veterans and friends check out the displays in the NAVHPA booth in Cullman.

November fifth. Members Ernie Megli, Rich Hudgens, Stan Souvenir, Sam Maki and Marshall Eubanks presented the 30-minute program. We showed a 5-minute movie about helicopters flying in Vietnam. Then we had a "show & tell" of equipment and gear we used, including flight uniforms and gear, rockets, flak jackets and C-

rations. Prior to the start of the program, we paraded through the halls of the school where all the classes were in the halls waving flags and cheering us on – a great experience for both our members and the kids.

Our NAVHPA annual participation in the Huntsville Wreaths for Veterans program took place in November 2024 and January 2025. From November 4th to the 6th we helped unpack, clean, fluff, replace bows and pack the 3600 wreaths (in 360 boxes) that were destined for

VHPA Chapter Activities

veteran's graves in Huntsville. Many community volunteers, including the NAVHPA, placed the wreaths 850 wreaths on November 19th at Valhalla Cemetery and 2750 wreaths at Maple Hill Cemetery on 20 November. The wreaths remained on veterans' graves until volunteers retrieved them on January 7th and 8th 2025.

On November 11th, eighteen members and families participated in the Huntsville Veterans Day Parade. We have participated in the parade since 2010. Our entries are BUC-3, our Huey Gunship, and our "people trailer." Some members ride in BUC-3, some, still spry, members and families choose to walk along side of BUC-3, and others ride on our trailer. Both are pulled by member's super duty trucks. The parade is about 2 hours long with around more than 150 entries (many entries have multiple vehicles/displays). BUC-3 seems to be a crowd pleaser. She is the only aircraft in the parade and one of a handful of Vietnam era military vehicles.

The chapter hosted our NAVHPA annual Christmas Dinner & Meeting on December 10th at the Huntsville



Sam Maki and Stan Souvenir showing Vietnam flight gear to students at Lakewood Elementary School. (The manikin is known as "JJ Johnson")



Sam Maki and Stan Souvenir showing Vietnam flight gear to students at Lakewood Elementary School. (The manikin is known as "JJ Johnson")



NAVHPA members and spouses reconditioning wreaths for Wreaths for Veterans.



One section of wreaths at Maple Hill Cemetery



Rich Hudgens and Gil Fluhr hard at work for Wreaths for Veterans.



Volunteers hard at work repacking wreaths until next Christmas season.

Country Club. We had a record number of 83 attendees this year. In addition to spouses, several members had children, grandchildren and friends in attendance. Our strength grew by two members at the meeting: LTG(R) Dan Petrosky joined as a regular member and Medal of Honor recipient, LTC(R) Mike Sprayberry was selected by our Board of Directors as our newest Honorary member. Member and VHPA past president Don LeMaster, along with several other out of town members and guests, attended. Dining and dancing celebrating the season held center stage at the festivities.

In compliance with the North Alabama VHPA by-laws, elections for the Board of Directors are held every two years in December. Our nominating committee chairman, Rick Davis, was unable to "recruit" any additional members willing to serve on the Board. So, with their concurrence, he nominated all the members of the current Board. Because we had only one nominee for each position, our By-Laws allow the election to be by acclamation. Our members unanimously approved of this action. The board members for the 2025-2026 term are: President, Marshall Eubanks; Secretary, Sam Maki; Treasurer, Sandy Weand; Director Activities, Bob Monette; and Director Publicity, Ralph Weber. As past

on the Board. So, with their concurrence, he nominated all the members of the current Board. Because we had only one nominee for each position, our By-Laws allow the election to be by acclamation. Our members unanimously approved of this action. The board members for the 2025-2026 term

are: President, Marshall Eubanks; Secretary, Sam Maki; Treasurer, Sandy Weand; Director Activities, Bob Monette; and Director Publicity, Ralph Weber. As past

VHPA Chapter Activities



LTG (Ret) Dan Petrosky speaking to the chapter at the Christmas dinner & meeting



NAVHPA folks at the Christmas dinner and meeting listening to the guest speaker, Dan Petrosky.

president, Les Haas agreed to continue to serve on the Board. The new Board was sworn-in by Tom Houser.

Perhaps the chapter wasn't as active in 2024 as we were in prior years (we're not getting any younger), we have continued to be visible reminder of the valor of those who served in Vietnam to the community. A few highlights from 2024 were:

We participated in ten veterans' events and activities, five of which were BUC-3 parade or display events.

We had articles submitted by Ralph Weber for every Aviator magazine.

Les Haas's wife, Renja Schmitt, received her US citizenship in October after many years going through the "government process." Congrats Renja.

We ended the year with 67 NAVHPA folks on the People Trailer for the Veterans Day parade.



Renja Schmitt shows her new certificate as a US citizen



After the social hour, Chapter Chaplain Paul Keil gave the blessing. Then the Huntsville Country Club staff served a great meal. LTG(R) Dan Petrosky, our speaker for the evening, is well known for his positions in Army aviation as well as key Army and joint leadership positions. Dan spoke on the transformation of Army aviation from Vietnam to the present, while using examples of aviation experiences in Vietnam which informed and shaped the future of Army

aviation. His address was enjoyed by all, and we presented him with the coveted NAVHPA Certificate of Appreciation.

The NAVHPA meets every month at the Huntsville Country Club for a social hour, business meeting and buffet dinner. We have 40-50 attendees every month, depending on the members' travel, family, and medical concerns. After the social hour, we conduct business using a format that allows us to complete the meeting in 45 minutes or less. Then we enjoy a buffet dinner. If you or someone you know is visiting or moving to the North Alabama or Middle Tennessee area, please let them know we are here and eager to find new folks to talk with. We are on Facebook as 'North Alabama VHPA'.

Ralph Weber



Some of the NAVHPA folks participating in the Veterans Day parade in Huntsville.

VHPA Chapter Activities

North Carolina Chapter

This Winter has, so far, been a quiet one for NC VHPA, our members participating in only one event since our previous news article. On November 10 and 11, 2024, we again supported the Veterans Day activities of the Old Armor Beer Company in Kannapolis, North Carolina with a display of three helicopters: OH-6, OH-58 and UH-1H. Attendees at this event were Jerry and Barbara Seago, Brock and Colleen Nicholson, Ben Gay, Gerald Phelps and Phil Keith.

Jerry Seago applied to the Presidential Inaugural Committee to have NC VHPA, once again, represent North Carolina during President Trump's inauguration parade with four helicopters and 42 personnel. Our organization, however, was not selected. If NC VHPA had been chosen and had participated, this would have been the fourth occurrence for our members to march along Pennsylvania Avenue during a new president's parade.

During participation in three previous presidential inaugural parades, NC VHPA has contended with cold, sleet, rain, getting helicopters ensnared

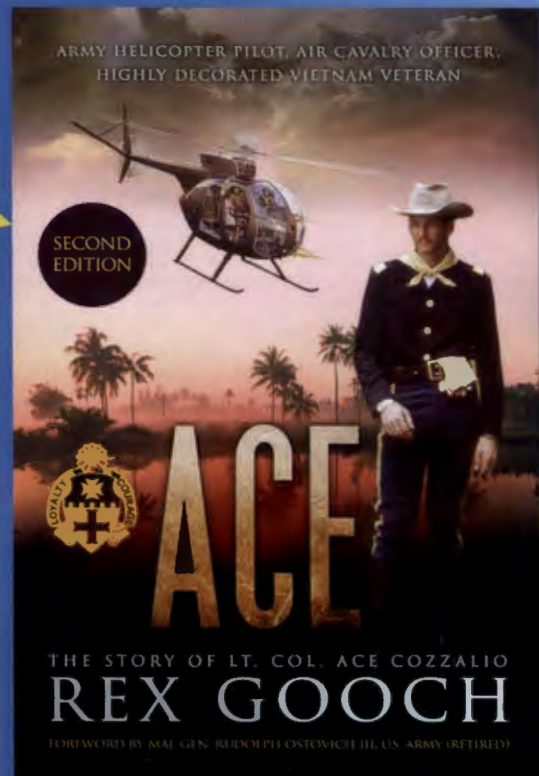
in DC side streets, did I mention cold, and WAITING. It has since been realized by our members that not being invited to this event was good news - not only were the weather conditions frigid and windy in Washington, DC that day, there would have been no favorable maneuvering of the helicopters through the narrow aisles and 90° turns that those who did march encountered in the Capital One Arena. (P.S. Richard Petty's 1970 Superbird was invited to represent North Carolina, but also did not drive in the parade through the arena.)

