



The VHPA AVIATOR

The Newsletter of The Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association



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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

A New Year

and a time of new beginnings and resolutions! A time to remember why you joined this fantastic organization in the first place. At odds with anyone in the VHPA? Well stop! Try something like this - if we have an ongoing issue that is causing both of us grief, be advised I am no longer in the fight. I welcome your friendship and will work to improve our relationship. Few people if anyone can live up to all our expectations so stop expecting that of them. Argument over!

As we age, (Last year VHPA averaged 79 years old), we find ourselves less physically capable but a whole lot wiser! Our medical appointments are more frequent and we find that different body parts, hips, backs, etc. have catches and are easily strained - basically, if it works it hurts. Ah, but the wisdom! A good trade? Still to be determined! There are exceptions and those guys are my heros. Our health is the key to a happy future. If you had health issues last year, I pray those issues are in the past and you are

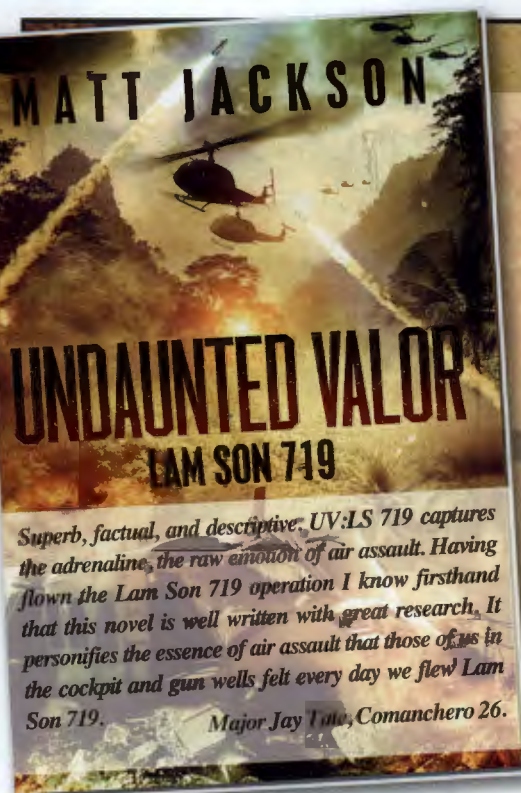
looking at a healthier 2022. I know I am.

Get creative and use that wisdom to your advantage. The possibilities are endless and can be entertaining. For example, I solved an ongoing issue on going to the Gym. My wife and kids wanted me to go more frequently than I felt I had time to do. Solution, (Drum Roll - Wisdom at work) I changed the name of that little room I go to more frequently all the time from the John to the Jim. When they ask about attendance at the Gym, I answer - I go to the Jim regularly!

As previously reported - Our VHPA is not going broke! Scout Pilot is still watching the funds. The next Reunion is shaping up nicely. Now if we can get inflation under control and gas prices down, we can all afford to go. My resolution for 2022 is to be a better man this year than I was last year. Enjoy the ride in 2022 and remember you are flying!

Art Price

VHPA President



After the first day of operations in Lam Son 719, almost every aircraft had at least one new hole due to gunfire. Over the course of the next forty-five days, 600 aircraft would be hit with gunfire; 108 would never return to the home base; 1200 crew members were wounded, 108 were killed. 11 are still missing today.

Sophisticated enemy air defense, use of pilots unfamiliar

with the AO and poor high-density altitude performance of older model aircraft certainly compounded this complex operation.

Matt Jackson provides a more in-depth account of these facts and the inevitable outcome.

It is a sobering read of how things can go dramatically wrong.

Available from Amazon in paperback and Kindle formats.

FROM THE STAFF AT HQ!

Preliminary information for R2022 in Tampa follows in later pages of this issue. DUE TO THE CUT OFF DATE FOR ITEMS TO BE PLACED IN THE JAN/FEB ISSUE, THE INFORMATION BELOW IS PRELIMINARY INFORMATION THAT MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. FINAL REUNION DETAILS WILL BE LISTED AT VHPA.ORG IN EARLY FEBRUARY 2022. PLEASE BE SURE TO CHECK THE WEBSITE FOR THE MOST CURRENT DETAILS.

HOTEL RESERVATIONS WILL OPEN JANUARY 3, 2022

VHPA REUNION REGISTRATION IS ANTICIPATED TO OPEN BY MID FEB 2022.

