



The VHPA AVIATOR

The Newsletter of The Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association



Vietnam
Veterans Day,
March 29, 2023 ~ Georgia

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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@vhp.org

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

I am sitting in my office on this beautiful, 70-degree Spring day, pondering some of my memories over the last 50 years, since the last American soldier departed SVN. Yes sir, it's National Vietnam Veterans day and it's 50-year anniversary. Like many, maybe most, of you it is a time to remember those lost in country and tragically, those MANY, MANY more lost to the ravages of Agent Orange and other maladies. It also reminds me to be damn grateful and thankful to still be on the right side of the lawn. I was extremely fortunate to have stayed in the military for over 30 years, as I did not experience the utter loneliness felt by so many. I've had many of my fellow warriors around me to share the burdens and joys of whatever came up. To that extent this organization has also been a major contributor to my life experience. Another example of "you get out what you are willing to put in".

This is my last full Presidents Corner as the next edition will be split with the incoming President LTC RET. John Powell, my friend and able Vice President for the last year. I will save the farewell until that publication, which is in itself rather funny, as it will be unlikely that



you will receive it until AFTER the reunion in San Antonio is over. Nonetheless...

Welcome Home my Brothers, on this day of Remembrance!



*LOOKING FORWARD TO
SEEING Y'ALL IN SAN ANTONIO!!!!*

Don Le Master,
VHPA President

Come join us in celebrating a combat aircraft with a legacy that extends from the jungles of Viet Nam, to the smoke-filled skies of Kuwait and the mountains of Afghanistan; continuing to this day.

Savannah, Georgia ★ Hotel DeSoto ★ 1 - 5 October



For details see the Cobra Reunion 2023 FB Page:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/818011722313360>

Or...

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FROM THE STAFF AT HQ!

PLEASE HELP US REDUCE THE COSTS OF REMAILING ITEMS!

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

REUNION INFO:

* The 2023 reunion will be July 2 thru July 5, 2023 in San Antonio, TX. The hotel room rate will be \$129+ tax. Hotel registration & reunion registration will not be available until approximately the first of April 2023. Please consult www.vhpa.org for the most current reunion information & details.

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

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

Sherry Rodgers
VHPA Business Manager

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Army Aviation Museum VHPA "VIP" Memberships

Your Legacy Committee, in revitalizing the VHPA relationship with the Army Aviation Museum & Foundation at Fort Novosel (Rucker), Alabama, is pleased to announce that the Museum & Foundation are making a very special and exclusive offer to VHPA members:

- **FREE VIP Membership for VHPA Members**
- **10% Discount at the Museum Gift Shop**
- **FREE admission to the Museum**
- **A VHPA VIP Membership card**
- **Lifetime Museum Member Sticker**
- **Monthly Foundation updates**
- **Quarterly Newsletter, "The Prop & Rotor"**



Go to the website www.armyaviationmuseum.org now and apply for this generous offer the Museum & Foundation are making to recognize and honor those of us who flew helicopters in Vietnam. Signing up is easy. You just go to "Get Involved" and then click on "Become a Member" to complete the form (click VHPA VIP). Or, you can just use the link below:

www.armyaviationmuseum.org/get-involved/museum-membership

*And, do go visit this great museum on your next road trip.
You'll love the walk down memory lane
and revisiting our unique history!*



RECALL 1991

In January 1991 the Army recalled to active duty approximately fifty retired Army Aviator Warrant Officers. This was done in anticipation of aircrew losses in the coming Desert Storm. Plans were to replace the losses with active-duty individuals, and to replace those with the recalled retirees.

The recalled retirees were given approximately 10 days notice to report to Fort Rucker. Once there, the usual activities began: signing in, issuing uniforms and other needed items, flight physicals, and refresher training in the individual's respective aircraft. Interestingly, some of those recalled were at the time, civilian flight instructors at Fort Rucker.

Though the recalled were important to the big picture, they needed to fit in to the existing training programs. Aircraft and instructors were not available at all times, so

refresher training took longer than usual. Time went on and situations changed: my refresher training was to include night flight. Arriving for night training on a Thursday afternoon, my group was told it was cancelled – Desert Storm had ended, and we were informed we were to report at 8:00 A.M. on Sunday for Out Processing.

Thomas Hirschler, CW4 Retired.

WANTED!
MILITARY AVIATION MILITARIA

Buying:

★ Uniforms
★ Flight Jackets
★ Helmets
★ Medals
★ Patches
★ Insignia
★ Other Aviation Items

Please contact: Daniel Miller, Collector/Dealer
 Phone/text: 202.841.3062
 Email: Militbuff@aol.com

Also buying non aviation related militaria.



GENERAL REUNION INFORMATION

Last updated 30 MAR 2023

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS ★ JULY 2 - 5, 2023

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

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

As a general rule, since VHPA Membership and Subscriber dues expire on the last day of the month, someone who is dues current when they register could be non-dues current on the 1st day of the Reunion (02 JULY 2023). Because of this, the VHPA Reunion Registration software is "forward looking" regarding dues status.

Reunion Hotel Info: San Antonio Marriott Rivercenter, 101 Bowie Street, San Antonio, Texas, 78205

The VHPA Group Rate is **\$129 plus tax per night for single, double, triple, or quad** over the dates of 02 JULY 2023 thru 05 JULY 2023 (**based on availability**). **The cutoff date for the hotel rate is 05 JUNE 2023**.

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

Getting to San Antonio:

★ **San Antonio International Airport:** 9800 Airport Blvd, San Antonio, TX 78216

Located just 15 minutes north of downtown, San Antonio International Airport (SAT) offers competitive nonstop service to over 40 destinations across 13 airlines. The newest airlines at SAT include both JetBlue Airways and Spirit Airlines. The largest airline operating at SAT is Southwest Airlines which was founded right here in San Antonio.

★ **Amtrak Train:** 350 Hoefgen Ave, San Antonio, TX 78205

San Antonio station hosts two Amtrak services; the tri-weekly Sunset Limited and the daily Texas Eagle. Four days a week, San Antonio is the southern terminus of the Texas Eagle, which originates in Chicago. Three days a week, the Texas Eagle joins with the Sunset Limited, continuing westbound to Los Angeles. It is the second busiest Amtrak station in Texas, behind Fort Worth Central Station. Please visit www.amtrak.com for more information, pricing, schedules and more.



Transportation from/to the Airport: The hotel does not offer a shuttle to/from the airport. There are several options for going to and from San Antonio International Airport: Members can take a taxi cab which is available at the outer commercial curbside at Terminal A. For assistance, please see the Airport Ground Transportation employee (wearing a red shirt). Fares to San Antonio downtown areas start at \$24-\$29 per taxi cab.

Members may prefer Uber or Lyft and pricing will fluctuate. Booking can be done by downloading and using the App on your phone for these approved ride share services.

SuperShuttle provides airport rides to and from SAT to any address in the Greater San Antonio area. SuperShuttle fares are flat rate by zip code with downtown SHARED-RIDE services at \$15 one-way/\$28 round-trip. Private Non-Stop rides can range from \$35 to \$40 per car one-way. Visit supershuttle.com for all shared-ride, private direct and black car services. SuperShuttle ticket counters are located in the Baggage Claim area of Terminal A and Terminal B and are open from 9:00 AM until 1:00 AM with after hour contact available 24/7 at 210.BLUE.VAN. Use VHPA code KHC6Y for a 5% discount.

Parking: VHPA has negotiated a 25% discount off the hotel's standard parking rates per day. More details will be posted on the reunion website at a later date.

You can also visit <https://www.sahbgcc.com/Visit-Us/Location-Directions-Parking> for more local parking options. The Marriott Rivercenter is attached to the Rivercenter Mall and across from the Convention Center for map reference.

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

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 Rentals – Toms Wheelchair and Scooter Rentals is located one block from the Alamo and Riverwalk and will deliver to the hotel. Reservations can be made by calling the number below or booking online.

Phone: (210) 223-7878

Website: [https://tomswheelchairs.com/](http://tomswheelchairs.com/)

Vendor Area: If you are interested or know of anyone interested in becoming a Vendor for R2023 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, fax, or email to VHPA HQ. If you know of anyone that you think would be an asset to the Reunion Vendor Area be sure to let them know or contact VHPA HQ to give us the info and we will be happy to give them a call. 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 mglaw@earthlink.net or visit www.vhpa.org for details about how to sign up prior to arriving in San Antonio so you can fit this history preserving event into your Reunion schedule.

Family-Friendly and Local Attractions: There are plenty of things to do around San Antonio for everyone to enjoy, no matter the age. We recommend bringing the kids and grandkids to all Reunions to see what the VHPA is all about and to check out things to do around the city. Many attractions are within walking distance of the hotel or, for a fee, there is a city shuttle that makes a loop around top areas in Downtown San Antonio. There are numerous places to visit with family outside the inner circle of San Antonio as well.

The following is a list of a few attractions that we recommend visiting, but **are not** included in our tours and may be within walking/driving distance:

Attached to our hotel is the Shops at Rivercenter Mall that has Legoland Discovery Center, Sea Life Aquarium, Dave and Buster's, and Spyder Jump of San Antonio. Also, there is the Amazing Mirror Maze, Ripley's Believe It or Not and Ripley's Haunted Adventure that is just right outside the hotel. Our hotel is located directly on the River Walk with many food and shopping options. Another area we recommend visiting is La Villita on the River Walk with shops, dining and local art. Expanding further outside the city there is SeaWorld, Natural Bridge Caverns, Six Flags Fiesta Texas, San Antonio Zoo, and much, much more...this is only to list a few.

Volunteers: The Alamo 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 Alamo Chapter, gets "first shot" at the Duty Roster. If you are interested in volunteering you can contact Ron Spearman of The Alamo Chapter at 706-244-4255 or ron@ronspearman.com. You can also contact HQ at 800-505-8472. BTW, husband and wife teams are welcome to volunteer.

Reunion T-Shirts – The T-shirts for this year will come in two (2) colors: a tiger stripe camo with no front pocket and a forest green with a front pocket and will come in sizes small thru 3XL. You are welcome to order as many as you wish with your Reunion Registration until the cutoff date below.

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 want a "Reunion T-shirt order only". The shirts will be mailed to you after the Reunion.

S - L - \$19 XL - XXXL - \$21

Primary Attendee (Member or Subscriber) Registration - The early registration fee for the member is **\$40** through 01 July and **\$50** beginning 02 July.

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



Adult Guest Registration - The early registration fee for the member is **\$40** through 01 July and **\$50** beginning 02 July.

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

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

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

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 or her registration **any time prior to Monday, 29 May 2023** by contacting HQ via US Mail at 1601 E Lamar Blvd, Suite 117, Arlington, TX 76011, Email to HQ@vhpa.org, Phone at 800-505-8472 or Fax at 817-200-7309. *It is important to note that reunion registration cancellations and hotel reservation cancellations are completely separate business processes. The PR is responsible for both processes. PRs cannot assume that when they cancel their hotel reservation that the hotel will notify HQ to cancel the reunion registration or vice versa.*

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, directory orders, donations or voluntary contributions, cancellation fees, plus any event tickets designated as non-refundable. A PR may only cancel all or portions of his or her registration with GRI **any time prior to Thursday, 22 June 2023** by contacting HQ via US Mail at 1601 E Lamar Blvd, Suite 117, Arlington, TX 76011, Email to HQ@vhpa.org, Phone at 800-505-8472 or Fax at 817-200-7309.

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 R2023 is Monday, 29 May 2023 without GRI and Thursday, 22 June 2023 with GRI.** Only cancellations received by HQ by close of business Central Daylight Time (normally 3pm) on the OCD (including those via US Mail) are considered for refunds. *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, directory orders, 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: 02 July through 05 July - 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!**

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

It is easy to schedule a Mini-Reunion or TOC. Complete the Mini-Reunion Request form available at VHPA.ORG and return by email to Sherry Rodgers at sherry@vhpa.org or mail the completed form to HQ at the address listed on the form. **NO OUTSIDE FOOD OR DRINKS ARE ALLOWED IN THESE ROOMS!**

KIA/MIA Gold Star Family Sponsorship - \$25 - Use this item to support costs of events for Gold Star Families to attend events. This item was added to the VHPA Reunion Registration form at the request of VHPA Members attending the Annual Business Meeting during the 2010 Reunion in San Diego. **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.** Thank you for your generosity.

O'Club: 02 July thru 04 July -11:00am – 11:00pm / 05 July - 12:30pm – 11:00pm - 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.



WE NEED YOUR HELP!!

CONSIDER RUNNING for the VHPA Executive Council at the 2023 Business meeting in San Antonio.

POSITIONS:

- 1. Vice-President-** Only those previously on the Executive Council (3 year term as VP. President and Immediate past President)
- 2. Junior member at Large-** This is our new blood and we need you! (3 year term).

To see the requirements and National Election Policy go to the VHPA site, Login and select Administrative Documents. Scroll to Policies and open National Election Policy. Familiarize yourself with the policy and then submit a BIO/RESUME of no more than 500 words to:

Dennis L. Faucher, Junior Member at Large and National Election Chairman Cell: 814-363-1547
E-mail: dfaucher@verizon.net

NO LATER THAN: 30 days prior to first day of the San Antonio Reunion, which begins on Sunday 2 July 2023, so no later than: 2 Jun 2023. Must be present to run.



Please note that descriptions for every event are included. Where, however, there are multiple instances of the same event the date/time are noted, but not the full description. You must refer to the first instance of the activity. It will be title 'X' tour/event #1.

This format saves a great deal of space otherwise dedicated to identical wording.