On February 1, 2025, NC VHPA will again gather at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial on the North Carolina Capitol grounds to read the names of North Carolina servicemen who are still Missing In Action from the Vietnam War. Following the ceremony, we will retire to the nearby Gravy Restaurant for a buffet lunch and conduct our annual business meeting. Topics to be addressed during the meeting include: Transfer of additional helicopters to the North Carolina National Guard Museum, the tentative 2025 display schedule, and election of officers.

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VHPA Chapter Activities

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

We held our first meeting of the New Year meeting at Post #1 of the American Legion in Denver and provided Zoom conferencing for those who could not attend in person. We had 20 or so of the unusual suspects in attendance with 3 Zoomies. Since our last activity report we've had 4 events, one birthday anniversary worthy of mention. (Not that all of them are not note worthy at this stage). Three of our members have passed away since we last reported which are celebrated in Taps; Bill Robie, Larry Weaver, and Rick Beaver.

Wings Over The Rockies Event at The Exploration of Flight:

This four day Labor Day event over August 30th thru September 2nd was a partnership between The Commemorative Airforce-Rocky Mountain Wing, and



Carl Cavaluzzi and Terry Olson watching the DC-3 "That's All Brother" Taxing out for a flight.

Wings Over The Rockies- Exploration of Flight located at Centennial Airport, in Englewood Colorado. The highlights included the C47 pictured above ("That's All Brother"), which lead the D-Day Invasion in 1944, and a vintage B-25J Mitchell WWII bomber "Yellow Rose" which was deployed in South East Asia and the Pacific Theaters of WWII. It was made famous as a result of the Jimmy Doolittle Raid on Japan. Rides were given in both airplanes.

We had a good round of docents that included: Rick Beaver, Carl and Barbara Cavalluzzi, Wick Clark, Bruce Girvan, Bob Harris, Al and Dotti Harinck, Dale House, Phil Lanphier, Cliff Lawson, Jim McGrevey, Greg Mann, Doug Neil, Terry Olsen, Richard Overstake, and Mike Poindexte.

"Those Crazy Nights"-Journey Back in Time:

On Fri Sep 06 2024 at 6:30 pm We Journeyed back in time with "Those Crazy Nights." Hosted by the Commemorative Air Force to relive the music and memories of the past. It was a unique event with Airplanes, Hot Air Balloons, A live Band, "Journey Reimagined", our "Helicopter War Museum", and a Helicopter (Rich Norloff's vintage Bell 47). "Those Crazy Nights" featured a stellar lineup of the nationally touring professional musicians who brilliantly emulate the nostalgic sounds of Journey. Journey hits from the 70's and 80's such as "Don't stop believing", "Anyway you want it", "Separate ways", "Wheel in the sky", and many more. Journey Reimagined harnessed the "Ultimate Journey Experience" delivering an unforgettable, dynamic performance that captured the hearts of



The EOF, HWM, and the DC-3 That's All Brother" View from B-25 Nose Gunner position



Vietnam Veterans Dale House & Lockheed "Conney" pilot Doug in cockpit of the B-25



Dale House explaining aerodynamic of a Huey blade to a young visitor.



Wick Clark teaching a visitor how to fly a Huey.

VHPA Chapter Activities



Journey, "Those Crazy Nights"



GBill McPherson getting roasted by LTC Ken Overturf.



Hot Air Balloon Vintage Aircraft and Journey Band

everyone in attendance and awakened the Journey Spirit.

Doug Eastman President of the Rocky Mountain Chapter of The Commemorative Air Force expected approximately 300 guests but nearly 800 showed for this event. It was a BYOC (Bring Your Own Chair) event. An acre deep of fans seated in front of the stage to enjoy the music of "Journey". Nearly half of those present visited our museum that evening. Candy, my wife, was initiated into docent hood until Mike Poindexter and Mike Silva came. Our neighbors David and Nadine, who came with us were put to work setting up and to figure out our power outages and accept donations for T shirts and Hats.

Once both Mikes arrived to take over, Candy, and I danced the night away. It was an Awesome and Memorable Night.

Colonel Bill McPherson 90th Birthday Celebration:

On June 30th, 2024 We helped celebrate chapter member Col Bill McPherson's 90th Birthday at the Wings Over The Rockies Air & Space Museum alongside his UH1-M "Mike" Model Gun Ship, "Sweet Sioux". Helping to celebrate (in the picture) were, in the first picture: Front row L-R, BG Kathleen Flarity, and Chapter Members, COL Bill McPherson, LTC Ken Overturf; Back row L-R Crew Chief TSgt Ed Arden, and CSM Bill Martin.

Bill graduated Flight School Class 63-4. He was shot down during his first tour in Vietnam in 1966, conducting close air support to a Special Forces Fire Base. He managed to crash land the Helicopter gun ship inside the wire where his crew chief pulled him to safety. He had sustained 3 rounds to the abdomen and suffered severe spinal injuries. He recovered from those injuries only to return to Vietnam and serve two more tours.

After 30 years of Service, he returned to Colorado and eventually became the City Manager of Cripple Creek, CO. Aside from establishing Helicopter Ministries with Sweet Sioux and a host of volunteers, He was also recruited as the Ambassador Commander to the 34th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron at the 302nd Airlift Wing at Peterson Air Force Base by the Squadron Commander, then Lt. COL Kathleen Flarity.

Col Bill stated that, "If you don't come to my 90th, you won't get invited to my 100th". Happy Birthday Bill!!!

VHPA Chapter Activities



Wick Clark with Veteran



Front-Bill Bates, Doug Neil, Phil Lanphier, Bck-Rick Overstake, Mike Poindexter

Veterans Day Celebration at The Wings Over the Rockies Museum:

Due to the inclement weather pending for the weekend event, we decided to move the trailer from Golden to the Wings Museum on Friday morning during a "Window of Opportunity". However, when Carson, the driver from Tom Calaveras Trucking hooked up, the brakes would not release on the trailer. Carson, our driver, worked on it for half the morning with Chief Mechanic Dereck. The Snow, now falling made delivery to Wings impossible so Terry Olson, our Operations Officer, made arrangements for the following day (Saturday), after the snow stopped, to deliver the trailer.

The Trailer now covered with snow, was moved indoors at Wings. After the doors closed things started to warm up, and the snow began melting which created a small lake around the trailer inside the Wings Museum. After setting up the Museum we spent the rest of the day mopping up water. This continued into Sunday morning. We believe that the Wings Museum delayed opening until noon on Sunday because of the cleanup.

We had a good turnout of docents for this event. They were: Bill Bates, Rick Beaver, Carl and Barbra Cavalluzzi, Wick Clark, Bruce Girvan, Al and Dotti Harinck, Bob Harris, Dale and Candy House and Dale's Brother Don, who was visiting from Missouri, Phil Lanphier, Cliff Lawson, Doug Neil, Terry Olson, Richard Overstake, Mike Poindexter, and Chris Towne.

We estimate that we had nearly 600 guests over the 3 day weekend. A pretty good turnout considering the way it all started with the "Big Snow Event", where the Governor issued a "Severe Weather" declaration and put the National Guard on standby. It's Colorado!

We normally hold meetings once a month, on the third Wednesday, at 10:00 hours at the American Legion Post #1, I-25 and Yale Avenue. Visit our Web site at www.RMCVHPA.com for any updates. We continue to look for artifacts for the Museum. 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.

Dale House

Photos by Cliff Lawson and Dale House

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Captain Lawrence Liss Recognized 57 Years after Combat Action

By Jack Swickard

Lawrence "Larry" Liss received the Silver Star Medal, 57 years after his Army helicopter helped rescue 87 South Vietnamese soldiers from an ambush. During a March 5 ceremony at Valley Forge Military Academy in Pennsylvania, former Cpt. Liss received the medal from Gen. Daniel K. Hokanson, chief of the National Guard Bureau.

The ceremony was set up by U.S. Rep. Chrissy Houlahan, who represents Pennsylvania's 6th Congressional District and is an Air Force veteran. "It's long overdue that we gather to honor the extraordinary bravery and selflessness of Cpt. Larry M. Liss, a true American hero," Houlahan said. "His acts of valor during the Rescue at Cau Song Be in the Vietnam War exemplify the highest standards of military service. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to Larry's brother, Art Liss, whose unwavering advocacy played a pivotal role in ensuring that Larry receives the recognition he deserves," the congresswoman said.

Larry Liss said at the ceremony, "I don't think anybody realizes what it means to be a helicopter pilot in combat. You can't hide in a helicopter. You're exposed and they hear you coming. You're out there all alone."

During his combat tour in Vietnam, Liss also served on the ground as a pathfinder, leading a team that marked landing zones for helicopters to land during combat assaults.