*Mark your calendar for May 26 – May 29, 2022
(closing banquet will be on May 29)
Tampa Marriott Water Street Hotel
Hope to see you there!*

REMINDERS:

- Paper Directories purchased beginning September 1, 2021 will be for the 2022 directory that will be delivered in October 2022. The deadline for ordering the 2022 directory will be August 31, 2022.
- The price for a pre-ordered copy of the paper directory is \$25.
- The on-line directory is free at <https://directory.vhpa.org>
- Dues can be paid and a directory can be ordered on line via the On Line Directory at <https://directory.vhpa.org>!

PLEASE HELP US REDUCE THE COSTS OF REMAILING ITEMS! If you move, **PLEASE** go on line to <https://directory.vhpa.org> and log in with your member number, then set up a password. Then on the left side will be a box with red lettering that says "Other Services". Under "Other Services" will be a box that says "Update My Information". Click on this button and you can make updates directly to your information. You can also call HQ with an update to your contact information!

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

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

*Sherry Rodgers
VHPA Business Manager*

UPCOMING REUNIONS

A Troop, 3/17th Air Cavalry Reunion "Silver Spurs"

Where: Hotel Elegante in Colorado Springs, CO

When May 24 - 28, 2022

Contact: Bill McCalister silvertip_trading@yahoo.com

27th ANNUAL REUNION 174 AHC

Where: Ft Walton Beach, FL

When: April 28 - May 1, 2022

Information see website 174thAHC.org

174th Assault Helicopter Company Association

"One Dark Night at Dak To"

VHPA Life Members: Doug Drury & Bill Bulger

The battle for Dak To was one of the heaviest fought battles of the Vietnam War and one of the least known about except for the men involved. Several combat units were involved, and the casualty rate was high. The camp and airfield at Dak To were located in the Central Highlands of South Vietnam and close to the Cambodian and Laotian borders. This made it an ideal location to launch reconnaissance teams from the highly classified U.S. Studies and Observation Group (SOG) commonly referred to as the special operations group (SOG) operated by the 5th Special Forces. Helicopters from various units were assigned to SOG on a rotational basis. They would usually spend 30-45 days moving five and seven-man recon teams deep into Cambodia and Laos for five-day missions. Most of these missions were "Top Secret" because we were not supposed to be operating in Cambodia and Laos prior to 1970, but these missions were being conducted in 1967-68.

Dak To lies on a flat valley floor, surrounded by waves of ridge lines that rise into peaks (some as high as 4,000 feet) that stretch westward and southwestward toward the tri-border region where South Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia meet. Landing Zones (LZs) large enough for helicopters were few and far between, which meant that most troop movements could only be carried out on foot or from LZs cut and blown with detonation explosive cord in the triple canopy. Temperatures in the highlands could reach 95°F/35°C during the day and as low as 55°F/13°C at night.

Operations had been carried out from this airfield since 1965 which was resupplied by C-130s as well as truck convoys from Pleiku. Elements of the 4th Infantry's 1st and 2nd Brigades from Camp Enari in Pleiku used this as a staging base, as well as the 173rd Airborne which had moved up from the coast in June of 1967. In early November 1967, all hell was to break loose as elements of the 4th Infantry discovered preparations by highly trained and skilled NVA elements of the 24th PAVN (Peoples Army of Vietnam). The PAVN were dug in on the surrounding ridge lines north and west of Dak To, and they were poised to hit the airfield and camp. The NVA had managed to move over 6000 troops into the Dak To area with the primary mission of over-running the camp at Dak To.

We were assigned as "Huey" aircraft commanders with the 119th Assault Helicopter Company (call sign Alligators) out of

Camp Holloway at Pleiku. This was the base camp for the 52nd Aviation Battalion and its supporting units such as the 170th AHC; 189th AHC, a Chinook company; 545th Maintenance support; and a 'Birdog' L-19 recon outfit. We supported mainly the 4th Infantry Division and the 5th Special Forces, plus any ARVN or support groups that needed helicopter support. For both of us, our first few months of flying assignments in Vietnam in 1967 were mostly routine; seldom did we receive enemy fire or operate in a "hot" LZ. We did so much hauling of rations, clean clothes, mail, and ammo to various field units that we nicknamed ourselves the "Alligator Trucking Company."