SUNDAY, 02 JULY 2023

Fredericksburg Winery Tour #1:

02 July – 10:30am – 5:00pm - \$70

Take in the views of Texas Hill Country on a one hour bus ride to Fredericksburg, Texas; known for its abundance of views and wineries. Locally owned Texas Hill Country Backwood BBQ will be the first stop of this tour for our members to grab lunch ON THEIR OWN. This tour will make a stop at historic Luckenbach Texas, where "Everybody's Somebody". Guests will visit Texas Wine Collective, which is a collaboration of three Texas wineries, learn about the winemaking process of the region, and sample several wines over the course of the tour. There will be time to freely explore the beautiful and historic downtown of Fredericksburg for additional wine tastings, and plenty of shopping.

Capacity: This event is limited to 100 participants.

NOTE: Purchase of lunch is not included in price.

Fredericksburg National Museum of the Pacific War #1:

02 July – 10:30am – 5:00pm - \$40

Located about an hour away from San Antonio in the heart of Downtown Fredericksburg, Texas - this museum is the only one in the Continental United States centered on World War II's Pacific campaign and has gained a reputation as one of the premier military museums in the nation. Enjoy the gallery's 33,000 square foot exhibition featuring 40 media installations, approximately 900 artifacts in 97 climate-controlled cases, 15 macro-artifacts, and hundreds of photographs. Members will be given free rein to visit the entire museum at their own pace and grab a bite to eat or a sip of wine in Downtown Fredericksburg.

Capacity: This event is limited to 100 participants.

San Antonio River Cruise Tour #1:

02 July – 11:00am – 12:00pm - \$15

Jump aboard a private boat cruise, as it gently winds through the city center to take in the iconic River Walk from another perspective. VHPA Guests will see some of the most significant historical sites in downtown San Antonio and many architectural wonders.

Learn a little more about the history and the American, German, and Mexican cultures that helped transform the Alamo City into what it is today.

Capacity: This event is limited to 60 participants.

San Antonio Sightseer Tour #1:

02 July – 12:30pm – 2:30pm - \$35

Jump aboard a private bus tour with this one-of-a-kind city tour. This tour is the perfect way for VHPA guests to get a grand overview of old San Antonio, outside of the Riverwalk, with its rich history & culture. The Sightseer will include a personalized VHPA itinerary with guide and give a mix of history including the Alamo, King William District, Architecture, Riverwalk, La Villita, San Fernando & more! This tour is delivered in a way all ages and interests will enjoy!

Capacity: This event is limited to 54 participants.

San Antonio Sightseer Tour #2:

02 July – 3:00pm – 5:00pm - \$35

See tour Sightseer tour # 1 for details.

Capacity: This event is limited to 54 participants.

San Antonio River Cruise Tour #2:

02 July – 4:00pm – 5:00pm - \$15

See River cruise # 1 for details

Capacity: This event is limited to 60 participants.

San Antonio River Cruise Tour #3:

02 July – 5:00pm – 6:00pm - \$15

See River cruise # 1 for details

Capacity: This event is limited to 60 participants.

Welcome Reception w/Folklore Show:

02 July – 7:00pm – 9:00pm - NC

Traditionally this reception was the first official event for everyone to get together FOR SURE at a Reunion. This year's reception is not only a social get together, but brings a piece of the San Antonio heritage to life with a Mariachi band and Folklore dancers that will include cultural traditional Mexican dancers. Cash bars will be positioned to make certain no one has to stand in a long line.

MONDAY, 03 JULY 2023



Golf Outing at Fort Sam Houston – La Loma:

03 July – 7:15am – 3:30pm - **\$115**

This year we will play the La Loma course at the historic Fort Sam Houston. The La Loma course is one of two 18-hole, championship courses at the historic Fort Sam Houston. The facility hosted the Texas Open in the '50s and '60s, making it the only military facility to ever host a PGA event.

Your golf ticket includes bus transportation, green fees, carts, scorecards, complimentary range balls, one Power Pack, and lunch. Golf clubs can be rented for \$25.

Capacity: This event is limited to 50 participants.

Breakfast w/speaker – Thanh Boyer:

03 July – 7:30am – 9:00am - **\$25**

This is the first of three breakfasts offered at this Reunion. Thanh Duong Boyer was born in the Mekong Delta, South Vietnam, in May 1967. She is the oldest of six children, born in a wealthy family, according to Vietnamese standards. Then, as a young child, she saw her family struggle to survive after the North Vietnamese takeover. At twelve years old, her parents put Thanh and one sister on a boat, during the nighttime hours in an effort to escape Vietnam and its suppressive government.

Fifteen months later, she finally arrived in the United States as a refugee. Although unable to speak English, she worked hard, learning the language, becoming a U.S. citizen, and committing herself to bringing her parents and siblings to the states. She married and succeeded in having her family join her stateside. Thanh has two children who are examples of achieving The American Dream; her daughter is in medical school and her son is an electrical engineer. Her brother and three sisters also achieved success and are electrical engineers.

Today Thanh gives inspirational talks to groups and she and her husband, John, live in Madison, Alabama.

San Antonio River Cruise Tour #4:

03 July – 9:30am – 10:30am - **\$15**

See Sunday entry for River cruise # 1 for details

Capacity: This event is limited to 60 participants.

Mission Tour #1: 03 July - 9:30am – 1:00pm - **\$45**

Experience the beauty and history of the beginning of San Antonio with a guided mission tour. Enjoy mission silhouettes

like Mission San José, Mission Concepción and others that show the Spanish and Moorish influenced architecture. Guests will see Espada Acequia, which is a 270-year-old irrigation system that is still in use today. The missions are a must see when visiting San Antonio and the only UNESCO World Heritage site in Texas!

Capacity: This event is limited to 100 participants.

Fredericksburg National Museum of the Pacific War #2:

03 July – 9:30am – 4:00pm - **\$40**

See Sunday entry Fredericksburg National Museum of the Pacific War #1: 02 July for details

Capacity: This event is limited to 100 participants.

Writers Panel – Putting Action into Words # 1:

03 July – 10:00am – 12:00pm - **NC**

The dreaded COVID is behind us and we plan to hold our next face to face meeting (first since Kansas City) this year in San Antonio. If you have ever owned a pen, pencil or grease-marker... have words in print or wishing to have in print, this event is for you.

This is the opportunity to meet and exchange ideas, experiences, dos and don'ts etc. Publishing, like flying a helicopter, can be great fun or a nightmare. This meeting is the time to sort through the pit falls and successes and put faces on names.



Fredericksburg National Museum of the Pacific War.



San Antonio River Cruise Tour #5:

03 July – 10:30am – 11:30am - **\$15**

See Sunday entry for River cruise # 1 for details.

Capacity: This event is limited to 60 participants.

Video Presentation – Vietnam Center & Archive at Texas Tech #1: 03 July – 11:00am – 12:00pm – **NC**

The VHPA has been working with the VNCA for more than a decade. Each year things get better and better as we continue to build the VHPA's legacy at Texas Tech University in Lubbock.

In addition to an update on adding new individual Collections (documents, images, plus museum items) and Oral Histories, at the San Antonio Reunion you will learn more about the Volunteer HQ Center. Currently there are **two opportunities**, for especially Vietnam Veterans, to add value to the Archive ~ **Photo Captioning and Document Transcription**. Search engines CAN NOT find a photo that does not have a caption containing keywords such as: AH-1G, 105mm howitzer, _-ton truck, M-48 tank, etc. A hand-written letter or note taped to a map is worthless unless the words can be entered as typed text or computer readable document.

This last year, because of the efforts of VHPA Calendar Committee member, John Jones, the **Patch Project** will be the **third opportunity** in the Volunteer HQ Center. Again, a digital image of a cloth pocket or shoulder patch is worthless without associating a set of keywords and metrics such as: shield shape, containing colors: red, white, and black, 11th Armored Cavalry, 2.5" tall, made in Vietnam.

San Antonio River Cruise Tour #6:

03 July – 11:30am – 12:30pm - **\$15**

See Sunday entry for River cruise # 1 for details

Capacity: This event is limited to 60 participants.

San Antonio Sightseer Tour #3:

03 July – 12:00pm – 2:00pm - **\$35**

See Sightseer tour entry # 1 for details.

Capacity: This event is limited to 54 participants.

Casino Event:

03 July – 1:00pm – 4:00pm - **\$55**

Back by request, VHPA is bringing the Casino to its members in an exciting private Casino event at the Marriott. Come try your luck with blackjack, craps, poker, and roulette. Guests will be

given a set number of chips to keep them entertained for hours. Turn those winnings into a raffle ticket for your chance to win some grand prizes.

Capacity: This event is limited to 100 participants.

Note: THIS IS A COME AND GO EVENT so feel free to attend anytime during the event.



Video Presentation – EAA Aviation Museum-Restoration of UH-1B #1: 03 July – 2:00pm – 3:00pm – **NC**

The Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) Aviation Museum, formerly the EAA Air Venture Museum, located in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, is dedicated to the preservation and display of historic and experimental aircraft as well as antiques, classics, and warbirds. After several years of meticulous effort and consultations with Vietnam Veterans, including those from the 121st AHC, the "Huey: The Workhorse of Vietnam" exhibit opened to the public in 2020.

To those who served, as well as those who remember, the helicopter known as the Huey is one of the enduring symbols of the Vietnam War. This exhibit allows visitors to explore this remarkable machine and learn of the men who rode them into battle. This video shows how this Huey was restored and provides the background details for this unique exhibit.

San Antonio Sightseer Tour #4:

03 July – 2:30pm – 4:30pm - **\$35**

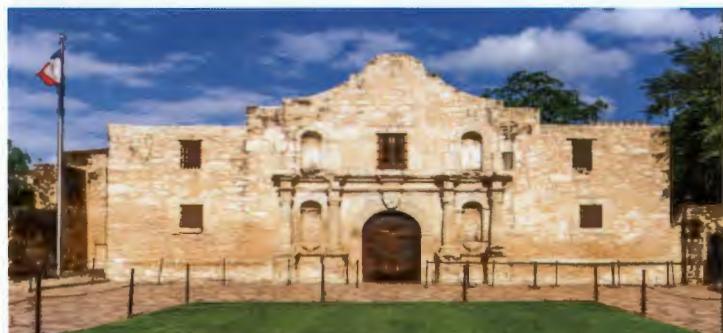
See tour Sightseer tour # 1 for details.

Capacity: This event is limited to 54 participants.

San Antonio River Cruise Tour #7:

03 July – 5:00pm – 6:00pm - **\$15**

See Sunday entry for River cruise # 1 for details.



The Alamo.



San Antonio River Cruise Tour #8:

03 July – 6:00pm – 7:00pm - **\$15**

See Sunday entry for River cruise # 1 for details.

Capacity: This event is limited to 60 participants.

Tejas PRIVATE Rodeo w/dinner:

03 July – 6:15pm – 10:00pm - **\$75**

Tejas Rodeo Company is a hidden gem, tucked away in the corner of Bulverde, Texas, just north of San Antonio, providing a true taste of Texas and its authentic Western-heritage. VHPA guests will get the rodeo in a private setting with just our members for this action-packed rodeo! Enjoy a BBQ dinner with 2 meats, 2 side dishes, dessert, and ice tea. The rodeo event will include Tejas award-winning drill team, Texas longhorn cattle entrance, bull riding, team roping, and barrel racing. There's fun for the whole family out at Tejas Rodeo!

Capacity: This event is limited to 250 participants.

TUESDAY, 04 JULY 2023

KIA/MIA Gold Star Breakfast:

04 July - 7:30am – 9:00am - **\$25**

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.

San Antonio River Cruise Tour #9:

04 July – 9:30am – 10:30am - **\$15**

See entry for River cruise # 1 for details.

Capacity: This event is limited to 60 participants.

Mission Tour #2: 04 July – 9:30am – 1:00pm - **\$45**

See Mission tour #1 entry for River cruise # 1 for details

Capacity: This event is limited to 100 participants.

Fredericksburg Winery Tour #2:

04 July – 9:30am – 4:00pm - **\$70**

See entry for Winery tour # 1 for details.

Capacity: This event is limited to 100 participants.

Video Presentation – EAA Aviation Museum-Restoration of UH-1B #2: 04 July –10:00am –11:00am – **NC**

See Video Presentation – EAA Aviation Museum-Restoration of UH-1B #1 for details.

Writers Panel – Putting Action into Words:

04 July – 10:00am – 12:00pm – **NC**

See Writers Panel – Putting Action into Words # 1 for details

San Antonio River Cruise Tour #10: 04 July – 10:30am – 11:30am - **\$15**

See entry for River cruise # 1 for details.

Capacity: This event is limited to 60 participants.

Video Presentation – Vietnam Center & Archive at Texas Tech #2: 04 July – 11:00am – 12:00pm – **NC**

See Video Presentation – Vietnam Center & Archive at Texas Tech #1 for details.



Tejas Rodeo Company.



Who Dun It Murder Mystery Lunch:

04 July – 11:00am – 1:00pm - **\$65**

The Who Dun It Mystery Show in San Antonio gives audiences an immersive experience into a classic murder whodunnit mystery while enjoying a lunch of salad, chicken, rolls, dessert, tea & coffee. The real twist is in the way the mystery is presented. While you uncover clues and watch interrogations unfold, you'll begin to realize not everything is as it seems. Among VHPA guests are plainclothes actors and actresses blending in for an extraordinary experience. You'll never know who the murderer is, so keep your eyes peeled! Who will be the closest to figuring it out before the killer is revealed by the end of the show?

Capacity: This event is limited to 100 participants.

San Antonio River Cruise Tour #11:

04 July – 11:30am – 12:30pm - **\$15**

See entry for River cruise # 1 for details.