The Rescue at Cau Song Be involved two U.S. Army helicopters that chopped their way through bamboo and tree limbs to extract the South Vietnamese soldiers from the middle of an intense battle. Though one of the Hueys was unarmed and the M-60 machine gun on the other had jammed, the aircrews made five trips into the

landing zone to complete the rescue. By the time the helicopters returned to base at Bien Hoa Airfield their crews had escaped injury. The helicopters' rotor blades were shredded from the trips through the vegetation.

The day's events began on May 14, 1967, when some 600 North Vietnamese Army and Viet Cong soldiers ambushed a company of South Vietnamese Civilian Irregular Defense Group and Special Forces advisors from Cau Song Be Special Forces Camp. The camp was north of Saigon, just off National Highway 14

between Chon Thanh and Dong Xoai; the ambush site was five miles from the camp, inside the Iron Triangle, known by the U.S. military as War Zone D. The ambush survivors had radioed Maj. Ronnie Mendoza, commander of the Special Forces B Team at the camp, asking for helicopters to bring out the wounded, and Air Force fighters to launch an airstrike. It was the last day of Operation Junction City, one of the largest operations of the Vietnam War, said Capt.

Wallace "Wally" Johnson, Special Forces A Team commander at Cau Song Be.

By chance, WO1 Thomas Baca landed an unarmed UH-1D helicopter at Cau Song Be. He normally flew VIP missions for II Field Force and was ferrying a chaplain to Special Forces camps throughout the III Corps north of Saigon. Baca was asked to evacuate the wounded CIDG soldiers. He and copilot, Larry Liss, flew to the battlefield and located the wounded CIDG soldiers. They used their helicopter's rotor blades to chop through overhanging trees and bamboo. Aboard



Gen. Daniel K. Hokanson, Larry Liss, and brother Art Liss after Silver Star Medal presentation. (Jill Frechie photo)

the Huey were Johnson and an A-333 Team medic from Cau Song Be. While Baca and Liss were evacuating the wounded, WO1 Jack Swickard, a 118th Assault Helicopter Company pilot flying a paymaster to Special Forces camps, landed at Cau Song Be in another UH-1D "Huey" helicopter.

After Baca and Liss took the wounded soldiers to the Cau Song Be camp hospital, Mendoza asked Swickard and Baca if they would extract the Special Forces team and CIDG soldiers from the battle. The two helicopters flew to the ambush site and circled until a U.S. Air Force forward air controller arrived to direct airstrikes. However, the FAC called off the air strikes because the enemy force was within 20 feet of the CIDG soldiers.

The two helicopters returned to Cau Song Be, where the pilots decided to try rescuing the CIDG soldiers without airstrikes. The helicopters headed back to the battlefield. First Lt. Albert R. Croteau, the gunner aboard Swickard's helicopter, reported his M-60 machine gun had jammed as the Huey approached the ambush.

At the ambush, Swickard and Baca brought their helicopters to a high hover above the battlefield. The vegetation and bamboo were 30 feet tall. WO1 Kenneth M. Dolan, Swickard's copilot, said: "I was a relatively new pilot at the time, about 2 months. I vividly remember using the blades of the Huey as a mower to chop down bamboo to get to the road where the wounded and dead were staged, which didn't seem like a particularly good idea at the time. The noise was almost like a high-pitched whine. It was a singing noise. I knew we had done damage; I just didn't know what the extent was."

On the ground, the helicopters were in the middle of the battle. Swickard said he saw CIDG soldiers being killed by gunfire after they scrambled aboard his Huey. Croteau exited the Huey, armed with a handgun. He recalled rounds whizzing past his head and thought the enemy soldiers were poor shots. Croteau loaded dead bodies and assisted the injured onto the

helicopter, counting them to ensure the Huey was not overloaded. The dead and wounded soldiers were stacked inside, leaving little room for him. When both helicopters had full loads, they lumbered back up through the openings they had chopped, then flew back to Cau Song Be, about 5 miles from the battlefield. The helicopters returned to the battlefield four more times and rescued all living allied soldiers.



Lawrence "Larry" Liss
(Jill Frechie photo)

Baca, who alternated landings and takeoffs with Liss, said: "Conditions were difficult, with enemy forces barely 50 yards from our craft. Intense small-arms fire, panicked troops, poor communications, lack of tactical air or artillery support . . . Each subsequent approach to the LZ was more dangerous due to a shrinking perimeter and fewer troops to defend the LZ." During the final two rescues from the battlefield, Liss got out of his Huey to engage the enemy while helping the CIDG soldiers board the helicopter. His actions gave the flight some breathing room from incoming small-arms fire, while speeding up the loading of CIDG soldiers. "Capt. Liss, in

total disregard for his personal well-being and safety, exited the aircraft . . . with his personal weapon to assist in rallying the troops left on the ground. He was totally exposed to small-arms fire on both of these courageous initiatives. They were outside of his normal duties of a pilot, but showed bravery beyond the call of duty," Baca said in an affidavit after the mission.

A Special Forces medic said the two helicopters brought 87 CIDG team members, along with a wounded Special Forces advisor, to the Cau Song Be camp hospital. In his after-action report, Johnson said 6 CIDG soldiers were killed and 13 were wounded before the helicopters rescued the troops. Baca and Liss evacuated the last 18 soldiers on their Huey's final flight out. Liss recalled to or three of the Special Forces advisors died during the ambush. Johnson later told Liss the rescue and return of the CIDG soldiers likely averted the Cau Song Be Special Forces Camp

being overrun by the enemy. The camp, which was short defensive artillery, had been probed by the NVA, he said.

Johnson later recommended the aircrews for upgrades to the awards they initially received for the rescue. The only participant in the rescue who has received an upgrade is Liss. He initially was recommended for the Medal of Honor.

Johnson died on June 14, 2018, in Dumfries, Va. Baca also was recommended for the Medal of Honor. He died on Aug. 30, 2020, in Albuquerque, N.M. After the upgrades were denied by the Army awards and decorations office, Liss's brother Art in 2008 decided to advocate for upgrades. Over

the next 16 years, he built a 2,200-page file of support documents and refiled for upgrades multiple times. During the years, he persevered while battling lung cancer.

In 2008, Larry Liss, Baca, Croteau, and Swickard returned to the landing zone for the filming of a documentary on the mission by Windfall Films of London. The documentary, entitled "Helicopter Wars: Vietnam Firefight," has been shown in the UK and Commonwealth on the 4 Channel, in the United States on the Smithsonian Network, and worldwide on National Geographic Network International.

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25 March 2025

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Dear Arthur Jacobs and Donald LeMaster:

In January 2025, AH-47 Easy Money was disassembled and transported from Redstone Arsenal to the Army Aviation Museum at Fort Novosel, AL and placed in storage awaiting a complete restoration.

Since assuming duties as Curator of the Army Aviation Museum in January of 2012, it was brought to my attention that the last surviving example of the detachment, "guns-A-Go-Go" aircraft Easy Money was on outdoor exhibit. Over the next few years, we received many reports on the poor condition of the aircraft and a decision would have to be made to determine its fate. We traveled to Huntsville in January 2023 to see for ourselves the actual condition and to our surprise, previous reports could have been further from the truth. The staff began a plan to move the aircraft from the Army Aviation Museum and one year later, that dream would become a reality.

With the help of our Army Aviation Museum Foundation, planning is currently underway for a full restoration to be conducted in phases and when complete, the aircraft will be placed on permanent display in the Museum's Training Support Facility (TSF). A worldwide search is currently underway for parts, instruments, etc. to complete the restoration.

I would particularly like to acknowledge the following individuals, without whom the recovery of the aircraft may not have been possible. MG T. Crosby and MG R. Barrie, former PEO's, for their crucial assistance in the approval process. As well as Don LeMaster and Art Jacobs, Past Presidents of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association for their unwavering and tenacious work in reigniting the effort to relocate EASY MONEY to the museum.

Please contact me if you have any further questions at (334) 255-1078, or robert.d.mitchell3.civ@army.mil.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "R. Mitchell", is located below the word "Sincerely,".

Robert D. Mitchell
Director, Army Aviation Museum

Awards Legend: MOH= Medal of Honor; DSC= Army Distinguished Service Cross; NC= Navy Cross; AFC= Air Force Cross; DSM= Distinguished Service Medal; SS= Silver Star; DSSM= Defense Superior Service Medal; LM= Legion of Merit; DFC= Distinguished Flying Cross; SM= Soldier's Medal; NMC= Navy and Marine Corps Medal; CGM= Coast Guard Medal; BS= Bronze Star Medal; PH= Purple Heart; MSM= Meritorious Service Medal; AM= Air Medal; CM= respective service Commendation Medal

*If available, more obituary information for the individuals in TAPS can be found at: VHPA.org at the *Died After Tour Name List*.*

M* Alleger, Walter D. USA; CW2 Ret.; Flight Classes: 67-13, 67-15RVN: 67-68 117 AHC, 68 B/801 MNT 101 ABN & TC 101 ABN; Callsign: BEACHBUM.