The combat assaults (CAs) we went on were routine and even during these, the LZs were usually cold as far as enemy fire goes. The month of November 1967 was to change that attitude and put us on constant alert. Elements of the 1st and 2nd

Brigade of the 4th Infantry were working search-and-destroy missions in the Dak To area late in the summer of 1967.

There had been intelligence regarding heavy troop infiltration and that the NVA were getting ready to hit the camp at Dak To. On November 6, we lifted one of the 4th Division's companies into an LZ just north of Dak To and they immediately came into contact with a heavy force of NVA. For the rest of the month there was heavy contact throughout the various hills and terrain to the north and northwest of Dak To. The U.S. forces found NVA

troops dug in on most of the hilltops in very heavily fortified bunkers and fortifications which

they must have been constructing for weeks. We were taking heavy losses and the NVA constantly ambushed the patrols and probes. We moved troops from one area to another in an attempt to block the NVA movements, with little success, all the while taking casualties and losing aircraft.

The biggest battle and concentration of efforts came just before Thanksgiving on and around Hill 875 northwest of Dak To. (You can research Hill 875 for more information.) Our assault helicopter company (119th AHC) had been working out of the Dak To airstrip all week long. There were so many aircraft on the field that we had to stage in an open area just to the south of the strip. This gave us more room to maneuver, and it also kept us away from the mortar attacks that were aimed at the strip and the adjacent ammo dump. The NVA mortars eventually found the ammo dump one day and a direct hit on the stores of



Bill Bulger

C-4 set off all the ordnance with a thunderous explosion. Someone remarked, "It sounded like the NVA had gotten ahold of a nuke." The NVA had mortar emplacements all along the ridges to the north and they periodically shelled the camp.

The night in question came around the 21st-22nd of November. Along with our co-pilots John Thybody and John Breedlove, we received a mission to re-supply elements of the 173rd on Hill 875 with hot chow and water at around 1600 hours or as soon as the engineers had blown an LZ in the triple canopy on the west side of the hill. The 173rd had been slogging up Hill 875 all day through thick timber and foliage. The mess hall at Dak To loaded our aircraft with hot chow in "mermite" cans. We waited and waited for the word to "crank up" and head toward the hill.

About an hour later, they said to unload the chow as the company had come into heavy contact with Charlie and they were now calling for ammo and water. The LZ hadn't been cleared yet, so the decision was made to re-supply by external cargo and drop it as best we could through the trees and as close to the troops as we could. It was getting dark, and we needed to expedite.

The loads were 500-600 lbs of ammo crates, chainsaws, and water in nets hooked externally. Our two helicopters were piloted by Doug Drury/John Thybody and Bill Bulger/John Breedlove. We lifted off from Dak To as a flight of only two and headed for the hill. Darkness was falling fast. We located the forward elements and tried to find a place to drop the supplies. The troops had begun digging in for the night and were scattered over their defensive lines on the slope of the hill. The trick was to drop the supplies from as low an altitude above the ground as possible without hitting anyone while also keeping the ammo from rolling down the hill and out of reach. The canopy was triple, meaning it was about 200-250 feet high, and thick. Plus, it was getting dark and we couldn't see the ground very well. Our crew chiefs and gunners were hanging out each side talking us into the best position they could determine and calling for the punch off. Unfortunately, one or two of the loads hit too close to some of the foxholes and troops were injured by falling cargo. We didn't want to repeat that situation, so we decided not to drop anymore and to wait until the LZ was cut. Our approach was from the west and hostile fire had calmed down due to constant artillery support on the south, east and north sides surrounding the defensive positions. We returned to Dak To and shut down to wait for the LZ to be cut.

Around 0130, word came that the LZ might just be big enough to get in. They had a lot of wounded and still needed supplies. The artillery, which would give us a fire free route into the LZ, was shut down on the west corridor. The Air Force DC-3 gunship/flareship "Spooky" was on station dropping flares and lighting up the area. We really appreciated this. There is nothing as dark as a moonless night in central Vietnam with miles and miles of dark hills covered in very tall trees. As we came over the LZ, we were being guided by a radioman on the ground with strobe lights. It soon became very apparent that the LZ was tight at the top due to overhanging branches that had not been cleared when they blew the LZ or cut down the trees. This was the Central Highlands and the home of triple canopy forests where 200-300 foot teak and other species grew, especially on the hills.

Everyone was tense and the crew chiefs and gunners craned their necks while hanging on to the safety straps to watch the tail rotor and call out clearances. "Bring it right a little. A little left. Now come down a bit and then back left." We were literally picking our way through the tops of the overhanging branches and praying to God we didn't nick one as it would have been fatal.