Capacity: This event is limited to 60 participants.

Texas Air Museum – Stinson #1:

04 July – 2:00pm – 4:00pm - **\$15**

Since 1999, the Texas Air Museum at Stinson Field has been dedicated to telling the story of Texas and San Antonio's vital role in the development of military air power and the history of Katherine Stinson, the 4th woman to earn a pilot's license. It also pays tribute to aviation pioneers, technical achievements in the realm of aviation, and above all, pays respect and honor to those who gave their lives to defend freedom. This museum, run by volunteers, at Stinson Field maintains a significant collection of aircraft that illustrate changes in aviation technology across more than a century of development.

Capacity: This event is limited to 100 participants.

Note: This museum is located in a hangar with no air conditioning.

Veteran's Quilt Presentation & Quilter's Show & Tell:

04 July – 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.



The Magicians Agency Theatre #1:

04 July – 4:30pm – 6:00pm - **\$45**

An award winning magic and illusion show VHPA members will enjoy an intimate setting of the Magicians Agency Theatre and experience the magic right before your eyes. To start off, members will enjoy included popcorn and soda as well as mind bending and close up magic from our strolling Magicians. When the show begins, enjoy an hour of nonstop, action packed magic and illusion that you will never forget. After the show, make your way to entrance area where the performers will be on hand to sign autographs and take pictures.

Capacity: This event is limited to 100 participants.

San Antonio River Cruise Tour #12:

04 July – 5:00pm – 6:00pm - **\$15**

See entry for River cruise # 1 for details.

Capacity: This event is limited to 60 participants.

San Antonio River Cruise Tour #13:

04 July – 6:00pm – 7:00pm - **\$15**

See entry for River cruise # 1 for details.

Capacity: This event is limited to 60 participants.



River Cruise.



Tower of America Private Group Dinner:

04 July - 7:00pm - 10:00pm - **\$120**

A spectacular 4th of July event with an award-winning menu, the 750-foot-tall Tower of the Americas provides the most spectacular views of the Alamo City. While enjoying this private, you will have a bird's eye view of 4th of July fireworks surrounding downtown. Known locally as "The Tower", this is the tallest observation tower in Texas, and was the tallest in the U.S. from 1968 until it was surpassed by the Stratosphere Tower, Las Vegas in 1996. This event will include salad, main entrees of salmon, steak and/or chicken, with a dessert. This event does include an OPEN BAR for all guests that will include standard well spirits, wine and domestic bottled and draft beers.

Capacity: This event is limited to 260 participants.

Note: This event DOES include a 2 hour OPEN BAR.

WEDNESDAY, 05 JULY 2023

Pre-Memorial Service Breakfast:

05 July - 7:30am - 8:30am - **\$25**

This is the third and final breakfast offered at this Reunion. The Memorial Service, scheduled to begin at 9am is primarily a time to honor the several hundred VHPA members and potential members who passed away since the 2022 Reunion in Tampa, FL.

Memorial Service: 05 July - 8:45am - 9:30am - **NC**

The Memorial Service has been part of the "Reunion's Fabric" for at least eighteen 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.

Spouse/Guest Event -

Bingo: 05 July -
10:00am - 11:30am -

\$35

This will be a fun filled event for our ladies of VHPA with laughter and prizes included. This event will be some old-fashioned fun for all ages and our VHPA guests can spend time with their friends and getting the chance makes new ones. Get your daubers ready, because we're calling your number. You'll have a blast with a combination of different kinds of wins including traditional lines, corners, blackouts, multiple patterns, and more.

Capacity: This event is limited to 100 participants.

Annual Business Meeting:

05 July - 10:00am - 12:30pm - **NC**

The Annual Business Meeting (ABM) is when we conduct the official business of the association. On Wednesday 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.

Texas Air Museum – Stinson #2:

05 July - 1:00pm - 3:00pm - **\$15**

See Texas Air Museum – Stinson #1 for details

Capacity: This event is limited to 100 participants.

Note: This museum is located in a hangar with no air conditioning.

The Magicians Agency Theatre #2:

05 July - 2:00pm - 3:30pm - **\$45**

See The Magicians Agency Theatre #1 for details.

Capacity: This event is limited to 100 participants.



Closing Banquet:

Registered Adults – 05 July – 6:00pm – 10:00pm - **\$75**

This ticket is for an adult banquet meal (a dual plate w/chicken & salmon) 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, PROGRAM BEGINS AT 6:00PM

Closing Banquet:

Registered Child <12 – 05 July – 6:00pm – 10:00pm - **\$35**

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 – 05 July – 6:00pm – 10:00pm - **\$85**

This ticket is for an adult banquet meal (a dual plate w/chicken & salmon) 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

VETERAN'S QUILT PRESENTATION AND QUILTERS SHOW AND TELL

The quilts for this year's recipients shall be on display in the vendors room July 2 and 3.

The Quilter's Room will be open July 4th and all quilts will be on display in preparation for the 2:00 P.M. Presentation. Everyone is invited to attend the presentation; please sign up to ensure we have adequate seating. Our Show and Tell will immediately follow the Veteran's presentation. Looking forward to meeting this year's quilt recipients and encourage everyone to attend.

There is still time to construct blocks, quilt tops and/or quilts for your Show and Tell projects.

REQUIREMENTS:

- ★ The fabrics are to be red, white/cream and blue.
- ★ 12 1/2 (twelve and one half) inch unfinished.
- ★ Quilt tops and quilts measure (lap size) 56 X 65 average.
- ★ Prewash all fabrics as some do bleed onto other fabrics when washed.
- ★ 100% Cotton.
- ★ 1/4 (one-quarter) inch seams.

I shall be calling the potential recipients between May 1st and May 15th. My area Code is 913 and if you do receive a call, please answer as I would love to talk to you.

Any questions, contact me at **913-631-6811**

or klskms@aol.com

Kathleen Sherfey ~ Quilt Coordinator

R2023 OFFICIAL SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

UPDATED 30 MAR 2023

Time	Event
SUNDAY, JULY 2	
9:00 am - 12:00 pm	HQ Registration Desk
9:00 am - 8:00 pm	Pre-Registered Packet and Tshirt Pickup
9:00 am - 8:00 pm	Welcome Desk
9:00 am - 8:00 pm	Vendor Room Open
9:00 am - 10:00 pm	Mini Reunions / TOCs
10:00 am - 11:00 am	Oral History Interviews
11:00 am - 11:00 pm	O' Club Open
10:30 am - 5:00 pm	Fredericksburg Winery Tour #1
10:30 am - 5:00 pm	Fredericksburg National Musuem of the Pacific War #1
11:00 am - 12:00 pm	San Antonio River Cruise Tour #1
12:30 pm - 2:30 pm	San Antonio SightSeer Tour #1
1:00 pm - 5:00 pm	HQ Registration Desk
3:00 pm - 5:00 pm	San Antonio SightSeer Tour #2
4:00 pm - 5:00 pm	San Antonio River Cruise Tour #2
5:00 pm - 6:00 pm	San Antonio River Cruise Tour #3
6:00 pm - 8:00 pm	HQ Registration Desk
7:00 pm - 9:00 pm	Welcome Reception w/Folklore Show
MONDAY, JULY 3	
7:15 am - 3:30 pm	Golf
7:30 am - 9:00 am	Breakfast w/speaker - Thanh Boyer
8:00 am - 11:30 am	HQ Registration Desk
8:00 am - 8:00 pm	Pre-Registered Packet and Tshirt Pickup
8:00 am - 8:00 pm	Welcome Desk
9:00 am - 10:00 am	Oral History Interviews
9:00 am - 8:00 pm	Vendor Room Open
9:00 am - 10:00 pm	Mini Reunions / TOCs
9:30 am - 10:30 am	San Antonio River Cruise Tour #4
9:30 am - 1:00 pm	Mission Tour #1
9:30 am - 4:00 pm	Fredericksburg National Musuem of the Pacific War #2
10:00 am - 12:00 pm	Writer's Panel
10:30 am - 11:30 am	San Antonio River Cruise Tour #5
11:00 am - 12:00 pm	Video Presentation-Vietnam Center & Archive at Texas Tech #1
11:30 am - 12:30 pm	San Antonio River Cruise Tour #6
11:00 am - 11:00 pm	O' Club Open
12:00 pm - 2:00 pm	San Antonio SightSeer Tour #3
12:30 pm - 5:00 pm	HQ Registration Desk
1:00 pm - 4:00 pm	Casino Event
2:00 pm - 3:00 pm	Video Presentation-EAA Aviation Museum-Restoration of UH-1B #1
2:30 pm - 4:30 pm	San Antonio SightSeer Tour #4
3:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Banquet Seating
6:00 pm - 8:00 pm	HQ Registration Desk
5:00 pm - 6:00 pm	San Antonio River Cruise Tour #7
6:00 pm - 7:00 pm	San Antonio River Cruise Tour #8
6:15 pm - 10:00 pm	Tejas Private Rodeo w/Dinner

R2023 OFFICIAL SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

UPDATED 30 MAR 2023

Time	Event
TUESDAY, JULY 4	
7:30 am - 9:00 am	KIA/MIA Gold Star Breakfast
8:00 am - 11:00 am	HQ Registration Desk
8:00 am - 12:00 pm	Pre-Registered Packet and Tshirt Pickup
8:00 am - 5:00 pm	Welcome Desk
9:00 am - 10:00 am	Oral History Interviews
9:00 am - 8:00 pm	Vendor Room Open
9:00 am - 10:00 pm	Mini Reunions / TOCs
9:30 am - 10:30 am	San Antonio River Cruise Tour #9
9:30 am - 1:00 pm	Mission Tour #2
9:30 am - 4:00 pm	Fredericksburg Winery Tour #2
10:00 am - 11:00 am	Video Presentation-EAA Aviation Museum-Restoraton of UH-1B #2
10:00 am - 12:00 pm	Writer's Panel
10:30 am - 11:30 am	San Antonio River Cruise Tour #10
11:00 am - 12:00 pm	Video Presentation-Vietnam Center & Archive at Texas Tech #2
11:00 am - 1:00 pm	Who Dun It Murder Mystery Lunch
11:30 am - 12:30 pm	San Antonio River Cruise Tour #11
11:00 am - 11:00 pm	O' Club Open
12:00 pm - 6:00 pm	HQ Registration Desk
2:00 pm - 4:00 pm	Texas Air Museum - Stinson #1
2:00 pm - 4:00 pm	Veterans Quilt Presentation and Quilters Show & Tell
3:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Banquet Seating
4:30 pm - 6:00 pm	The Magicians Agency Theatre #1
5:00 pm - 6:00 pm	San Antonio River Cruise Tour #12
6:00 pm - 7:00 pm	San Antonio River Cruise Tour #13
7:00 pm - 10:00 pm	Tower of America Private Group Dinner
WEDNESDAY, JULY 5	
7:30 am - 8:30 am	Pre-Memorial Breakfast
8:00 am - 11:00 am	Consolidated HQ Reg, Pre-Reg & T-Shirts
8:00 am - 1:00 pm	Welcome Desk
8:45 am - 9:30 am	Memorial Service
10:00 am - 11:30 am	Spouse/Guest Bingo Event
10:00 am - 12:30 pm	Annual Business Meeting
12:00 pm - 3:00 pm	Consolidated Reg, Pre-Reg & T-Shirts
12:30 pm - 11:00 pm	O' Club Open
1:00 pm - 3:00 pm	Texas Air Museum - Stinson #2
1:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Mini-Reunions / TOCs
1:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Vendor Room Open
2:00 pm - 3:30 pm	The Magicians Agency Theatre #2
4:00 pm - 6:00 pm	Banquet Seating
5:30 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



Book A Private Group Dinner Cruise At The San Antonio Reunion!



VHPA guests can book their own dinner cruise on the River Walk and have a private gathering with friends, unit and/or flight class at the 2023 Reunion.

With many restaurants to choose from, GO RIO's Dinner Cruises are one of the most enjoyable experiences along the San Antonio River Walk. Food and beverages must be provided by a restaurant or catering company. You may not provide your own food.

All bookings are handled directly with the restaurant.

Visit the following link to view information and restaurants currently participating in GO RIO Dinner Cruises. <https://www.goriocruises.com/Cruises/dinner-cruise/>

**** VHPA HQ is not responsible for booking, confirming, or setting up private group events. ****



SuperShuttle San Antonio Airport VHPA Discount

SuperShuttle provides airport rides to and from SAT to any address in the Greater San Antonio area. SuperShuttle fares are Private Non-Stop rides that can range from \$35 to \$40 per car one-way.

VHPA Discount Code: KHC6Y

To book visit:

<https://www.supershuttle.com/>

or Call:

1- 800-BLUE-VAN (258-3826)



San Antonio Travel Alternative

Gather a group of friends and take a train ride to the 2023 Reunion.

San Antonio station hosts two Amtrak services; the tri-weekly Sunset Limited and the daily Texas Eagle. Four days a week, San Antonio is the southern terminus of the Texas Eagle, which originates in Chicago. Three days a week, the Texas Eagle joins with the Sunset Limited, continuing westbound to Los Angeles.

Please visit www.amtrak.com for more information, pricing, schedules and more.

From the Managing Editor...

In the March/April issue of the Aviator, Tom Andrew was credited as author of the article A CO 159 PACHYDERMS. The article was submitted by Andrew Belmont

.....

It was recently brought to my attention an error occurred in the obituary for the late Reverend Jerome Daly, a three-tour aviator, who was highly decorated. In the obituary, the preparer (likely family) stated "He was the most decorated American aviator of the Vietnam War". The words "a highly" in place of "the most" would have been a true statement – and I missed it.