Walter Alleger passed away peacefully on Wednesday January 22, 2025 at the Edward C.-Alworth Veterans Home, Lebanon, OR.

He was born December 4, 1937, in Walla Walla, WA, graduated Kelso High School and joined the Army after graduation.

After retirement from the US Army, he and the family moved to Walla Walla, WA where he attended Walla Walla College and received an Associate of Science degree in Electronic Technology.

He was instrumental in helping get a Veterans Center organized in Salem, OR. He was a founding member of Oregon Veterans Motorcycle Association where he served as the At Large member, being State Secretary for 17 years. In addition to his VHPA membership, he was a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Vietnam Veterans Association, Disabled American Veterans, Military Officers Association of America, Cascade chapter 101s Airborne Association, National Rifle Association.

He is survived by his wife, Nelda.

*** Barnes, Edward G. USAF COL Ret.; Flight Class: 55-I; RVN: 66-67 10 FCS, 70-7172 TW VNAF; Callsign: GEECHEE.**



Edd Griffin Barnes passed away peacefully at his home on 21 August 2024 at the age of 91. He was born and raised in Estill, SC. After graduation from Estill High School, he went

to Newberry College earning his Bachelor of Science degree in three years.

Edd was a graduate of Squadron Officer School, Air Command and Staff College and the Industrial College of the Armed Forces. He was selected to appear in the 1969 edition of Outstanding Young Men of America, and in 1970 as a Distinguished Personality of the West and Midwest. In 1971 he was listed in the National Register of Prominent Americans and, in 1972, the Dictionary of International Biography.

After retirement from the Air Force, Edd "went back to school and learned how to build new houses and fix broken ones." After Linda's retirement from the Air Force in 1993, Edd enjoyed traveling the world and spending summers on Oneida Lake in upstate New York State.

He is survived by his wife, Lieutenant Colonel Linda B. Barnes, USAF, Retired.

*** Beaver, Richard C. USA; Flight Class: 67-1; RVN: 67-68 B/229 AHB 1CAV; PH; Callsigns: SILENT PREACHER, HARD CORE.**



Richard "Rick" Beaver, was born October 1, 1946, and died January 27, 2025. Rick was born in Philadelphia, PA.

After his tour and recovery (from combat injuries) at Walson Army Hospital in Ft. Dix NJ, he was assigned to Hunter Stewart, GA as an Instrument Instructor Pilot.

After his separation, he obtained a job with IBM as a Customer Engineer and moved to Denver, Colorado in 1988 as a result of job requirements and was later employed with Lockheed-Martin Corporation.

Rick was very active in volunteer

work and was a Director with the "Colorado Veterans Re-integration Project". Rick was one of the legacy members of the Rocky Mountain Chapter of the VHPA and responsible for much of the design and construction of the Helicopter War Museum, which can be seen on our Website. He also volunteered at the Broomfield, Colorado Veterans Museum. Ricks "Story from War Time" can be viewed on YouTube at "Coffee and Conversation #483"/or the Broomfield Veterans Museum Website.

He is survived by his wife of 26 years, Janet.

Beyer, Eugene A. USA; COL Ret.; Flight Class 60-9; RVN: 63 93 TC CO, 63-64 121 AVN CO, 67-68 A/229 AVN 1 CAV, 71 TACRON-11; LM, DFC, BS; Callsign: BLACK BANDIT 6.



Eugene Beyer, 87, died at his home on December 28, 2024 from several long illnesses related to Agent Orange exposure. He was born in Abilene, TX on July 29, 1937. Gene graduated from Wylie High in Abilene with a scholarship to Texas A&M University. He joined the Corps of Cadets and graduated in 1959 with a commission in the Army. Gene served multiple tours in Vietnam.



***Cornelius, David L. USA; Flight Classes: 68-512, 68-20; RVN: 69 DIV ART 4 INF, 69 604 TC DET, 70 187 AHC, 71 B/2/17 CAV 101 ABN, 72 D/1/9 CAV, 73 H/10 CAV; SS, DFC (3 OLC), BS (6 OLC), Callsign: YELLOW SCARF.**



David Lee Cornelius, 80, passed away on May 16th, 2024, at Memorial Hermann Greater Heights Hospital surrounded by his loving family. He was born on August 13th, 1943, in Muskogee, OK and was raised primarily in Bryan, TX, where he attended Allen Academy.

David's life was marked by service and sacrifice. After graduating from Stephen F. Austin in 1961, he bravely served his country, undertaking three tours in Vietnam as a helicopter pilot.

After his military service, he graduated from the University of Colorado. David's dedication and work ethic were unwavering, leading him to retire in 2018 from a long career as a CPA with a focus on corporate tax. David's commitment extended beyond his military and professional endeavors; he was a devout Catholic, actively involved in his church community. He served as a sacristan at St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church, participated in RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults), and was a valued member of the Men's Club and Knights of Columbus.

He is survived by his wife, Lillian.

Davidson, Norris L. USA; Flight Class: 64-2W; RVN: 64-65 121 AVN; Callsign: VIKING 22.



Norris Davidson, 84, of Finchville passed away Wednesday, December 4, 2024 in Louisville.

Norris was retired from Dow Chemical Company where he was a corporate pilot. He also trained thoroughbred horses.

He is survived by his wife of 54 years, Judith.

Dunn, Richard L. USA; Flight Class: 69-16; RVN: 69-70C/229 AVN 1 CAV, 70-71 F/1/9 & D/229 AHB 1 CAV; SS, DFC, BS (2 OLC), PH (2 OLC); Callsign: YELLOW ONE DELTA.

It's with a heavy heart that I report the death of a great helicopter pilot and friend, Richard L. Dunn, on December 26, 2024.

Dickie and I were hooch mates in RVN and spoke often since coming back to the world. He'll be missed, and may he rest in peace. Dickie was a true American Hero and my best friend. I'll miss the long talks and laughs we had together...oh, the things we did in war are never forgotten and the friends forged by war can never be replicated, yes, we are truly a band of brothers!

English, Philip F. III USA CW3 Ret.; Flight Class: 66-13; 64-65 611 TC CO, 66-67 281 AHC; BS (3 OLC) Callsign: FANG 8.



Philip English passed away on November 9, 2024, at his home in Thorndale, TX. He was born February 8, 1943, in Placerville, CA. He graduated in 1961 from Eldorado High School. He retired again as a chief test pilot at DynCorp after leaving the Army.

***Fairweather, David L. USA CW2 Ret.; Flight Classes: 69-45, 69-43; RVN: 70-71, A/227 AVN 1 CAV; DFC (2 OLC), BS (2 OLC) PH, ACM; Callsign: CHICKENMAN 39.**

David Lloyd Fairweather, 80, of Boonville, IN passed away on Thursday, January 10, 2019 at his home. David was born on May 19, 1938 in Grand Forks, ND. David served in the United States Marine Corp for five years and retired from the United States Army after 15 years of service as a CW2. He was a lifetime member of the VFW Post # 3418 in Boonville.



Farrell, Mark T. USA; Flight Classes: 69-33, 69-37; 70-71 A/7/17 CAV; DFC, BS, ACM; Callsigns: ARMY, BISHOP 18.



Mark T. Farrell, age 74, of Grand Ledge, passed away on Monday, December 2, 2024. He was born on March 9, 1950, in Jackson, MI. Mark will be remembered for his love of music, animals, coney dogs, and his lawn mower. His teenage career as a drummer and adult career as an electrician showed his dedication, attention to detail, and intelligence.

He is survived by Ann, his wife of 34 years.

Forrest, Robert R. Sr. USA CW4 Ret.; Flight Class: 66-1; RVN: 66 A/227 AVN. DFC, BS, MSM, ACM.

Robert "Bob" Reece Forrest, Sr., 77, passed away October 9, 2023 at his residence. He was born on November 18, 1945.

After his military retirement, he started Woodworks Manufacturing where he worked for another 15 years.

He is survived by his wife of 47 years, Mary.

***Goeltzenleuchter, Louis R. USA; Flight Classes: 68-521, 68-39; RVN: 69-70 20 ENG BDE, 72-73 H/10 H/10 CAV.BS, (OLC).**

Louis Raymond Goeltzenleuchter, passed away peacefully on January 15, 2025, in Palm Harbor, FL, at the age of 86. He was born on March 9, 1938, in Montpelier, OH.

Louis's life was characterized by service and commitment. At the young age of 18, he joined the United States Navy, serving from 1956 to 1960. After a series of diverse job experiences, he found his calling in the Army in 1968, becoming a helicopter pilot.