Once we cleared the branches, the LZ opened up and we were able to descend the rest of the way. We had to have our searchlights on to see what we were doing even though this would light us up like a big fat target to the NVA that surrounded the 173rd, but we had no choice. We were forced to make skid landings on some of the logs cut down earlier and hold a hover with power while the supplies were unloaded, and the wounded clambered aboard. While holding there, you could see the KIAs stacked and wrapped in ponchos right under the chin bubble. The rotor wash made the ponchos flutter and expose some of the faces of the KIAs. We were in the LZ probably no more than a minute or two while loading and unloading, but it seemed like an eternity. The noise of the helicopters and the light show we were putting on stirred up the enemy and they started shelling the area trying to walk the shells into the LZ. The radio operator helped guide us while our gunners and crew chiefs had their hands full retrieving the last of the wounded, calling clearances, and manning their guns as we were starting to receive fire.

As we flew out, we were worried about clearing the overhanging branches, but we needed to get clear. Throwing caution to the wind and relying on the Lord to help us, we pulled pitch and hoped if we nicked a branch, it would be a small one and we could blast through it. We popped out of the top of the trees



Doug Drury

without hitting anything, which neither of us could believe, turned east and high-tailed it to Dak To.

Since a fair amount of time had evolved since we left Dak To, our fuel was running low and the morning fog that always surrounded Dak To that time of year had rolled in. We survived the LZ and now we were caught above the fog unable to see the runway and without enough fuel to reach another base. Great. Thankfully, the tower had us on radar, so they lined us up with the runway and guided us in. We hovered back to the MASH unit next to the runway and shutdown while the wounded were unloaded.

We continued these evacuation flights throughout the night. The MASH unit received so many wounded that they were over-run and could not keep up. We had been up since 0600 the day before and had been operational for over 24 hours. As more helicopters became available, we were eventually released to get some rest. The hill was taken a couple of days later and thankfully we were able to fly in a hot Thanksgiving meal for the troops who had successfully made it to the top of Hill 875.

Epilogue:

We finished our tours after surviving further exploits during Tet '68 and a stint with FOB -2 in support of Special Forces involved with Special Operation Group in Cambodia. We both received Distinguished Flying Crosses (DFCs) while in Vietnam for missions in support of Special Forces Operations. We each continued with commercial aviation careers after our discharge from Army active duty. WO1s Thybony and Breedlove survived Vietnam, but both lost their lives in separate commercial aviation accidents.

Footnotes

Hi Bill, I saw your post in the Ivy Dragons guestbook and wanted to send a reply. I was an RTO with the HQ platoon in B Company. That was the worst day I ever had in my life and still can't figure out how I survived. I still, to this day, can remember you guys lowering down to us with the tail rotor stuck between two trees what seemed like 12 feet apart as you came in. That took some amazing skill and courage to do that. I was carrying some of our wounded down the hill to load them on your bird from our triage area. I got to see what you did. You saved many of our brothers out there. I just want to say "Thanks" from this old infantryman, and I will never forget what you did for us. Jim Bury

History of the 119th Aviation Company: One date in November 1967, at approximately 1300 hours, B and C Co 3rd/8th started moving southwest to secure the crash site of Croc 594. They came into heavy enemy contact and for the next 24 hours they took many casualties. Among these were the B Co Commander. WOs Drury and Thybony in Gator 534 and WOs Bulger and Breedlove in Gator 517 started medevac from their small ship LZ. This started at 2200 hours and went until 1400 hours. Small arms fire, mortar and rocket attacks covered the LZ the whole time. Gun cover was not available after 0100 hours, although an Air Force plane did drop flares for the two ships to get in and out of the LZ.



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We thank those who contributed to the book, and those who purchased it!



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LOOKING FOR

I am looking for anyone who might have known my brother, who was a gunship pilot in Vietnam in 1967-1969. His name was Henry ("Pistol") Boswell. Can you help me with that search in any way?

Boswell, Henry USN; RVN: 66-67 HA(L)-3 DET 2, 67 HA(L)-3 DET 5; Callsign: Seawolf.

Thank you,

Patricia Boswell pboswell@triad.rr.com

I am trying to find the pilot that was stationed in Vinh Long Air base in the delta in 1970 that piloted the air craft I was transported in to check my Military Police units. I would really like to correspond with him and/or his family. I am now 91 years old and live in an assisted living facility in Colorado Springs Colorado and would just like to make contact with old combat folks.