The member who discovered the error (I do not know who the most decorated aviator of the Vietnam war is/was by the way) was quite shocked to find out our non-existent fact checking department had allowed this glaring error to reach print. Our staff consists of three people, one of whom is a contractor without any in-depth military knowledge and two volunteer retired Army Aviators. We presume good faith and honesty in all of the submissions we receive.

Mistakes are inevitable, yet very few in contrast to the amount of material processed.

This is an apt time to bring up another fact and one which has been noted in the not-so-distant past. We need to receive a notice of death, ideally, with the provision of the URL where the obituary is posted. It may be a newspaper or a funeral home web site. For all who are aware of the distinction, we prefer a Microsoft Word document as opposed to a PDF file for a number of reasons. If you do not have access to "Word" a text entry in an email is acceptable. Smartphone images of a printed source are NOT usable. Going forward, anything that is too involved to transfer will be returned with the reason.

It is understandable for a colleague wishing to honor a fellow veteran decides to notify us. In such case, unless none exists, please simply forward the web location.

Thank you,
Tom Kirk

Friends of Vinh Son Orphanage (FVSO) Kontum, Vietnam

Donations are tax deductible with 100% going to the kids, providing support for over 760 Montagnard children who live in 7 Vinh Son orphanages in the Kontum/Pleiku area of Vietnam. For over 20 years, FVSO donors have supplied food and medicine, dental care, education, clean water, housing and more.

Patrick Leary
FVSO PRESIDENT AND LIFE MEMBER OF VHPA



TO DONATE OR CONTACT FVSO

Our Monthly Newsletters Available on the Web Site

Website
FriendsofVSO.org
Email
FriendsofVSO@gmail.com
Address
FVSO, P.O. Box 9322
Auburn, CA 95604-9322



A Fowled Up Mid-Air Collision

The following is an excerpt from the book "Phoenix 13" with permission from the author – Darryl James

A midair collision involving a helicopter is arguably the worst thing that can happen. In flight school, we had a few such tragedies in Primary School at Fort Wolters and Fort Rucker that killed several students and instructor pilots. It was said in flight school, "If this occurs, don't sweat it. There's only one emergency procedure to follow: bend over and kiss your ass goodbye."

0645 Hrs. 20 November 68

Div Arty Air Operations

Major Fulton, the unit's commanding officer, sat in the Operations hut with Operations Officer, Captain Fuller, and Lieutenant Bryant. Fulton and Fuller sat at their desks while Bryant manned the Operations radio. Operations keep track of all the Div Arty Air Section pilots in the air marking their locations, time, and position on the sizeable topographic wall map overlain with plastic.

Warrant Officer Steven Lindauer, reported on the radio, "Phoenix One Four, landing Duc Pho with two PAXs."

"This is Ops, Roger One Four," replied Bryant as he wrote this down on the map with erasable markers.

"Ops, this is Phoenix One Two, landing Lima Zula West. " "Roger One-Two," replied Bryant.

"What's Birmingham doing out at LZ West?" asked Bryant. "Heard they took mortar fire and opened up with their Quad 50's last night."

"Right," replied Fuller. "No one was hurt, but those '50s knocked down trees and some heavy brush. "Birm's picking up the Chaplin and bringing him back to Division." Fuller turned and asked the operations sergeant a question regarding slick support. Major Fulton looked up and asked, "Is it going to rain today?" "Hell, it rains damn near every day," replied Fuller.

"I asked, smart ass because Colonel Jones is supposed to come over to play cards and drink whiskey tonight." He paused, then quipped, "Hate to see the 'Old Man' get wet."

Fulton was highly thought of by the chopper drivers. He was a tall, lean, lanky officer with short brown hair that he wore in a close crew cut. Unlike the gaggle of pilots, he did not have a mustache. He instead opted for the clean-cut West Point graduate 'strak-look.'

Often commanding aviation officers did not fly combat missions choosing quietly to fly only non-combat administrative flights under the premise that the boss should not be subjected to

hostile fire. Not Major Fulton, he flew combat chopper missions and admin fixed-wing flights in the unit's Otter and Beaver. This made him greatly respected by the pilots.

Father Flannigan frequently flew with the Div Arty chopper pilots. He spent much time in the field with the troops conducting Mass, taking confessions, counseling, and providing general TLC to the soldiers. He had a terrific sense of humor as well.

Earlier that month

Father Flanagan was flying with Lieutenant James during the Monsoon Season when it rained seemingly all the time. It was foggy with a 100-foot ceiling when he and James followed Highway One in the OH-23G about 10 feet off the ground at 80-knots airspeed. In Vietnam, you needed to fly your helicopter below 20 feet or above 1,500 feet above the ground to be relatively safe from small arms fire. In between those heights was what the pilots called the 'dead man's zone.' It was hard to hit a target, flying low and fast, ducking below the tree line, and maneuvering. Above 1,500 feet, small caliber arms could not reach you. The low-level flying was still risky. Div Arty Air suffered a fatality that summer when a pilot, low-leveling west of the town of Tam Ky, was shot down, crashed, and rolled the small helicopter into a ball.

Low-leveling along Highway One was relatively safe from bad guys, but it had another risk. Other choppers chose to low-level along the highway in bad weather. You could crash into another helicopter and ruin your day. A midair collision in a helicopter was almost always fatal. James kept to the right of the narrow, macadam two-lane road to mitigate this risk, had his landing light on, and hoped other chopper drivers flying in this weather would do the same. They were zipping along to the right of the road above the mud from the heavy rains.

At 80 knots, it was exhilarating going that fast, that low. Rounding a bend in the road, they soared over several peasant women. One rather large woman had her black pajama pants down with two giant hams exposed. Unashamed to the world, she squatted, pinching off a rather large loaf on the asphalt away from the muck and mud alongside the road. It was a shocking, awkward scene in the foggy air, funny, maybe a bit offensive, but indeed an event worthy of comment.

James thought to himself, if you gotta go, you gotta go. Hope that didn't offend our mild-mannered Padre.

No one spoke over the intercom for several, seemingly long minutes. Father Flanagan then quipped, "Darryl, now I know

why the good Lord makes it rain so darn much over here."

James burst out laughing, causing the chopper to wobble. He instinctually relaxed on the stick. They climbed as the cyclic was trimmed back for safety. He regained control and pushed forward on the cyclic to get them down, low-leveling again.

In the poor visibility, he spotted the landing light of another helicopter rushing toward them at a high rate of closure. James veered right to avoid a potential collision, then continued back along the road chuckling to himself about Father Flanagan.

Landing Zone West 0645 Hrs. 20 November 68

Lieutenant Birmingham lifted off from LZ West with Father Flanagan, climbed to 3,000 feet, and headed east towards the coast. He soon found himself in and out of cloud scud. He descended to stay out of the clouds with the weather deteriorating. What a crappy day to be flying, thought Birmingham.

He continued descending and passed through a green, heavily forested valley. He dodged clouds and finally saw Highway One in the distance. It was a welcome sight. He descended to 1,800 feet and turned south, following the road toward Tarn Ky. when he passed the city, he turned off the road to the southeast in a direct course to Ky Hai Heliport at Chu Lai.

Father Flanagan carefully pressed the intercom switch on the cyclic in front of him and said, "Mark, the Lord has us flying today in pretty soupy weather."

"You have that right, Father; he's making it tough for us to get home. At least it's not raining. It rains so much during the Monsoon Season that it wears my tired bones out. I am looking forward to a sunny day. It's been so long since we have seen the sun."

"We fly in all kinds of weather here, Father. We have to be careful and use our wits to keep from getting in trouble in what we call this. excuse my English, 'S***Y IFR' weather. We must stay out of the clouds, maintain separation from clouds, and keep the aircraft safe." Yes, Mark, I'm counting on you and the good Lord to keep us safe."

They passed over marshland, rice patties, and inland lakes and ponds. They noticed many of the ponds were full of ducks and geese. "Look at all the waterfowl below. Are we in some kind of bird migration?" "Don't know. I see some flying off below to the left of us."

The visibility was poor, and the helicopter's rotor blades seemed to be in and out of the cloud scud. Things can happen fast when you're flying. One moment everything is fine, and the next moment things can turn to hell in a handbasket.

From the corner of Mark's eye, he noticed what seemed to be a shadowy aberration. His eyes snapped to the right. A hazy, ghostly aircraft appeared out of the midst, on a collision path with their

helicopter. He reacted instantly, pushing down on the collective and turning sharply left. A loud boom and the canopy exploded in front of father Flanagan.

Divarty Operations

Lieutenant Bryant was standing writing on the map wall. Captain Fuller was on the phone, and Major Fulton was at his desk doing paperwork. The radio crackled, and in a nonchalant voice, "Operations, this is Phoenix One Two. We just had midair with a B-One-RD." Everyone in operations jumped up and turned toward the radio as Bryant said, "WHAT the hell is a B-One-RD? Say again, One Two?" "We just hit a bird, Operations, a big ass bird. It crashed through our canopy."

"WHAT? Are you okay, One-Two Roger. My passenger's a bit worse for wear. He's full of feathers, gore, blood, and debris. The wind is rushing in the cockpit, blowing crap all around. We are flying okay. Had to slow to 40 knots. We should be at Ky Hai heliport in about 20 mikes." "Roger One-Two, is your passenger, okay?" "Yes, he's okay, Ops. He had on a helmet, which took the brunt of the collision. "We will alert the tower and have maintenance, and the medics meet you."

Ky Hai Heliport: 0645 Hrs.

One-Two landed with a crowd of Div Arty Air people gathering. The midair with a goose caused quite a stir. Birmingham and Father Flannigan climbed out with a huge crowd watching. Soldiers examined the broken canopy and peered into the trashed-out cockpit. Major Fulton said, "Wow, this could have been a disaster. You two are lucky, hombre." Father Flanagan replied, "The incident didn't seem to bother Mark, but I was certainly shaken." He added in his humorous style, "That incident," he chuckled, "gentlemen, was close to getting my goose cooked." The soldiers gathered around them laughed. Birmingham quipped in Flannigan's best dead-pan style, "No harm; no fowl." Everyone roared with laughter.

By Darryl James, Life Member

Landing Zone West was an Americal artillery emplacement on a mountain ridge southwest of Danang.

2 Mounted gun emplacement with four M-85 50-caliber machine guns. Originally an anti-aircraft weapon that was used in Vietnam for fire base protection and convoy cover.

3 Instrument Flight Rules weather. Weather below visual flight minimums.

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ATTENTION!

Thunderbirds and Bandits
(118th Assault Helicopter Company)

Our traditional Thunderbirds-Bandits get-together is scheduled this summer at the VHPA Reunion in San Antonio, TX.



The VHPA Reunion will be July 2-5 at the San Antonio Marriott Rivercenter, on the River Walk.

Call Jim Thorne at (830) 598-7000 or write to him at jimthorne1@aol.com to get on the get-together notification list.

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VHPA SCHOLARSHIP UPDATE

VHPA Scholarship Correction Letter

In the last AVIATOR the wrong version of a letter concerning VHPA Scholarship Funding was printed in error. In the past, \$15,000 from interest earned on VHPA investments, has been donated to the next year's VHPA Scholarship

Awards. Due to the down turn in the economy and stock market this is no longer possible. What we receive in New and Regular Members' dues and earn in interest on our Association investments is needed to fund the operations of VHPA Headquarters and the existing VHPA Life Members. Hopefully, the economy will improve and we will again be able to donate some of our



earnings to VHPA Scholarships. But, until then, we, the existing membership need to contribute what we can to the VHPA Scholarship Fund. What we raise by September 1, 2023 and the interest earned on the VHPA Scholarship Corpus with AAAA will determine how many VHPA \$2,500 Awards we will offer in the 2024-2025 awards period. Give generously!!!

Please forgive my blunder on the letter printed on page 25 in the March/April issue. I must be getting more seasoned.

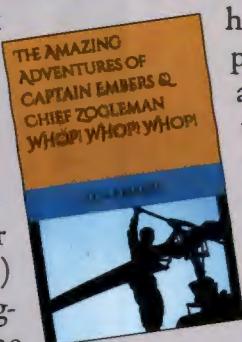
Mike Sheuerman
Scholarship Fundraising

Book Reviews by Phil Marshall

Ken Ember's first self-published book gives us one more look at a pilot's Past, Present and Future. Of course, his time as a Gun Platoon Leader and some memorable missions in the Past and other amazing adventures (misadventures?) in the 61st Assault Helicopter Company are documented. But (then) Captain Embers also documents his magnanimous (my word) efforts towards the Vietnamese people today. With several trips back to Vietnam in the Present, he discusses his efforts, along with other Veterans, to build Libraries in Vietnam, and especially his efforts to teach English as a second language to the Vietnamese children.

Not a long read, I had no trouble finishing the book in just a few sittings; plus, Ken kept my interest, a key requirement for me to judge a book. I especially enjoyed Ken's humor and keen insight into

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.



how the "system" worked in Vietnam. For example, "Promotion came fast in Vietnam. Just stay alive!" And then there is the photo caption "A very, hairy, scary mission!" More than once, my wife caught me laughing out loud at some of Ken's humor.

"The Amazing Adventures..." is not so much about "War Stories" as it is a book about what we can do for the Vietnamese people now. He is still very much involved in the Present and what we can do for the survivors and their families of that terrible time.

As for the Future? Ken ain't done yet! Via Zoom, he still teaches English to Vietnamese students. So nice to know that even in our 70s and 80s, we are still trying to do something good for the people of Vietnam.

By Phil Marshall

UPCOMING REUNIONS

LIGHTHORSE D TROOP 3/5 CAVALRY & C TROOP 3/17 CAVALRY 2023 REUNION

Where: The Marriott Cool Springs, Franklin TN.