Beyond his military career, Louis was a co-founder of the Dry Dock Center, where he offered support and guidance to many, embodying the principles of his long-time friend, Bill W. His wisdom and loving nature made him a beacon of hope and a pillar in his community.

He is survived by his beloved wife of 67 years, Nancy.

***Gosney, Robert R.**
USA LTC Ret.; RVN:
67-68 119 AHC 69-70
25 AVN 25 INF; DFC
(OLC), BS, (OLC);
Callsign: CLIPPER 6.



Robert Gosney, 92 of Belton, passed away peacefully at the Texas State Veterans Home in Temple on 13 November 2024. Robert Russell Gosney was born on 21 December 1931 in Junction, TX. For his combat service he was awarded two Distinguished Flying Crosses, two Bronze Stars, and 29 Air Medals (two with devices for Valor). His citations and eyewitness accounts detail how his leadership and bravery saved many lives, including that of his brother Gary.

Robert's service to his community was unbroken after retirement. He was a local business owner, a 38-year member of the Temple Founder Lions Club, on the Parish Council at Christ the King Catholic Church in Belton, and a member of the Knights of Columbus.

He is survived by his wife, Jean of Belton.

Hamburger, Kenneth E. USA; Flight Class 68-22; RVN: 67-68 229 AHB 1 CAV, 71 212 CAB; DFC, BS (OLC), LM, Callsigns: KILLER SPADE 16, HARD CORE 16.



Kenneth Hamburger was born in Lawton, OK October 4, 1941. He passed away on October 16, 2024 right after his 83rd Birthday in Fort Collins, CO.

Ken graduated from Oklahoma State University in 1964, where he earned his Bachelor of Architecture Design and qualified as a Distinguished Military Graduate in Army ROTC.

To begin his two-year commitment to the Army. Ken Hamburger served on three hostile borders. Each assignment caused a deeper realization that he was a part of something bigger than himself. His two-year commitment became a 30-year profession. During the first half of his career, he described himself as "in

the trenches."

He had two tours as a pilot in the Vietnam. The first tour as a Combat Helicopter Pilot in I Corps, and the second tour in II Corps as a Fixed wing Pilot and then Helicopters.

Ken began the second half of his career as a "scholar/teacher" when he was admitted to Duke University to study Military History. The Army was preparing him to be an instructor at the US Military Academy, West Point, NY. He received his PHD and was appointed as Permanent Associate Professor in the Military History Division.

Hamburger retired from the Army after 30 years. He wrote the definitive book on combat leadership, "Leadership in the Crucible." Published by Texas A&M University Press, he vividly portrays those military leadership qualities that cause soldiers to follow a leader into combat.

He taught senior officers as the Distinguished Military History Visiting Professor at National War College. Ken was the historical consultant for leading site tours of WWI, WWII, Civil War and Korean War battlegrounds for tour companies.

He is survived by Jane, his wife of 61 years.

Hartley, Thomas M. USA; Flight Class: 65-18; RVN: 66-67 A/1/9 CAV 1 CAV; DFC, BS, PH Callsign: APACHE 29.

Thomas "Tom" Maxwell Hartley, 81, of Granbury passed away on Tuesday, July 9, 2024. Tom was born on August 2, 1942, in Peoria, IL. He earned his degree from Texas A&M in 1964 and was a Certified Public Accountant for the Internal Revenue Service.

Tom owned a 1969 Cessna 150J airplane that he loved to fly and maintain. He took his grandchildren on many trips to visit the family farm in IL.



Hatchell, Jon M. USA; Flight Classes: 65-5FW, 68-5QC; RVN: 68 116 AHC; Callsigns: HORNET 5, HORNET 26.

Jon "Mike" Hatchell, 84, of Albuquerque, NM, passed away peacefully surrounded by his wife and family. He was born in San Antonio, TX. Mike served honorably in the United States Army and the New Mexico National Guard, retiring as a Major with more than twenty years of dedicated service.

He later received his Master's Degree from the Anderson School of Business at the University of New Mexico. He was well respected in the surrounding area for his expertise in commercial appraising and spent a number of years with Hatchell Brothers Construction. Mike's unwavering faith was evident in his service to both his country, his church, and his community. He was a member of Heights Christian Church for over forty years, where he served as an Elder, Life Group leader, Caraway Street team member, Daycare Board member, and in numerous other leadership roles.

He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Dottie.

James, Stephen E. USA Ret.; Flight Class: 70-42; RVN: 7192 AHC, 72 B/17/17; Callsign: PALLBEARER 32.

Stephen E. James, 77, of Bee Branch passed from this life to Heaven on June 20, 2024. He was born May 27, 1947, in Little Rock, AK.

As an attorney, he led a fulfilled life working for the Van Buren County Prosecuting Attorney's office for over 30 years.

Jones, Hartley T. USA; Flight Class: 71-7; 71-72 175 AHC; BS; Callsign: OUTLAW 15.



Harley T. "Terry" Jones, 73, passed away on February 11th in Chon Buri, Thailand from injuries received in a motorcycle accident on December 27th in Pattaya. He was born July 26, 1951, in Marion, OH and was a 1969 graduate of River Valley High School. After graduation, he worked on the Eric Lackawanna RR as a brakeman on the Mansfield freight run.

After leaving the Army, Harley was employed as a pilot in a variety of flying positions around the world including air taxi's, powerline weed spraying, logging, offshore petroleum fields, and air ambulances in Saudi Arabia, Abu Dhabi, Louisiana, the Pacific Northwest and AK .In 1991 Harley returned to Marion where he pursued a variety of endeavors including woodworking and carpentry, before retiring in 2014 to travel and live in the Philippines, Vietnam and Thailand.

Harley was a former member of American Legion Post 584 and VFW Post 720 1, both of Marion.

He is survived by his companion, Jiraporn Saisan of Pattaya.

Kollmorgen, Bruce P. USA; Flight Classes: 70-33, 70-31; RVN: 71-72 240 AHC, 25 CAC; Callsigns: GREYHOUND, RED CARPET.

Bruce Paul Kollmorgen died on January 9, 2024. He was born on December 30, 1948 in St. Louis, MO. Bruce was a master plumber and skilled handyman. He and his brothers owned KEMBco Plumbing during the 1980s.

Bruce would go on to serve the City of Houston in building inspections. He was a member of Our Savior Lutheran Church and a person with a deep and abiding faith, a quiet sense of humor, and an unwavering devotion to family and friends.

***Lake, Kenneth R. USA; Flight Classes: 67-25, 68-501; RVN: 68-69, D/3-5 Air Cavalry (Lighthorse); DFC (OLC); DFC, BS; Callsign: Longknife 28.**



Lake, Kenneth of Citrus Heights, CA, passed away on October 6, 2024. He was born in Fowler, CA. Ken graduated from Hamilton High School in Hamilton City, CA. With a strong desire to fly helicopters, Ken joined the Army in 1967. After Vietnam, Ken was an instructor pilot at Fort Wolters, TX. He left the Army in 1970. He returned to CA and attained a business degree

from Sacramento State College.

Ken worked for the American Lung Association (ALA) in Sacramento, CA where he organized and managed fundraising events. He then became executive director of the ALA in Superior, CA. Returning to Sacramento, Ken worked for Breathe California. Later Ken worked for the Place County Office of Education, taught parenting classes for Kaiser Hospital and served as board president of numerous non-profits. Ken was proud of finishing several ultra runs, including the Western States 100.

He is survived by his wife, Leslie.

***Leach, Bertram G. II USA LTC Ret.; Flight Class: 53-I; RVN: 62-63 93 TC CO, 67 336 AHC & 13 CAB, 67-68 345 AVN DET; LM, DFC, BS; Callsigns: SPIN TOP 5, DELTA 21 , CAN THO 6.**



Bertram Leach of Minnetonka MN, age 93, passed away peacefully to be with his Lord and Savior on 7/11/2023. He was born on November 18, 1929, in Detroit Lakes MN, he moved to Minneapolis with his parents in 1938 where he graduated from Central High school in 1947. Bert then went on to receive a BS in Pharmacy at the University of MN in 1952. He then enlisted in the US Army where he served valiantly for the next 20 years.

As a test pilot, he set six world speed records and he represented the US Army while flying in the Paris Air Show. After the end of the Viet Nam War, Bert and his wife Norma spent countless hours helping in the settlement of southeast Asian refugees in the Twin Cities. Over the years they maintained close relationships with many of the refugees they helped as they became productive and successful citizens. Bert and Norma were active members of Minnetonka Lutheran Church, serving as volunteers and choir members since the mid 1970's. Following his military retirement, Bert was a financial advisor for 26 years.

***McCarthy, Michael J. USA; Flight Classes: 68-24, 68-514; RVN: 68-69 C/7/17 CAV, 69 A/7/17 CAV; Callsign: CHECKMATE.**



Michael John McCarthy, 79, passed away peacefully with his loving family by his side Thursday April 18, 2024 at his home in Murrells Inlet, SC. He was born on July 8, 1944.

He graduated from Council Rock High School in Newtown, Bucks County, PA and attended Parsons College of Fairfield, IA. Following graduation Michael served in the US Army from August 1966 until December 1977.

Following his honorable discharge, Michael was able to enjoy the finer things in life. He was an avid golfer who found peace on the course- and was very proud of his 4 hole in-ones! Michael was a faithful man and was a member of St. Michael Catholic Church.

He is survived by his wife, Linda Marie of Murrells Inlet.

***Norton, James D. USMC LTC Ret.; RVN: 66-67 HMM-362 & HMM-363, 69-70 HML-167; DFC (Gold star in lieu of second award) Callsign: SCARFACE.**



James David Norton passed away on Saturday, 9 March 2024 in Norfolk, VA surrounded by family after a valiant battle with pulmonary fibrosis. David was born in New Iberia, LA. He attended the University of Southwestern Louisiana (USL) and graduated with a BS degree in Animal Husbandry. In 1964.

Known by his Marine Corps brethren as "Smoky", he had a successful career in aviation flying over 5,500 hours in numerous aircraft. In 1985, following 21 years of honorable service, he retired from the Marine Corps and began working as a helicopter and fixed wing simulator instructor at Whiting Field in Milton, FL. During his 28 years

instructing students, he also served as the contract negotiator and Union President for the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) Local Lodge 2902, retiring for the final time in 2013.

***O'Hara, Thomas P. USA; Flight Classes: 68-24, 68-514; RVN: 68-70 B/123 AVN 23 INF, 71-72 B/123 AVN 23 INF, 72 D/1/1 CAV; PH (OLC); Callsigns: WARLORD, SABER.**



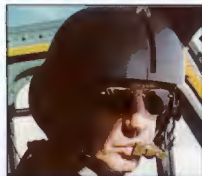
On Monday, November 18, 2024, Thomas Francis O'Hara of Eastham, MA, loving husband and father of three children, passed away at age 81. Tom was born on June 17, 1943 in Boston, MA.

He received his master's degree in Statistics from the University of Massachusetts in Amherst in 1978 and worked at Yankee Atomic for 25 years. On June 5, 1975, he married Susana Krivatsy, the love of his life and as he would say, "the best thing that ever happened to me". They raised three solid children who graduated from military academies: Tom (United States Air Force Academy), Christina (United States Military Academy) and Bill (United States Naval Academy).

When Tom returned from serving almost three years in Vietnam, he finished his graduate education.

He is survived by his wife, Susana.

Owen, Dean M. USA COL Ret.; Flight Class: 63-9; RVN: 66 116 AHC, 67 HHC/ 11 CAB, 69 11FFV & 155 AHC; Callsign: STAGECOACH.



Dean Mallory Owen, 86, died on March 4, 2024. He was born Aug. 24, 1937, in Pullman, WA.

He graduated Moses Lake High School, WA in 1955.

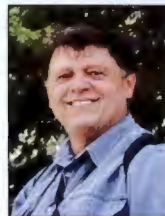
Dean and Jan (his wife to be) each attended Eastern Washington State College. Dean graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration and was commissioned in the infantry as a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Army by

the Reserve Officers Training Corps in 1960. Dean later received a Master of Arts Degree in History in 1973 from Kansas State University.

Following an impressive list of accomplishments in his 30 years of service, Dean and Jan settled in Fairbanks, living in their dream home, a log house, outside Fairbanks for the next 24 years. After his retirement, he accepted the job of rural airport manager for the State of Alaska. He flew many miles to remote villages, inspecting airfields, a job he thoroughly enjoyed. He retired from airport management but soon realized he was not ready for full retirement. Therefore, he took a position as the Executive Director of Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation. His final employment was working for Alaska Tent and Tarp where he designed and developed fabric shelters for the military, establishing many close friendships. He officially retired from the work force in 2006 at the age of 69.

Dean was involved with many groups and organizations including QBs (Quiet Birdmen), Rotary Club, Army Aviation Association, Association of the United States Army, National Rifle Association, National Turkey Federation, Alaska Trappers Association, Lewis-Clark Antique Power Club. Friday mornings were saved for coffee with the Palouse Tractor Guys (one of his favorites).

Paul, James G. USA; Flight Classes: 67-1, 66-23; RVN: 67-68 B/7/17 CAV, 68 119 AHC; Callsign: WHITE 21.



James George Paul, 78, of Parker, CO, passed away peacefully on January 15, 2025, surrounded by his family. He was born on November 23, 1946, in Mandan, ND.

James graduated from St. Anthony's High School in Linton, ND in 1964 before joining the U.S. Army. After his military service, he continued his love for flying in the North Dakota National Guard. He also pursued a career in pharmacy, earning his degree from

North Dakota State University.

In 1979, James and his wife, Kathryn, moved to Philipsburg, MT, where they owned and operated Does Rexall Drug for 13 years. During this time, James was a city council member, a member of the rotary club, an elder and treasurer for the local community church, and joined the Montana National Guard, continuing his passion for flying helicopters. In 1992, the family relocated to Bozeman, MT, where James worked as a pharmacist for Safeway. Later, they moved to Colorado Springs, where he continued his work with Safeway until his retirement. Throughout his life, James remained involved with his community particularly through his active participation in the VA group in Colorado Springs where he gained a brotherhood.

He is survived by his devoted wife, Kathryn.

*** Picofsky, Conrad N. Sr. USA; Flight Classes: 68-503, 68-1; RVN: 68-69 12 AVN GP.**



Conrad M. Picofsky was born on October 1, 1947 and died on May 18, 2024. The cause of his death was multiple myeloma linked to his service-connected disability of agent orange from his Vietnam service.

He was born and raised in Drexel Hill, PA. He graduated from Monsignor Bonner and Archbishop Prendergast Catholic High School. Upon graduating from High School, Conrad enlisted in the US Army.

After serving Honorably, Conrad returned to civilian life and graduated from Temple University's class of 1973. He would later move to Isfahan, Iran with his wife Florence Valentine to work for Bell Helicopter International to train the Shah's Imperial Iranian Army Air Corps. While living in Isfahan, Conrad learned Farsi. In 1979 Conrad and his family had to evacuate from Iran due to the Iranian coup d'état. After the coup, Conrad returned to Media, PA to buy a house and have a son in 1980, Conrad M. Picofsky Jr., who followed in his

Father's footsteps as an army officer and is now retired from the army.

Conrad was a musician who enjoyed playing the guitar. He was a world traveler and made it as far as Antarctica. He dove the Great Barrier Reef in Australia and explored the Great Pyramid of Egypt.

***Potter Dale L. USAF LTC Ret.; Flight Class: 59-5; RVN: 65-66 38 ARRS 6 & 3 8 ARRS 7; DFC (OLC); Callsign: PEDRO.**



Dale Lawrence Potter was born on October 2nd, 1934, outside of Joseph, OR. He passed away peacefully on November 30, 2024, in Centennial CO.

Dale attended Joseph High School and Oregon State University, graduating in 1956.

Dale was commissioned in the United States Air Force. In addition to his combat role, he served as a military liaison officer for the Royal Thai Air Force in Thailand.

After retiring, Dale was a High School ROTC instructor, worked as the Director of Training for the Saudi Air Force in Saudi Arabia and as a Field Archeologist for the National Forest Service.

Dale moved back to his home in north-eastern OR in 1988. He did archeological surveys and participated in a dig in Hells Canyon; engaged in county politics; kept up with college football; and stayed active in local organizations. Dale's love of books prompted him to open a bookstore in Joseph! He was equally passionate about the outdoors, traveling, cooking, reading, writing, and long road trips.

Proper, Morris C. USA CW3 Ret.; Flight Classes: 70-37, 70-35; RVN: 71-72 A/7/17 CAV; Callsign: KNIGHT 30.



It is with heavy hearts that the family of Morris Christopher "Chris" Proper wish to announce his passing on Tuesday, March 28, 2023 at his residence follow-

ing an extended illness. He was 72 years old. Chris was born on June 6, 1950. At a young age, Chris moved to Pensacola, FL where he graduated from Escambia County High School.

Chris was drafted into the United States Army during the Vietnam War and served honorably as a pilot. He was stationed in Germany for several years before accepting a job at Ft. Rucker where he trained and instructed thousands of young Armed Forces Pilots for over 40 years.