The attached link will take you to the Marriott Lighthorse Nashville Reunion reservation site; where you can book from Tuesday September 12 through Sunday September 17. The room rate is \$159.00 plus tax and fees.

Book your group rate for Light Horse Reunion

When: September 12 through 17 2023

Additional information:

Facebook Link:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/587613165166285>

OV-1 MOHAWK ASSOCIATION ANNUAL REUNION

Where: Charleston, SC North Charleston Marriot Hotel

When: September 21-24, 2023

Information: OV-1 MOHAWK ASSOCIATION

Dedicated to All Who Serve, Las Vegas, NV

THE 101ST AIRBORNE DIVISION ASSOCIATION AND THE ALAMO

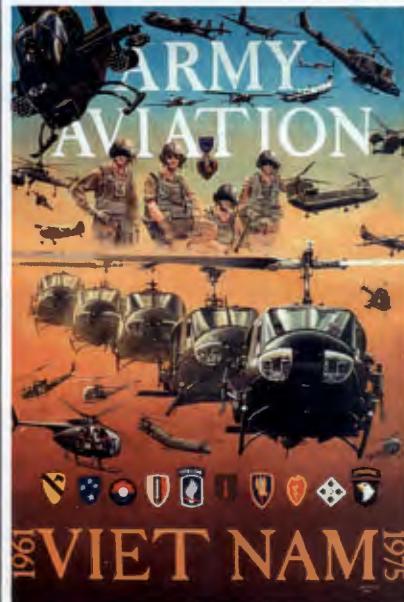
Eagles Chapter are hosting the Annual Reunion

When: August 23-26, 2023

Where: San Antonio, at the Westin North, on Colonnade

Information: <http://www.screamingeagle.org>, or directly by phone at 931-431-0199.

There is a large contingent of Comancheros, and Medevac pilots that attend each year.



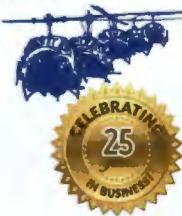
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WELCOME TO THE VHPA!

Look the list over and if you recognize anyone, give them a call, drop them a line or send them an e-mail welcoming them into our Association. Full contact information is available either on-line in the Member Services section of our website, or through our staff at HQ by calling 1-800-505-VHPA (8472).

AVIATOR REPORT completed for 11 New Members and covers the period 12.20.22 to 5.03.23

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

Bailey Linwood P. Huntsville Alabama Army 71-28 B/3/17 CAV in 72	Mcjunkin Dale A. ** Georgetown Texas Army 71-27 71-23	Sidebottom William J. 'Bill' Springfield Virginia Army 71-6 F/2/11 ACR in 68-69; C/159 ASHB 101 ABN in 72-73; B/159 ASHB 101 ABN in 73	Smith Steven G 'Steve' ** Orem Utah Army 70-47 116 AHC in 71; HHC/11 CAB in 71-72
Barloco Gerard H. 'Jerry' ** San Antonio Texas Army 67-14 C/2/20 ARA 1 CAV in 67-68	Nebel Thomas C. "Tom" ** Clarksville Tennessee Air Force 71-18AF 3 TFW in 72-75	Smith James R. ** Bossier City Louisiana Army 68-30 A/4/77 ARA 101 ABN in 69- 69; C/4/77 ARA 101 ABN in 69-69	Ward Lance B. ** Wedowee Alabama Army BIEN HO 118 AHC in 67-68; 213 ASHC in 70-71; HHC 145 AVN in 71-71
Herring Michael J 'Jim' ** Green Valley Illinois Army B/227 AHB 1 CAV in 70-71; B/227 AHB 1 CAV in 71-71	Nielsen Donald A. 'Don' ** Dousman Wisconsin Army 64-2 145 AVN PLAT in 64-65; 228 ASHB 1 CAV in 67-68		
Kirby Gene T. ** Richmond Texas Army 69-41 336 AHC in 70-70; 335 AHC in 70-71			

THIS COULD BE WHERE YOUR STORY STARTS!

*It was a dark and stormy night,
and there I was, guarding the
aircraft revetments. I had
my three-candle-power
flashlight, my .38 revolver, and 20
rounds of ball ammunition.*

*The communist hoards
were all about me...*

... So sweepingly adventurous, death defying, and over-flowing with bigger-than-life characters—that readers must remind themselves that Hoffman's account all really occurred."

*~ JOSEPH BATHANTI,
North Carolina Poet Laureate (2012-2014)*

FEW AMERICANS KNOW the facts about the final year of US combat operations in South Vietnam. As political will to sustain the fight shrank and most of their ground forces were withdrawn. The Soviets and North Vietnamese sought battlefield success to strengthen their negotiating position at the Paris peace talks. In March of 1972, North Vietnam invaded the South with the men and equipment needed to sweep the US air assets from the sky. They, however, miscalculated the difficulty of that task. The remaining US aviation forces, (Army, Air Force, Navy and Marines) would not be easily neutralized. This is the untold story of heroism, dedication, and refusal to yield the battlefield despite being largely considered by US political leaders as "expendable".



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Vietnam Center and Sam Johnson Vietnam Archive Museum Renderings top: Combat Air Assault and Riverine Warfare; bottom: Helicopter War and Urban Warfare.

VHPA and VNCA: Working together to preserve the VHPA Legacy

For twenty-four years, the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association (VHPA) and the Vietnam Center and Sam Johnson Vietnam Archive (VNCA) at Texas Tech University have worked together to preserve the legacy of helicopter pilots who served and sacrificed during the Vietnam War. Today, VHPA collections include more than 17,000 documents, artifacts, oral history interviews, and other materials. We have also worked together to digitize those materials, so they are easily accessible by VHPA veterans, your families, and students and scholars of the Vietnam War for many generations to come.

In 2016, VHPA and VNCA expanded our work together and created the VHPA Endowment, which provides support for dedicated student assistants at VNCA who continue to process and digitize VHPA collections to include documents, photos, slides, and other materials that tell the unique and important story of VHPA veterans. To date, VHPA funded student assistants have worked more than 6,000 hours processing VHPA veteran collections and have also digitized more than 13,000 documents, photos, and other VHPA collection materials.

More recently, over the past several months and through meetings and discussions with Don LeMaster, President of VHPA, and Art Jacobs, Chair of the VHPA Legacy Committee, VHPA and VNCA have greatly deepened our work together through a greatly enhanced VHPA Endowment. With additional VHPA funding support, VNCA is very excited to add a new VHPA scholarship for military history

students at Texas Tech who are studying the Vietnam War. In addition, and with a significant and permanent impact on the VHPA Legacy, VHPA and VNCA will work together to support the creation of helicopter exhibits in our planned Museum of the Vietnam War at Texas Tech. As you can see in the

renderings here, the helicopter will be featured very prominently in nearly every planned exhibit to include their critical roles in combat assaults, riverine warfare, MEDEVAC, SAR, urban warfare, and everything in between. With good reason, the Vietnam War is often referred to as “The

Helicopter War” – and we completely agree. With generous support from the enhanced VHPA Endowment, we will be able to develop world-class exhibits of the many aircraft flown by VHPA pilots, providing named recognition for VHPA in each one, and ensuring that the VHPA Legacy of service and sacrifice during and after the Vietnam War is never forgotten.

VNCA is deeply honored to be working with all of you and we look forward to continuing this important mission with all VHPA veterans and your families as we continue to preserve the VHPA Legacy, and your personal collections, with the honor, dignity, and respect that is worthy of your service to our nation. To coordinate donating your collection to the VNCA, please email us at vnca@ttu.edu or call 806-742-9010.

Thank you very much!

*By Steve Maxner Ph.D, Director,
Vietnam Center & Archive*



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memoir is one patriot's true account of the helicopter war and the brave pilots who fought alongside him. Joe Sheridan, a 1969 Niagara University graduate, was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant in the U.S. Army. He served in the 101st Airborne Division in Vietnam as a Cobra Helicopter Gunship Pilot. With

over 350 combat missions from September 1970 to September of 1971, he earned two Bronze Stars with "V" device (valor), twenty Air Medals with valor, and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry.

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A real, welcome home boys!

*Available on Amazon Books ~ Angel In the Cockpit by Joseph Sheridan
ISBN # 9798367893915 . Hard Cover, Paperback, and Kindle*



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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 CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

ALAMO CHAPTER

Texas is throwing a climate hissy fit. One day it's 88 degrees and humid and the next day the high is 60 degrees and bone dry.



Speaking of bone dry, still not much rain in south central Texas. Grass and weeds are green today, but will undoubtedly assume their summer brown color within a few weeks. Not much rain in the forecast.

The VHPA ladies decided that they have heard enough war stories, many repeated multiple times with definite embellishment, and decided to branch out and have their own luncheon. They met at P.F. Chang's. I've attached a picture. Please note the very healthy food that was ordered. The guys enjoyed their luncheon at a pizza place. Our meal was healthy as well if you consider pizza and beer as health foods. I've included a few pictures of the guys demonstrating their healthy eating habits. In any case, we all had a great time.

Planning is on-going in support of the annual reunion in San Antonio. Ron Spearman is leading the volunteer program for the chapter. Ron is coordinating with national by soliciting and scheduling names of chapter member volunteers to man the various requirements needed to facilitate attendee registration, etc. Many thanks to Ron for making this happen.

The chapter continues support of the Huey 369 project and the Vietnam Archives Project at Texas



Luncheon One.



Luncheon Two.



Luncheon Three.



Ladies Luncheon.

Tech.

The chapter is alive, well, and active. President Chip Brown continues to lead the chapter with plans of some future activities to be scheduled.

Visit us at our web site: <http://vhpa-alamo.com/> for more information about the Alamo Chapter.

Until next time, stay happy and healthy.

Mike Clark

Chapter Secretary

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

AMERICAN HUEY 369 CHAPTER

As you read this, the American Huey 369 chapter is finishing annual maintenance on our flying Hueys and the completion of the National American Huey History Museum is one day closer to completion. Our gunsights are set on the last Million dollars so construction can continue. It has been incredible to see the number of veterans and patriots who have contributed to the building of the museum and not just in dollars and cents. So many local construction workers have donated their time, money, and materials because it is a military museum honoring a bunch of Vietnam veterans, their four flying Vietnam Huey helicopters and recently acquired "restored to flight" TH-13. While not a Vietnam museum, it is a Huey helicopter museum. So many of these fine men and women who live in the area have contributed simply because of what it represents. Most are not veterans, but they are all patriots who appreciate what we did and they want to make sure we are recognized, unlike what happened to us when we came home 50+ years ago.

How many of you who are reading this have donated? Are you one of these folks who are preserving our history? If you are, thank you very, very much. Because if YOU don't help us preserve our helicopter history, who will? All of us get solicitations for donations, in the mail, on TV, you name it. When we donate, how do we know how our money is being utilized? How do we know that it is going where we intended to go, how many houses and expensive cars were purchased with our donation by the person who is "administering" the donation? With the National American Huey History Museum you can see the brick and mortar of where your donation is going. One can see the results! One can hear the results! One can fly the results!

The Museum will be a time machine! Yes, with this museum and its flying Hueys, one will be able to go back in time and this is your chance! A time when we



were young, handsome, "swave and de-boner"... flying those wondrous machines that were at our command. We were one with the aircraft, they were an extension of our hands and feet. Let us show it to the world.

Those who donate \$1000 or more towards the museum will get 24 characters on a line of a 7 foot tall by 7 foot wide (and growing) bronze plaque that will be displayed at the main entrance to the museum. Go to the AmericanHuey369.com website, tap on the Museum tab and see which of your friend's names are already on the 3rd Phase Founder's plaque. Well over 800 people have now donated and are recognized on at least one of the three bronze plaques; obviously, many have donated much more than \$1000. The time is now, while we are still around to appreciate the recognition that we all deserve. Every day that the museum is not completed is another day that Vietnam veterans will not be around to enjoy what it represents. It's our legacy.

Phil Marshall



VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

GEORGIA CHAPTER

The highlights of our activities for February and March were centered around our March Luncheon held at the 57th Group Restaurant in Chamlee, GA. In addition to great food and comraderie, our guest speaker was a very special treat. Commissioner Trish Ross with the Georgia Department of Veterans Services is a US Air Force Retired Colonel and her post service resume reads like a "Who's Who" in various Georgia Veterans organizations. She did a super job of clarifying and explaining many current VA policies. She was more than generous with her Q&A time and our 25 members in attendance really appreciated her candor. Her husband Scott, is also retired Air Force and they have four children. She can be reached at patricia.ross@vs.state.ga.us and welcomes any contact from Georgia Veterans.



for President of Our Chapter, and Master of Ceremonies:

We had a great National Vietnam Veterans Day ceremony at The Wall That Heals Today. Thanks so very much to all of you who came out -- the weather was perfect and we had a good crowd (well over 100 people). The Johns Creek Veterans Association Color Guard did its usual excellent job posting The Colors. Roger Wise led the Pledge of Allegiance.



CHAPTER ITEMS:

We discussed several Chapter items to include FAA Wright Brothers Awards updates, New Dues updates, Distributing and making available via our website (www.gavhpa.org) the VHPA Veteran Biographical Data Forms, potential luncheon venue change, Georgia Veterans Day planning (11 NOV), and contribution plans for the Cobb Veterans Memorial.



Vietnam Veteran's Day – 29 MAR

On Vietnam Veteran's Day, many of our members attended a very special ceremony which was just for us! Please note in the background of the accompanying pictures a down-sized duplicate of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial "Wall" erected in 1982 at Memorial Park in Washington, DC. Following is a summary from our own COL. Skip Bell, President of the Atlanta Vietnam Veterans Business Association,



And Tom Yearian read excerpts from the speech by former President Obama at the start of the Vietnam War Commemoration effort.