He is survived by his wife of 11 years, Diane.

***Reigle, Daniel H. USA; Flight Class: 70-24; RVN: 70-71 C/7/17 CAV, 71 IFFV.**



Daniel H. Reigle (Dan), who died on October 18, 2024 at 78 years of age. Dan and I met in our senior year at Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois and were married following graduation in 1968. Dan was in ROTC at Wheaton College and, upon graduation, he began his regular Army career in the Armor division at Fort Knox, Kentucky as a 2nd Lieutenant.

Dan completed his Army commitment (1968 to 1973) at Fort Lewis, Washington. While working and maintaining flight time at Fort Lewis, he also obtained a master's degree in Social Science-Human Relations at Pacific Lutheran University. Dan spent his civilian career at The Procter and Gamble Company in Human Resources and served as Director of Global Product Supply, Labor and Employee Relations. He worked for the company in multiple cities, which included Cincinnati, Ohio. Dan and I had 56 precious years together not counting the year we met in college and became engaged. We have two wonderful sons and two special grandsons. Dan was always a voracious reader, ardent Civil War historian, and became a genealogy researcher in retirement. by Mrs. Beverly Reigle.

Robie, William S. USA; Flight Classes: 67-23, 67-25; RVN: 68-69 92 AHC; Callsign: STAL-LION.



William S. Robie, (Bill), was born on April 6, 1944, died August 16th 2024. Bill was born in Melrose, MA.

Bill was a graduate of Colorado School Of Mines, Golden, CO. Following his military service, he returned to Golden to finish his degree at the School of Mines in Golden. He couldn't find a job related to geology so he went work for Coors Brewing Company, and succeeded in a great career in land development.

Bill loved trains throughout his life and became a "Trustee" of the Colorado Railroad Museum and spent many hours there. He was also one of founding members of the Rocky Mountain Chapter of the VHPA, and was "Force" in the development of the Helicopter War Museum.

He is survived by his wife of 57 years, Dianne.

A history of his Military career is available on U-tube at:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=GZFWVPqSugk

***Rynerson, David M. USA; Flight Class: 69-40; RVN: 70-71 61 AHC, 71 223 CAB & C/7/17 CAV; Callsign: STAR BLAZER 30.**



David Michael Rynerson (77), of Coon Rapids, passed away at home surrounded by loved ones

He is survived by wife, Kathy.

***Samek, John D. Sr. USA MAJ Ret.; Flight Class: 66-19; RVN: 70-71 243 ASHC; MSM, ACM (OLC); Callsign: FREIGHT TRAIN.**

John D. Samek, Sr. passed away on September 3, 2024. He was born in Brooklyn, NY, on July 30th, 1943.

Following flight school, he was a turnaround student for AMOC and, after graduation, was assigned to the 134th Aviation Company to help reactivate it.

He attended CH-47, AH-1G & Q, OH-23, UH-1, and CH-47 Test Pilot transitions Service Medal. In addition, he graduated from the Command and General Staff College in 1981.

***Sanders, Bobby L. USA COL Ret.; Flight Classes: 58-5, 59-1; 63 ARPA & 57 TC CO, 67-68 189 AHC & HHC 17 CAG; LM, DFC, BS (OLC); Callsign: GHOST RIDER 6.**



Bobby Lee Sanders, 93, passed away on July 7, 2024, following a wonderful life dedicated to God, family and country. Bob grew up in the Whittier, CA, area and left home at age 18, trying his hand at several jobs before working as a draftsman in York, PA. His most significant project was designing the steel work for the original National Bohemian Beer brewery building that still stands today as a landmark in Baltimore, Maryland.

Upon receipt of his draft notice, he chose to join the U.S. Army and during bootcamp was selected for Officer Candidate School (OCS). He graduated as a second lieutenant from Corps of Engineers OCS in 1953.

After returning from Vietnam in 1968, Bob became one of the first engineers/aviators to be given command of an Engineering battalion—the 548th—at Fort Bragg (now Fort Liberty).

While in the U.S. Army, Bob completed a bachelor's degree from Campbell College (now University).

Following his retirement from the Army, Bob had a very successful second career working alongside his former comrade and best friend, Bud Pohlman, at Component Machinery and Engineering in St. Louis, Missouri.

He is survived by his loving and devoted wife, Norma.



***Shea Dana, R. USA; Flight Class: 68-7; RVN: 69-70 B/158 AVN 101 ABN; Callsign: LANCER 29.**

Dana Robert Shea passed away on November 11, 2024. He was born on November 7, 1947 in Evanston, IL. Dan moved to California in 1964 and graduated from Santa Barbara High School in 1965. In 1968, he joined the Army.

After his honorable discharge in 1970, Dan attended college. In 1972, he took a job as a bush pilot flying helicopters in AK. In 1977, Dan began working as a helicopter pilot for the Ventura County Sheriff's department. He flew for VCSO for 27 years before retiring as the Chief Pilot in 2004. After retiring from Ventura County, Dan flew helicopters in Tasmania, Australia, and part-time for the Santa Barbara County Fire Department, before fully retiring in 2008.

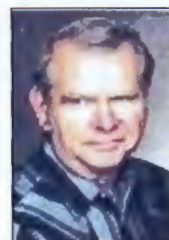
He is survived by his wife, Carolyn.



***Smith, Martin E. USA; Flight Classes: 68-512, 68-18; RVN: 68-69 129 AHC, 69 238 AVN.**

Martin E. Smith passed away suddenly on Tuesday, December 17, 2024. He was born in Omaha, NE. After graduating from Valley High School, Martin enlisted in the Army.

He is survived by his wife, Janice J. Smith.



***Spencer, Bobbie J. USA LTC Ret.; Flight Class: 57-1; RVN: 65 A/1 AVN 1 INF, 65-66 155 AHC, 68-69 525 MI GRP, 72 AFAT 2; DFC, BC, DSM; Callsign: VOLUNTEER 6.**

Bobbie J. Spencer passed away October 14 at his home in Navarre, FL, following a long illness. He was 92 years old. He was born on October 10, 1942 in Lobelville, TN.

He enlisted in the National Guard at 15 and attended West Point Prep School for



a year before joining the Air Force. After leaving the Air Force he served briefly as a member of the Tennessee Highway Patrol. He returned to the military in 1964, joining the Army Reserve and serving in active duty until his retirement. He became certified as a pilot, an instructor pilot, and an airframe and powerplant mechanic.

Following his military service, he was a flight instructor for Bell Helicopter International in Isfahan, Iran. He later worked in corporate aviation, primarily for L.T. Ruth Coal, Musco Lighting and Gold Kist. He was named a Kentucky Colonel by Governor John Y. Brown in 1981.

He is survived by his wife, Joyce.

Stephan, Robert K. USA CW4 Ret.; Flight Classes: 68-508, 68-12; RVN: 68-69 C/101 AVN 101, 69 D/101 AWC 101 ABN, 71 A/4/77 ARA 101 ABN (71); Callsign: HAWK 16.

Stephan R. Keith passed away on January 2, 2025. He was born on November 15, 1944, in Cincinnati, OH.

Stephan was a 1976 graduate of Cameron University and dedicated over 30 years of service to the United States Army.

After retiring, he took pride in raising black Angus cattle and was honored as a Master Beef Producer. Keith was awarded the 2014 Conservation Progress Award and the 2001 Extension Award for Most Improved Beef Production. A devoted husband, father, and grandfather, he was surrounded by his family at the time of his passing.

He is survived by his loving wife of 56 years, Judy Seipelt.



***Stone, William L. USA Ret.; Flight Class: 69-25; RVN: 70-71 129 AHC; Callsign: BULL-DOG.**

William L. Stone, age 75, passed away on Saturday, December 23rd, 2023. He is survived by his loving wife of 51 years, Eleanor Stone.



Bill retired from AT&T and the National Guard in 2008. He then went to work for Sporting Arms and Supply in Posen, Illinois. William enjoyed sharpshooting, spending time with his family and volunteering with various organizations. He will be truly missed by all who knew and loved him.

***Thompson, Mitchell S. USA; Flight Class: 69-49; RVN: 70-71 21 SIG GRP & 1 SIG BDE; Callsign: MANIFEST.**



Mitchell S. Thompson, 77, of Moses Lake WA passed away on Saturday, October 12, 2024 at home surrounded by his family. He was born in Van Nuys, CA, in 1947. After graduating from high school and completing 1 year of community college, Mitch traveled to Jackson, WY where he stayed and worked as a whitewater river guide, fishing guide, and carpenter.

He joined the Army in 1969. Following his military service, he was employed as a commercial helicopter pilot in Arizona and northern California. He returned to Wyoming in 1974 to work as a fishing & hunting guide, and owner of a whitewater rafting company.