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES



Retired COL Doug Middleton who gave an excellent presentation about his two tours of duty as a Field Artillery unit commander and staff officer. People from the JCVA and the AVVBA worked together to distribute American Flags, poppies, programs, and (for the Vietnam Veterans) black lanyards. Kudos to Tom Yearian for putting the program together and to Mike Mizell and the JCVA for the first-class venue for patriotic and Veteran-related activities that The Wall That Heals and the Veterans Park area of NewTown Park have become. Also, thanks to the City of Johns Creek for the chairs and their support of Veteran activities.



We also had a great after-party (slow food delivery notwithstanding) at The Brimstone Restaurant and Tavern after the National Vietnam Veterans Day Ceremony. Glenn Carr and Skip Bell at the Brimstone.



Max Torrence did a super job of finding the venue and coordinating the event. My burger was excellent, and everyone around me was complimentary of the food (when it arrived). In defense of the restaurant, there were three servers (including the manager) -- they are having a difficult time finding people who want to work (sound familiar)? I thought the after-party was a fun social event (and more social events was one of the things you folks asked for in our recent survey). This one was pretty much 'spur-of-the-moment' but Max did a great job getting it organized and I strongly suspect we will have more of these.



*Happy National Vietnam Veterans Day!
Welcome Home!*

Doug Lackey

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

MICHIGAN CHAPTER

The Michigan Chapter had several events as we continue to work our way out of the winter weather.

On February 1st another memorable event in NW MI in Traverse City was reported by Mark Benjamin. Jim, Leigh, Charles and Sue Opie all joined us and definitely livened up the conversation. Since it was the first event for those folks we basically went around the table and introduced ourselves and briefly told the story of our Vietnam experience.

Paul Fitzsimons, our one non-aviator in the crowd, talked about what it was like to be a LRRP in the Plain of Reeds where they went for days without being able to get out of the water. This made everyone else really glad to be Aircrew.

In 1964, there was an extensive photo spread in Life Magazine about a Marine H-34 unit that got shot up really bad. Bart Halliday's unit was assigned to picking up the pieces. We had an interesting discussion on the entire event and the contrast in tactics of each H-34 outfit and how the two units had dramatically different outcomes on that day.

The next monthly gathering at the Hotel Indigo in Traverse City was held on March 1st. Mark Benjamin was sidelined for this one, but it didn't stop the group from assembling. It was a very talkative group with lots of great stories and memories to share.

For a change of location, the Michigan Chapter VHPA SE had its first meet-up for 2023 on Wednesday evening March 1st, before attending a Historical Presentation event at the Yankee Air Museum (YAM). Bob Rich organized the event. The three VHPA attendees were Bob & Lee Gallant, Bob flew with the 335th AHC "Cowboys" in '68, and Bob Rich with the 118th AHC "Thunderbirds" in '68.

The Michigan Chapter members met first at the Twisted Rooster Restaurant, and then attended an Interactive Presentation for 55 people at YAM Willow Run airport for the rest of the evening's itinerary. This presentation was a little different than YAM's usual events which hold monthly Historical Aviation Presentations.. The March 1st production was a reenactment of the Wright Family in 1925, with questions posed to the actors in character



February 1st Traverse City. L to R: Walter Topp, Mark Benjamin, Shirley Benjamin, Paul Fitzsimmons, Charles Opie, Sue Opie, Leigh Opie, Jim Opie, Bart Halliday.



March 1st Traverse City photo was taken by Carol Luck and shows L-R an unknown participant with dustoff hat, Bart Halliday, Paul Fitzsimons, and Lee Luck peaking over Walter Topp. It was noted that all smiled for the photo.



March 1st Yankee Air Museum Participants.

as Orville and Katherine Wright. The next upcoming April historical event subject will cover Gerald Ford's WWII Navy memoir.

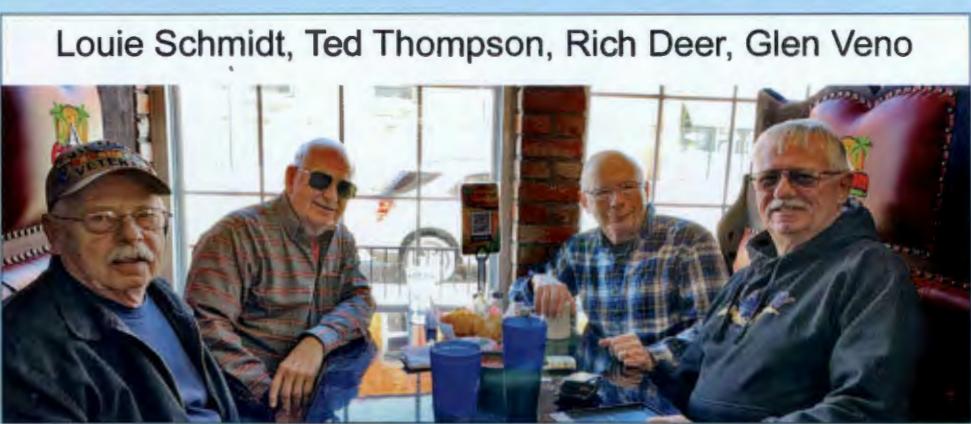
Michigan chapter member Ted Thompson advised that he had an extensive collection of VHPA artifacts which he wanted to offer to an appropriate museum, individual, or suitable organization, Chapter member-at-large Glen Veno agreed to

take charge of the items with probable intent to donate them to the Fort Rucker or Fort Campbell museums. An 1130 lunch meeting was arranged for March 15th at the Grand Ledge Log Jam restaurant to make the transfer. Glen brought along Vietnam veteran Louie Schmidt

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES



March 1st Yankee Air Museum Wright Family Reenactors.



March 15th Grand Ledge.

and alerted chapter president Rich Deer who joined the group. On arrival, it was discovered that the Log Jam did not open until 1600. Disaster was averted by relocating the gathering to the Cancun Mexican Grill across the street.

Louie Schmidt was an APC mechanic serving in Vietnam with the 1/1 Cav at Khe Sahn and Camp Eagle in 1971. Glen Veno had flown OH-6s in some of the same area. Ted Thompson had flown CH-21s in Alaska before his unit was abruptly relocated south and then to Vietnam in the early stages of the war. Ted and Rich Deer flew together after their active service while with the Michigan Army National Guard. Glen mentioned a niece in Canada flying their version of the Chinook.

Rich noted doing a Guard training mission in Canada. Other stories flowed long after the lunch meal was finished. The group then relocated to Ted's car and the collection of VHPA artifacts was transferred to Glen's car.

Additional information can be found on the Michigan Chapter VHPA website at <https://vhpami.wordpress.com>.

Look under "News" for past and recent events.

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.

Submitted by Rich Deer, president

NORTH ALABAMA CHAPTER

The Spring of 2023 was somewhat quiet for the NAVHPA. There were no displays. The annual Vietnam Veterans ceremonies in Huntsville were cancelled without explanation. We continue to meet regularly at the Huntsville Country Club. We routinely see 30 -45 members and spouses in attendance. At our age, we don't drink as hard as we used to. Many of us don't stay out as late as we did 50+ years ago. But we still gather for fellowship, stories, and fun times.

Several occasions brought NAVHPA members out to support others.

On March 4th, NAVHPA/VHPA member Bob Stewart and his wife Mary traveled to Auburn, Alabama for the Alabama Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) Annual Awards Luncheon. The DAR was founded in 1890 and is dedicated to promoting patriotism, educating young people about what it



means to be an American, and preserving historical artifacts pertaining to our heritage. Nationally, there are about 190,000 members in 3,000 chapters – with over 4,000 members in 71 chapters in Alabama Society. The DAR annually presents several awards to individuals who support these goals. This year, the Alabama Society of the DAR presented their top award, the DAR Medal of Honor, to NAVHPA member Bob Stewart. This is



NAVHPA member BG (Ret) Bob Stewart receives the DAR Medal of Honor from the Alabama Society.

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

the first time they have presented this prestigious award in two years, and we are proud that it was a NAVHPA member they chose to honor.

Congratulations Bob!

On March 10th, nine NAVHPA members (Ernie Megli, Rob Glasier, Les Haas, Sandy Weand, Sam Maki, Bob Monette, Malcolm Brown, John McDaniel, and Marshall Eubanks) attended the National Infantry Association, Tennessee Valley Chapter, Awards Program. Three local retired infantry officers received the Infantry Association's Order of Saint Maurice award. This award is presented to infantrymen for significant infantry feats, service, or accomplishments. Two of the awardees are 'friends' of NAVHPA. LTC (R) Randy Withrow, among his many accomplishments, is the founder of the only military museum in Huntsville and Madison County, Alabama. The Veterans Memorial Museum contains many Vietnam era artifacts, including several helicopters. One of their helicopters is on permanent loan to NAVHPA, known as BUC-3. LTC (R) Larry Bayer, in addition to his many infantry accomplishments, is the director of exhibits at the Veterans Memorial Museum and is the Treasurer of Wreaths for Veterans. NAVHPA's annual major community service project is supporting Wreaths for Veterans.

Congratulations to both these 'friends' of NAVHPA!

The chapter has discontinued our web site at <http://www.na-vhpa.org>. So, don't look for us there. We have a dedicated page on Facebook. You can see it by searching for "North Alabama VHPA" in the search bar in Facebook. See what we are doing.

The North Alabama Chapter meets in Huntsville, on the 2nd Tuesday of most months at 4:30 PM (1630) at the Huntsville Country Club. Stop in when you get a chance. If you live in the North Alabama and Middle Tennessee areas, we want you to join our chapter. You can contact us at navhpa@gmail.com or on the Facebook page.. Come on out!! We know all those war stories need to get out of your system. We need to hear new ones.

Ralph Weber



NAVHPA members attending the Retired Infantry Officers awards, L-R Back row; Sam Maki; Center row; Bob Monette, Sandy Weand, Rob Glasier, Les Haas; Front row; Marshall Eubanks, Ernie Megli, Malcolm Brown, and John McDaniel.

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NORTH CAROLINA CHAPTER

North Carolina VHPA finished 2022 with display events that enabled us to spend some time together and to talk with the public about our Vietnam-era helicopters and our experiences with them.

On a September weekend, we participated in the Balloons over Burlington Festival, which featured 21 hot air balloons that successfully launched on Friday evening, but due to inclement weather were grounded for the rest of the weekend. We brought for display an OH-58 scout, a UH-1H slick, and a UH-1M gunship, and though the weather wasn't great for the balloons, we enjoyed some success during lulls in the rain to show off the aircraft to fest attendees. And when the rains came down, we spent our time productively (as indicated in the photo to the right).

October 8 and 9 found NCVHPA with three UH-1 models and an OH-6 at the New Bern, NC Mumfest, an annual event that draws thousands of people to the beautifully restored setting of historic downtown New Bern and its waterfront.

NCVHPA was again invited to Kannapolis, NC by the Old Armor Beer Company for their 2022 Veterans Day weekend celebration. The unique brewery is owned and operated by combat veterans who served overseas protecting America. Static displays of three helicopters (UH-1H, UH-1H, OH-6) were set up in



Balloons Over Burlington:
L to R: Vic Rose, Brock Nicholson, Jerry Seago, Phil Keith, Ed Hughes, Jerry Phelps, Ben Gay.



Our grandkids have taught us well.



American Legion reenactors stopped by to say hello to Ed Hughes at Mumfest.

front of the brewery with a constant flow of visitors.



Helicopters outside Old Armor Beer Company



Senator Ted Budd in the cockpit with Ben Gay, George Chapman and Marine Staff Sergeant.

Pilots and wives enjoy time relaxing around the Old Armor's long table, constructed using a rotor blade. Left to right: Phil Keith, Jerry Seago, Ed Hughes, Claudia Hughes, Janet Gay, Colleen Nicholson, Barbara Seago, Ben Gay and Brock Nicholson.



VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES



On February 4, 2023, NCVHPA members gathered, as we do every year at this time, at the Vietnam Memorial on the Capitol grounds in Raleigh to read the names of those from North Carolina who are still MIA and POW from the Vietnam War. Following the ceremony, we reconvened in the nearby Gravy Restaurant for a buffet lunch and our annual business meeting. Of special interest to our members was Jerry Seago's report of progress on the important topic of transferring helicopters to the NC National Guard Museum and, potentially, to the NC Museum of History. Both actions are "in progress" and he assured members that we would retain sufficient aircraft with which to display. Jerry also presented the 2023 event display schedule, which is very active and can be seen on the website at www.ncvhpacom.

Completing all agenda topics, members then elected officers for the coming year: Ben Gay will continue his tenure as President, and Joe Armstrong was elected into the Vice-President position. Carl Seager and Bob Inglis continue respectively as Treasurer and Secretary.

During February 25-26, the NCVHPA provided two aircraft for the three-day, Freedom Classic baseball tourna-



Dave Samuels conducting and John Hoffman reading the names of NC MIAs and POWs.

ment at Grainger Stadium, Kinston, NC, between the Naval Academy and Air Force Academy. The OH-6 and UH-1H

were on static display, along with other military and veteran-related displays, for all the fans to enjoy. We met pilots and mechanics from the nearby USMC base who are flying and maintaining the current model of the UH-1 – 50 years difference in time, but similar in experiences. Allan Hoffman, long-time NCVHPA member and television news anchor, taped interviews with veterans and wives for a program called "Veteran's Voice" a program aimed at educating and assisting veterans returning home from military service. An added treat during this event was on the final night of the tournament when the pilots and wives were invited to attend a banquet for the baseball players and their families.

Contributed by Vic Rose, Mik Mikulan, Ben Gay, Jerry Seago, and Ed Hughes.



Allan Hoffman taping for "Veterans' Voice."

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VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

SOUTH MISSOURI CHAPTER

No doubt many VHPA Chapters were active in support of the Commemoration of Vietnam War Veterans Day across the Country.

Members from the South Missouri Chapter attended the ceremony at College of the Ozarks at Point Lookout MO. After a moving speech by Tom Center, a Navy veteran of river patrol boats in Vietnam, our Chapter laid a wreath in front of the wall dedicated to the 1410 Missourians who lost their lives in the conflict. Since our Chapter was formed, we have lost 19 of our brothers. They too were remembered today.

We are grateful to the College of the Ozarks for the emphasis they place on Patriotism in their Mission Statement. They strive to "encourage an understanding of American heritage, civic responsibilities, love of country and willingness to defend it".

Chuck Guy



Attending were Wayne Twiehaus, John Sorensen, Chuck Guy and Ron Clifton. Also attending, but not shown was Honorary Member John Clark, COL Ret. USAF and Vietnam POW.

Combat Helicopter Pilots Association

If you were a US military helicopter pilot or crew in combat or imminent danger area – in any conflict - you should be a member of CHPA.



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Email: hq@chpa-us.org
Phone: 800-832-5144 messages



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in Ft. Worth TX 5-8 Oct 2023

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TAPS

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.

***Adams, Teddy A. USA;**
Flight Classes: 68-1/68-501;
RVN: 68-69 A/1 AVN 1
INF, 71 A/5 TC BN 101
ABN, 72 25 CAC; Callsign:
Bulldog 45.



He passed away on March 20th 2023 in Rochester MN at Saint Mary's Hospital, surrounded by loved ones.

Bierlein, James R. USA; Flight Class: 65-4W; RVN: 65 119
AHC, 66498 MED CO.



James R Bierlein of Caledonia MI, age 80, went home to be with his Father in Heaven on March 10, 2023. Jim proudly served his country in the United States Army, then went on to work as a helicopter pilot and business owner for many years.

Birt, Bobby L. USA; Flight Class: 69-33; RVN: 70-72
196 ASHC; Callsign: **Flipper 31.**



Bobby Lawrence Birt, Jr. of Taft TN passed away on February 11, 2022 at Vanderbilt Bedford Hospital. He was born on March 7, 1949 in Urbana IL.

Bobby was a retired aeronautical engineer for Redstone Missile Defense and was a member of Kirkland Baptist Church.

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

Burden, John R. USA; Flight Class: 67-4QC; RVN: 67-68 C/7/17 CAV, 68 F/8
CAV 23 INF, 68 HHC 14 CAB; Callsign: **Blue Ghost 36.**

"Jack Died" - that is what Jack wanted me to say.

John Burden fought his last battle and took his last flight at 2:16 am on February 25, 2023 while in Hospice Care at home. His children and I were at his side, and he had a very peaceful death. He left his home covered in the flag of the country he loved and served.

***Adkins, Irving D. USA;** Flight Classes: 68-522/68-40.

Irving Dean Adkins, 75, passed away on December 11, 2019, at The Carpenter House, Shreveport, LA.

Dean was a native of Farmerville LA and a resident of Shreveport for thirteen years.

He is survived by his wife of 53 years, Kay.

***Barron, John E. USA;** Flight Class: 69-31;
RVN: 69-71 C/2/17 CAV 101 ABN;
Callsign: **Condor 27.**

It is with a heavy heart that the Barron family announces the passing of John Barron. He left us as a loving husband to Linda Barron.

***Carr, Jerry T. USA, LTC**
Ret.; Flight Class: 66-18;
RVN: 66-67 48 AHC, 70 4
INF DIV, 70-71 101 ABN;
Callsign: **Blue Star.**



Jerry Tuttle Carr of Bar Nunn WY, passed away on January 23, 2023, in Casper WY. Jerry was born in Casper on June 18, 1939. He graduated from Natrona County High School in 1957. Jerry enlisted in the United States Army in 1958. Returning to Casper he attended Casper College, after which he was enrolled in Officers Candidate School earning a rank of 2nd Lieutenant in 1965. He graduated from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University with a Bachelor of Science degree in 1973.

Jerry attended Command and General Staff College in Fort Leavenworth KS. He retired in 1983 in Fort Irwin CA. After retirement, Jerry attended farrier school in Porterville CA and relocated to his hometown of Casper WY.

***Clayton, Patrick B. USA;**
Flight Classes: 68-28/68-
516; RVN: 68-69 A/1 AVN
1 INF; Callsign: **Bulldog**



Patrick B. Clayton passed away at home in Fredericksburg TX on October 14, 2022. He was born on April 20, 1943, in Laredo TX. Patrick served the Spring Valley TX police dept for one year prior to joining the United States Army in February 1966.

He later served in Nebraska as a deputy sheriff with the Sarpy County Sheriff's Department. Later, he moved to Houston and worked in the Human Resources Office for The State of Texas. Through his life he owned several businesses and was an avid photographer and craftsman.

He is survived by his wife, Louise.

TAPS

***Cramer, Frank Jr. USA;**
Flight Classes: 66-15/66-13;
RVN: 66-67 48 AHC; BS;
Callsign: Joker 18.



Frank entered into Eternal Rest on February 23, 2023, after a ten-year battle with dementia. Frank was born in a log cabin in St. Marries on October 19, 1941. Frank graduated from Lewis & Clark High School in June 1961. While attending high school, Frank worked at a service station, took flying lessons, and received his pilot's license before getting his driver's license. He joined the National Guard at age sixteen with his dad's permission. Frank joined the US Army and went to Germany with the Third Armored Division. He was a Tank Commander. Frank was sent back to the US when his dad had a heart attack. Frank applied and was accepted into the Rotary Wing Flight School in 1966. Frank graduated and went to Vietnam.

Upon Frank's return from Vietnam in November 1967, he trained new pilots at the flight school in Texas as a Tactical Officer. After Frank's honorable discharge in 1969, he moved his family back to Spokane WA. Frank then joined the Spokane Police department in May 1971. He also went back to the Army National Guard, eventually flying with the 841st Medical Detachment. During this time, Frank also earned his BA Degree in Sociology from Eastern Washington University, while working full-time and flying for the Army National Guard. Frank medically retired from the Spokane Police in 1987. He was active in his church, Audubon Park United Methodist, and the "Walk with Christ" retreats.

He leaves his wife of 62 years, Diane.

***David, Ronald C. USA,**
COL Ret.; Flight Class: 59-
13/61-42; RVN: 65-66
D/227 AHB 1 CAV, 66 131
AVN, 68-69 1 AVN BDE, 69
MACV; Callsign: Devil 16.



Ronald Clifford David, age 87, of Orange Beach AL passed away on February 15, 2023. Ronald was born in Cincinnati OH. "Ron" David retired from the Army in

1983 after serving 25 years in various command and staff assignments in infantry, cavalry, airborne and aviation units.

After retiring from the Army, Ron became Director of Public Affairs and Communications for Atlanta Gaslight Co. (Southern Company) where he worked to serve the community for another 10 years before finally retiring and moving from Atlanta down to Orange Beach with his wife Rita "Sunny" David.

He was a faithful servant of the church and community. Ron helped establish a regular visiting program at the William F. Green State Veterans Home in Bay Minette AL where Ron and other church members served the veterans in the home by playing music, bingo, taking fishing trips and other activities. This was Ron's true calling in Life and he was committed as a Veteran to serving Veterans in his community.

Dennison, Ronald J. USA; Flight Class: 70-44; RVN: 71-72 B/159 AVN 101 ABN; BS, MSM (OLC), ACM (OLC), AAM; Callsign: Varsity.

Ronald James Dennison of Fort Myers FL has left this world on August 20, 2020. He was born March 22, 1947 in Providence RI. Ron graduated from Embry Riddle Aeronautical University with a Bachelors Degree in Aero-Space Management.

He retired after 26 years of Federal Civilian Service on 31 July 2018.

***Esposito, Frank A. USA,**
COL Ret.; Flight Class: 70-2;
RVN: 70-71 A/2/17 CAV
101 ABN; DFC; Callsign:
Assault 49.



Francis "Frank" Anthony Esposito, 76, of Myrtle Beach SC passed away peacefully on March 22, 2023 with his wife and children by his side at Grand Strand Medical Center. In his later years, Frank devoted much of his free time to veteran's programs including the Military Officers Association of America, raising money for JR ROTC college scholarships, homeless veterans, and at-risk veteran families.

Frank continued in service to the military

and his country after Vietnam, retiring in 1998.

Upon completion of full-time military service, Frank had a successful career with Mobil Oil throughout the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast.

He is survived by his wife of 55 years, Ellen.

Goodwin, James H. Jr. USA;
RVN: 70-71 192 AHC; BS,
PH; Callsign: Tiger Shark 30.



James H. (Jim) Goodwin Jr. passed on August 2nd, at the age of 73 in Winter Garden FL due to Covid 19 related illness. Jim was born in Orlando FL.

Jim graduated from Colonial High School, attended the University of Florida until he was drafted and received his BA from Emory Riddle University. Jim later received his Masters in Finance from Texas Christian University.

James Goodwin served in the Army, doing two tours as a helicopter pilot during the Vietnam war. Jim pursued many passions in his career from commercial airline pilot and financial advisor to real estate agent. He was a member of Masonic Lodge, the First United Methodist Church and, in his youth, won awards as a Trap Shooter.

He is survived by his wife, Betty.

***Joseph A. Goode USA, BG**
Ret.; Flight Class: 70-46;
RVN: 71-72 62 CAC; LM,
MSM (2OLC).



Brigadier General (US Army, Retired) Joseph Allen Goode, Jr. (better known as "Bubba" by family and friends), was born October 26, 1949 in Petersburg VA. Joseph made his earthly transition, March 2nd, 2023. He graduated from Petersburg High School in 1968. He attended Virginia State University, graduating cum laude with a BS in Accounting / Business Administration.

Prior to joining the Army National Guard, Goode served in the active army, assigned to the divisional artillery (DIVARTY) Aviation Section, 82nd Airborne

TAPS

Division, Fort Bragg NC. Goode joined the Virginia Army National Guard in July 1973, where he served for 16 years. He transferred to the Maryland Army National Guard in December 1989, where he served until his retirement in September 2002.

Joseph Goode was also employed by Brown & Williamson Tobacco in Petersburg VA prior to accepting a position with Westinghouse Electric and moving his family to Columbia MD. Joseph would continue his work as a financial manager following Northup Grumman Corporation's acquisition of Westinghouse until retiring in 2010.

He leaves behind to cherish his memory his wife of 52 years, Armita.

***Harrison. Lyle C. USA, LTC Ret; Flight Class: 66-7WF; RVN: 66-67 B/227 AHB 1 CAV, 70-71 11 GS 1 CAV, 70 IFFV ARTY; DFC (2OLC); Callsign: Gunslinger 46.**

Lyle Clark Harrison passed away on February 17, 2023. He was born June 30, 1941. Lyle retired from U.S. Army after 27 years of active service. Following his service to our country, he was a realtor for REMAX.

He is survived by his wife, Frankie.

***LePenske, James A. USA, LTC Ret; Flight Class: 67-11; RVN: 67 50 MED DET, 67-68 45 MED CO, 70-71 92 AHC, 71-72 68 ASHC, 72 180 ASHC; Callsigns: Dustoff 28/Stallion 26/Warrior 3A/Big Windy 3A.**

On October 15, 2022, James A. Le Penske Jr. died peacefully surrounded by family and close friends. Jim was born on May 24, 1944 in Seattle WA. He was heavily involved in the Boy Scouts with his father and reached the highest honor of Eagle Scout. Jim was a graduate of Queen Anne High School, Highline College, Troy State University, Western Kentucky University, and Seattle University. Jim joined the Army in 1966.

Jim was an active member of the Queen Anne High School Alumni Association, and made charitable contributions to many others.

Jim was the director of the European Chapter of the National Ski Patrol and loved helping others. He was there for you if you needed any first aid, help down the mountain on a sled, and if you needed to be evacuated from a chairlift.

Lilly, Richard A. USA, COL Ret; Flight Class: 55; RVN: 63-64 114 AHC, 67 11 ACR, 67-68 128 AHC; LM, DFC, BS, MSM, PH; Callsign: Cobra leader.



Richard Lilly passed away on December 24, 2022. Dick was born in St. Louis MO. After graduating from Soldan High School, he attended St. Benedict's College in Atchison KS., and graduated magna cum laude. Later, he would attend the New York Institute of Technology in Orlando FL for his MBA.

In St. Louis, he worked at McDonnell Aircraft. Dick was drafted into the Army in February 1953, the beginning of an illustrious, three-decade-long military career. In his retirement, he learned how to sail and became a boat captain, chartering guests through Florida and the Caribbean. After all, if it had an engine, he wanted to learn how to drive it.

Lovelace, Charles R. USA; Flight Classes: 70-43/70-41; RVN: 71 C/4/77 ARA 101 ABN; Callsign: Griffin 93F.



Charles "Chuck" Ray Lovelace passed away on February 3, 2023. He was born June 8, 1951, in Detroit MI. Chuck joined the military and served his country in three branches of the armed forces, the United States Army, Navy, and Marines. First joining the Army. After his Army career he went to college in Oklahoma and graduated with a bachelor's degree, he then joined the United States Navy and flew as a Top Gun pilot with over 517 Aircraft Carrier landings. Lastly, he proudly served his country in the United States Marines.