Mitch resumed his aviation career in 1980 flying helicopters throughout the Rocky Mountain west, in AK, and FL on government firefighting contracts, oil exploration contracts, search and rescues, medical transports, and filmmaking for news coverage, commercials and a movie. There are enough stories from this time to fill a book and he had a couple of experiences where our Lord was truly testing him.

In order to establish a more stable lifestyle for his growing family, Mitch owned and operated a photography and retail camera store for five years in Helena, MT. He began working for the US Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) in 1993 at recreation sites on Cascade Reservoir in ID, and Scootney Reservoir in central Washington state. He later moved to the USBR Lands Division in Ephrata, WA where he especially enjoyed work-

ing out in the field and the opportunity to work with students from Job Corps on projects at the recreation sites.

He is survived by his wife Karen of 42 years.

***Walker, Wayne T. USA CW4 Ret.; Flight Class: 66-15; 67-68 190 AHC, 68 118 AVN, 71-72 70 AVN DET; DFC, BS; Callsigns: GLADIATOR 25, BANDIT 32.**



Wayne Thomas "Tom" Walker, 86, of Belleville passed away peacefully in his sleep the morning of July 14, 2024. Tom was born on May 20, 1938 in East St. Louis, IL. After graduating from East St. Louis High School in 1956, he enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1958, and served over 27 valiant years flying fixed wing aircraft and helicopters until his retirement.

He continued to fly for Petroleum Helicopters for many years in the Gulf of Mexico in tumultuous conditions, often risking his life for others' rescue. Tom had memberships to Masonic Lodge #852 A.F. & A.M., Ainad Shrine, American Legion Post #1937, and the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association.

He is survived by his wife Elizabeth Jean Walker (nee Corran).

***Wargi, Donald L. USA; Flight Classes: 69-1, 68-29; RVN: 69-70 D/1/1 CAV; Callsign: SABER 16.**

Donald Wargi died on September 29, 2024. No other information provided.

***Welch, Donald L. USA; Flight Classes: 67-5, 67-3; RVN: 67-68 162 AHC, 71-72 5 TC BN 101 ABN; Callsign: VULTURE 27.**

Donald Lee Welch age 78, of Clearwater, Florida passed away on, November 11, 2024. He was born on October 6, 1946. No other information provided.



***Wenzel, Paul J. USA COL Ret.; Flight Classes: 61-10FW, QC67-3; RVN: 63-64 73 AVN, 67-68 128 AHC, 68 162 AHC; DFC, BS, PH; Callsigns: OBSERVE 10, GUNSLINGER 36.**



Paul Joseph Wenzel, age 87, of Havre de Grace, MD, passed away on September 18, 2024, at Brightview Assisted Living of Bel Air in Bel Air, MD. He was born in Niagara Falls, NY, on October 30, 1936.

Paul retired from the US Army after 37 years of dedicated service. He held a master's degree in science and business administration from Strayer University in Virginia. Paul was an active member of the Knights of Columbus, the Military Officers Association, Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association, and the Distinguished Flying Cross Society. Paul was known for his passion for woodworking. He made numerous wood cars, planes, and other items for his grandchildren. His contributions to his country and community, along with his love for crafting, will be fondly remembered by all who knew him.

***Williams, Robert M. USA COL Ret.; Flight Class: 54-L; RVN: 65-66 A/502 AVN, 67-68 355 AVN, 68 52 CAB, 68-69 57 AHC; BS (10 OLC), MSM, ACM; Callsigns: OUTLAW 5, WORKHORSE 5, FLYING DRAGON, GLADIATOR 6.**

Robert Madison Williams, 92, of Dunwoody, GA passed away on November 11, 2024 at his home. Bob was born on May 13, 1932, in Topeka, KS and graduated from Topeka High School in 1950. He studied Engineering at Kansas State University and was initiated into Theta Xi Fraternity. He played tennis and sang in the choir. He also attended Washburn University.

Bob volunteered for the draft and joined the Army in 1952. Entering as an enlisted man, he finished top of his class in basic, as he learned the Army was training officers to be pilots. He graduated from Officer Candidate School in 1954.

He was a nuclear weapons certified artillery officer who supervised the weapon's operation in Munich, Germany during the most significant period of nuclear history since the end of WWII from 1959 to 1963. He specialized in the Flying Crane after returning to Ft. Rucker AL for his 6th and final posting -- becoming one of the top experts in the world. Bob also founded the Chief Warrant Officer Career Flight School in Ft. Rucker. He was a founding member of the Army Aviation Association of America (The Quad A.) Lastly, Bob found his way back to school again, enrolling, attending and graduating from Troy State University with honors.

After retiring from the military in 1973, Bob joined the civilian workforce with Neptune Measurement Co., and the family relocated to Greenwood, SC. Bob was promoted to Regional Sales Manager as the family moved to St. Louis, MO in 1976. Bob and Dixie's final move was to Dunwoody, GA in 1981 when Bob became International Sales and Operations Manager; eventually purchased by Schlumberger Industries. Bob and Dixie would live there for 43 years.

***Yungwirth, Frank E. USA; Flight Classes: 66-17, 66-15; RVN: 66-67 2 BDE 1 CAV; Callsign: SILVER 11.**

Frank E. Yungwirth, 79, of Covington, passed away Saturday, November 9, 2024, at UPMC Williamsport. He was born October 4, 1945, in Blossburg. He graduated from high school, and joined the Army.

After leaving the military Frank worked at Maple Hill Tree Farm on his old homestead while he attended Mansfield University and earned his bachelor's degree. He then taught history and government at Wellsboro High School. After retirement Frank served Covington Township as a Township Supervisor. He attended St. Peter's Catholic Church, and was deeply involved in veterans' organizations VFW, DAV, and the American Legion, serving as commander and participating in veterans' events.

He is survived by his wife Susan of Covington.



***Ziccardi, Vincent A. USAF LTC Ret.; Flight Class: 66F; RVN: 68-69 37 ARRS; Callsign: JOLLY GREEN 28.**



Vincent Ziccardi passed away on November 2, 2024. He was born on August 16, 1937 in Philadelphia, PA. Vincent dedicated his life to his family and country, serving 26 years in both the United States Navy (USN) and United States Air Force (USAF). After retiring from the military, Vincent worked at Harris Corporation (GASD) for 8 years.

He was a graduate of Wilbur Watts High School in Burlington, NJ. He then went on to earn a Bachelor of Arts from Ryder College in Lawrenceville, NJ, and an MBA from Southwest Texas State University in San Marcos, TX. Vincent was committed to his family and his military brethren and constantly supported each.

His service to his country was characterized by a steadfast commitment to his roles in the USN and USAF, embodying the values of both services throughout his career.

He is survived by his loving wife of 68 years, Marian (Gilbert).

Obituary Submissions

Individuals wishing to supply a notice of death and/or information such as online link(s) may do so by email to aviator@vhpa.org. Those wishing to write their own obituaries may submit same to that email address as well. Space constraints may limit the amount of text allowed. For self-produced versions, any edited narrative will be provided to its author for review as soon as feasible. Pilots meeting VHPA membership criteria, but have never been a member, will have a one line entry. Regardless of whether or not an obituary is abridged, an unedited version (full text) of all submitted obituaries will be posted on our web site at <https://www.vhpa.org>.

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.

Beasley, Emory D. USA; Flight Class: 69-46 died on November 23, 2024.

Birmingham, John USA; Flight Class: 67-26; RVN: 68-69 195 AHC; SS, DSC, DFC, BS; died on Mar 28, 2024.

Coutoumanos, George USA LTC Ret.; died on November 13, 2018.

Cowart, Richard M. USA; Flight Class: 66-22; RVN: 67-68 128 AHC; died on September 3, 2024.

Foster, James W. USAF; Flight Class: 60-G; RVN: 69-70 20 SOS; Callsign: GREEN HORNET; died on December 9, 2024.

Glass, Christopher R. USA; Flight Class: 69-25; died on October 30, 2024.

Jones, Robert E. USN CPT Ret.; RVN: 70-72 HC-7; Callsigns: BIG MOTHER, SEADEVIL; died on November 16, 2024.

Key, Donald R. USA; Flight Class: 64-3; died on November 10, 2024.

Richardson, David A. USAF; RVN: 67 37 ARRS, 68 40 ARRS; died on November 5, 2024.

Stratton, Jerry R. USA COL Ret.; BS (OLC); died on January 18, 2025.

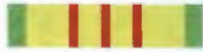
Turk, Walter F. USAF COL Ret.; RVN: 65 DET 2, 69 38 ARRS DET 11, 70 37 ARRS; SS, MSM (3 OLC), AFCM; died on October 22, 2024.



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