Chuck was passionate about taking to the skies and flew everything with wings. He fondly recalled flying F-18 airplanes, performing the Missing Man formation, an aer-

ial salute performed as part of a fly-by at a funeral or memorial event. Following his 20-year military career, he retired as a pilot for American Airlines. Chuck was a member of Cross Timbers Bible Church in Weatherford, Texas.

He is survived by his wife of 19.5 years, Michelle Nicole Lord.

***Malin, LaRoy W. USA; Flight Class: 71-17; RVN: 71-72 128 AHC, 72 135 AHC; Callsign: Tomahawk 10.**

LaRoy William Malin, a resident of Ozark, passed away on June 22, 2020 at his residence. Roy was born on January 29, 1951 in Philadelphia PA and lived the early years of his life there. He served in the U.S. Army for 24 years.

He is survived by his wife, Jackie.

***McCarthy Robert J. Jr. USA, MAJ Ret; Flight Class: 67-19; RVN: 67-68 114 AHC, 70-71 273 HHC, 71 478 HHC; Callsigns: Knight 218/Sky-crane.**



Robert "Jim" McCarthy was born in Superior WI on July 5, 1941, and passed on January 2, 2023 in Lawton OK. He joined the Army in 1960 and served as a Paratrooper with the 101st Airborne before attending WORWAC 67-19. He served one tour as a CW2 with the 114th AHC. Jim returned to Fort Rucker AL and served as a Standardization Instructor Pilot. He accepted a direct commission in the Field Artillery and was transitioned into the CH-54 Skycrane. After his second tour, Jim was transferred to Fort Sill, OK and spent his final years in the Army as a Life Flight Pilot stationed in Ft Sill OK where he retired.



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***Michalkiewicz, Joseph G. USA, CW3 Ret.; Flight Class: 67-7; RVN: 67-68 118 AHC, 71-72 117 AHC, 72 120 AHC; PH; Callsigns: Bandit 34/Sidewinder 6/Dean.**



Joseph G. Michalkiewicz, of Punta Gorda FL passed away January 22, 2023 at Fawcett Hospital at the age of 75.

He became a safety officer, and upon retirement from active duty continued to serve in that role as a civilian employee working for the Army, reaching the rank of GS-13. Joseph was an avid musician and golfer who received two bachelor's degrees, one in Air Safety and one in Computer Science.

He is survived by his loving wife, Sandy Sapatka.

Montgomery, Kenneth W. USA; Flight Classes: 67-23/68-1; RVN: 69-70 C/158 AVN 101 ABN; Callsign: Phoenix 23.

Kenneth Montgomery is presumed to have died on September 5, 2019. There is no other information provided.

***Moran, Michael J. USA; RVN: 69-70 E/82 ARTY 1 CAV; Callsign: Flames 8.**



Michael J. Moran was born in Long Beach CA on August 19, 1945, and passed away at Palm Beach Gardens Hospice FL. on February 6, 2017. Mike joined the Army in Anaheim CA in November 1967. Following completion of OCS in 1968, he went on to attend Army Aviation Flight Class as a 2nd Lt. After gaining his wings, he went to AMOC course, completing in 1969.

Mike joined Bristow Helicopters in 1974. He was posted to Iran, where he remained until 1976. He was then transferred to Aberdeen, Scotland and flew Pumas. In 1977 he attended the Bristow instructor course and was passed as a CAA TRE/IRE. He was then transferred to the new Bristow operation in the Gulf of Mexico (BOHI). There followed many assignments in Africa and Asia. Parkinsons disease curtailed his flying career. He continued in aviation as

simulator instructor at Flight Safety until 2009.

He is survived by his wife, Daphne.

***Neal, William J. USA; Flight Class: 67-5; RVN: 67 17 AHC, 67 11 ACR, 71 120 AHC.**

William Neal was born on October 22, 1934. He died on February 9, 2015. No other information provided.

***O'Quinn, David W. Jr. USA; Flight Class: 65-19W; RVN: 66-67 A/501 AVN, 69-70 73 SAC, 70 498 MED CO; Callsigns: Rat-tler 11/Uptight/Dustoff 3.**

David O'Quinn passed away on February 26, 2023. He was born on April 19, 1940 in Atlanta GA. He was a member of St. Cloud Masonic lodge.

He is survived by his wife of 58 years, Paula.

***Payne, Robert L. USA, CW4 Ret; Flight Classes: 66-21/66-23; RVN: 67-68 119 AHC; Callsign: Crocodile 7.**



Robert Payne (Bob) passed away on December 9, 2022. He was born on October 26, 1945, in Detroit MI. He was one of the first members of the VHPA and was at the first gathering in Arizona. He found his passion for flying through the United States Army when he enlisted in 1967 and attended flight school. He continued to fly throughout his career, was an instructor at Fort Rucker when he returned from Vietnam and instructed at Los Alamitos CA and was part of the 336th AVC and the 1st of the 214th Aviation Battalion.

Bob retired from the Army after 32 years and then went on to fly with the FAA flight check and retired from that job in 2017. He was awarded the Wright Brothers "master pilot" award in 2016. Bob's heart never left the love he had for his country, flying, and his friends and family.

He is survived by his wife of 42 years, Kathy.

***Purcell, Gerald L USA, LTC Ret.; Flight Class: 69-48; RVN: 70 HHC/145 CAB, 70-71 68 AHC; Callsign: Top Tiger 3.**



Gerald Louis Purcell of Lake Pauline, Effingham IL, died in his home on October 3, 2022, following a courageous battle with cancer and subsequent illnesses. Gerald was born December 9, 1940, in Granite City IL. He attended elementary and high School in Granite City IL. Further schooling included a math and economics bachelor's degree from Central Methodist College in Fayette MO as well as graduate work in Business and Public Administration at the University of Missouri. Soon after, he went to work for International Harvester Implement Company collecting owed debts.

He eventually enlisted rather than be drafted into the U.S. Army, which led to a military career. Gerald served in the United States Army for approximately 25 years He attended the Command and General Staff College.

He is survived by his wife, Patricia (Trish) Jean Martin.

***Sinclair, George L. USA; Flight Class: 69-5; RVN: 70-71 A/228 AVN 1 CAV; Callsign: Wildcat 15.**

George Sinclair, age 81, of Humble TX passed away on November 4, 2021. No other information provided.

***Stansel, Paul L. USA, LTC Ret.; Flight Class: 54-A; RVN: 63 1 AVN CO, 67-68 242 ASHC; DFC Callsign: Mule-skinner 6.**

Paul L. Stansel passed away on March 6, 2023 at the Vermont Veterans Home. He was 90 years old. His career as an Army Aviator spanned 20 years and wars in Korea and Vietnam.

He retired from the Army in 1970 and began a successful career as a college professor and administrator. Dad opened a branch of Troy State University at Ft. Benning GA and helped many other soldiers achieve their educational goals. He was a beloved husband, father, grandfather, and great grandfather.

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***Stephenson, Richard E. USA, MG Ret.; Flight Class: 58; RVN: 66-67 604 TC CO.**



Richard Stephenson passed on January 19, 2023. He was a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy in 1957, he attended flight school and Aircraft Maintenance Officer Course, subsequently serving in Vietnam as a company production control officer, and later commander of 14th Transportation Battalion. He rose through the ranks serving in pivotal assignments including White House Fellow, commanding General of 3rd Support Command (Corps), U.S. Army Europe, and commanding general of Aviation Systems Command where he and the Aviation branch chief developed the first Army Aviation Modernization Plan. He culminated his over 34-year career as the commanding general of the Army Operational Test and Evaluation Agency.

During both active service and retirement, he was a leader in AAAA as chapter president twice; chairman of the Awards Board; president of the National Executive Board; and a prodigious fund raiser for the Scholarship Foundation. He was inducted into the Army Aviation Hall of Fame in 2001 and the Texas Aviation Hall of Fame.

Stevens, Grady USA; Flight Class: 66-19; RVN: 67-68 189 AHC; DFC; Callsign: Ghost Rider.



Grady was born on September 21, 1944, in Panama City FL. He graduated from Cooter (MO) High School, Class of 1962.

After returning from war, he finished his service in Germany, then joined the Army National Guard for several years (AR and TN), rising to the rank of Captain. Grady graduated from Arkansas State University in 1970 with a degree in English.

Grady worked as a helicopter pilot in the aerial agriculture and forestry industry throughout his life. In 1980, he moved with his family to Natchitoches LA, and accepted a position as the Manager of the Helicopter Division for International Paper

Company, where he retired after serving more than 22 years. Grady was known to be an excellent pilot, who knew how to give a ride to remember.

Left to cherish his memory is former wife, Marilyn Stevens.

Stevens, Robert R. USA; Flight Classes: 70-27/70-19; 66 US Navy; RVN: 70-71 B/7/17 CAV; Callsign: Scal-phunter 11.



Robert Russell Stevens, Jr., of Lampasas TX passed away on May 14, 2022. He was born in Bethlehem PA. Robert proudly served in the US Navy and Army retiring in 1987. His Army service included Vietnam flying and then OV-10s in Germany where he and the right seater ejected due to a two-engine failure during takeoff caused by bird ingestion. He later flew RU-21Hs for the 15th MIBN, Ft Hood TX.

After retiring, he flew helicopters offshore over the Gulf of Mexico. A great pilot, he is survived by the love of his life, Lee Stevens.

***Tiffany, William A. USA; Flight Classes: 66-17/66-15; RVN: 66-67 498 MED CO, 69-70 326 MED 101 ABN; Callsigns: Dustoff28/Dustoff95.**

William Tiffany, age 84, of Stockton CA passed away on September 21, 2022. William was born April 27, 1938. No other information provided.

Torrance, Richard USA, COL Ret; Flight Class: 69-42; RVN: A/101 AVN 101 ABN; DFC. BS.



Richard Torrance of Milledgeville died peacefully in his home on June 17, 2018. He was born in Milledgeville on January 2, 1945. He graduated from Baldwin High School in 1963 and North Georgia College in 1967. Commissioned that year in the U.S Army he served for six years.

Following his discharge, he joined the Georgia Army National Guard and worked as the Commandant of Cadets at Georgia

Military College, as a private businessman, and for the U.S. Postal Service as a Rural Route Carrier. He returned to active duty in 1985 and served honorably at several posts across the United States until he retired at the rank of Colonel in 1999. During this time, he commanded the 1st Battalion, 121st Infantry, Georgia Army National Guard.

Upon retiring from the Army, he returned to Milledgeville and entered the cattle business, raising cows and growing hay on the farm where he grew up. Richard never met a stranger and was known for helping anyone he came in contact with. He was active in the local community, serving on the Baldwin County Tax Board of Assessors and as an elected member of the Piedmont District of the Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission.

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

Violette, Norbert G. USA; Flight Class: 62-1W; RVN: 65-66 1 AVN 1 INF, 69-70 156 ASA, 70 144 ASA.



Norbert Violette, a corporate pilot for NASA, died in March 2023. No other information provided.

***Williams, Bert M. USA; Flight Classes: 67-503/67-25; RVN: 68-69 A/227 AVN 1 CAV.**

Bert M. Williams, of Palm Harbor FL, was born on November 24, 1949 and died on February 24, 2020. No other information provided.



TAPS

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.

Adcox, Alfred W. USAF; died on March 16, 2023.

Barry, Samuel A. USA; Flight Class: 70-26; RVN: 192 AHC; died on February 17, 2022.

Caine, Paul E. USN, CPT Ret.; Flight Class: 58-5NAV; died on February 4, 2023.

Dickinson, John R. USA, LTC Ret.; SS, BS (OLC); died on October 27, 2021.

Dodd, George T. USA; Flight Classes: 67-1/66-23; PH; died on April 3, 2023.

Durham, Floyd A. USAF; RVN: 62-63 917 FTD; died on February 12, 2022.

Gilbert, Leslie H. USA, COL Ret.; RVN: 67-68 HHC/223 CAB; died on January 23, 2023.

Head, Alan L. USA; Flight Classes: 68-23/68-41; died on February 12, 2023.

Kelly, Michael M. USA; Flight Classes: 68-1/67-25; died on March 1, 2023.

Mcbeath, Thomas A. USA, CW5 Ret.; Flight Class: 65-17W; died on January 1, 2023.

Pawlik, Eugene A. Sr. USA, LTC Ret.; Flight Class: 63-9; RVN: 64-65 3 RRU, 67-68 25 CAC; Callsigns: Wolf 75 /Xray 3/Red Carpet 3.; died on February 22, 2022.

Poage, Robert B. USA; Flight Classes: 67-5/67-3; RVN: 67-68 1 CAV, 70-71 3/17 CAV; Callsign: Silver Surfer; died on December 12, 2016.

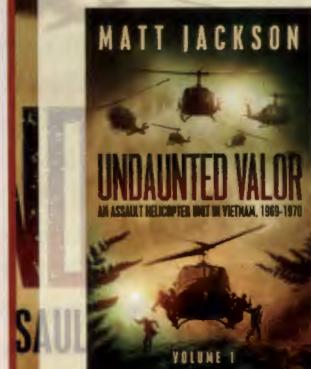
Rains, Roy L. USA; Flight Class: 66-7; BS (OLC), PH; died on July 12, 2022.

Stults, Claude L. USA, LTC Ret.; RVN: 66 A/82 AVN, 67 335 AVN, 69 199 LIB, 70 238 AWC; DFC, BS; Callsigns: Falcon 81/Cowboy 16/Gunner 6; died on November 29, 2015.

Underwood, Orlie J. USA; RVN: 65-66 118 AHC; died on November 2, 2021.

Utz, John S. USA, LTC Ret.; 65-66 A/2/20 ARA; DFC; died on January 2, 2023.

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.

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