My name is Albert S. Bryant, formerly assigned to the 188th Military Police Company Vietnam as well as Co B, 720th Military police Company both located at Vinh Long. At the time, I was First Sergeant of both companies. Prior to that as First Sergeant of 212 Military police Company (sentry dog).

The helicopter unit at Vinh Long flew me from Tay Ninh to Soc Trang to check on units.

Albert S Bryant

5355 Centennial Blvd ~ Colorado Springs, CO 89919

Command Sergeant Major US Army (Ret)

Cell and Text: 719-510-8364 ~ E Mail almitsuibry@icloud.com

I would like to know if any of you readers are aware of nicknames for the OH-58 and H-19. I have joint names, Native American names and nicknames for the nine other Army helicopters used during war but not these two. I want to make one more attempt to find them before finalizing the manuscript for my book.

Appreciate any assistance you can provide.

Warm regards and happy holidays,

Dave Napoliello DSN1967@verizon.net

Good morning,

Years ago, I mean like probably late 80s or early 90s, at a VHPA Reunion I purchased a Christmas tree ornament that had the VHPA logo and there was an opening on it that you could slip a tree light inside. My husband, Larry Michael Clark, passed away in January 2017. Last year when I began decorating our tree, I found that the ornament was broken beyond repair. I was crushed.

Do you or anyone at your Organization know where or how I could get a replacement?

I will be eternally grateful.

Sincerely yours,

Rhoda Clark

37 Sycamore Drive

New Caney, Texas. 77357

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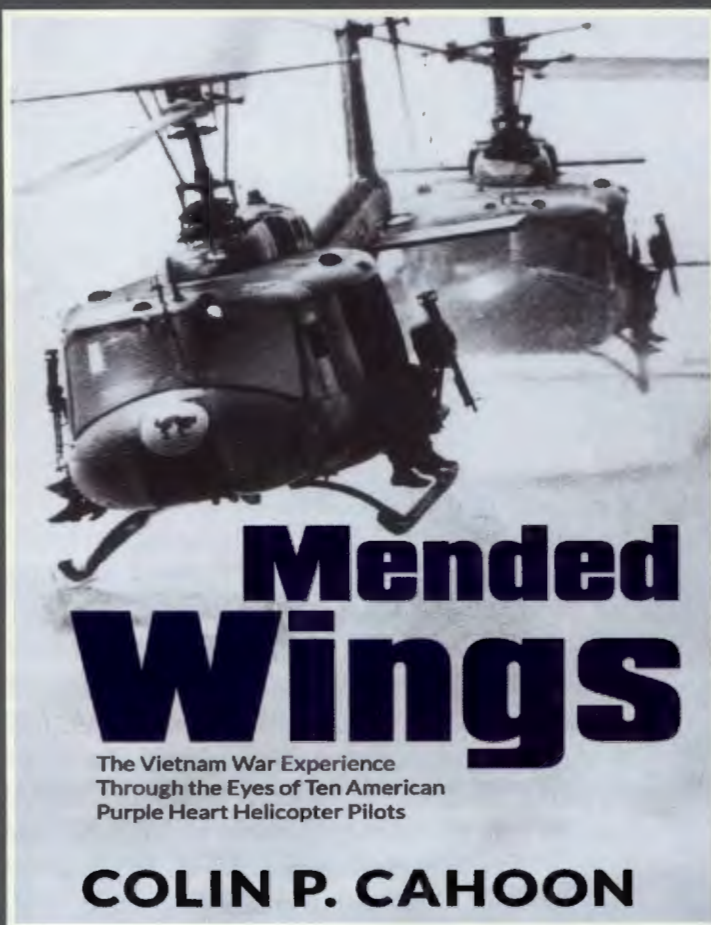
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155th AHC
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VHPA MEMBER 5-STAR REVIEWS

"This is truly one of the best written factual accounts of the many American heroes of Vietnam."

"As a Vietnam helicopter pilot veteran, I've read all the nonfiction books about flying in Vietnam that I could find on my Kindle, but Mended Wings last chapter...caused the most emotional reaction I've ever had from reading."

"I was transported back to Vietnam, great read."

"I flew both UH-1's and OH-6's in Vietnam 1968-69. Reading these accounts transported me right back to 'There I was' moments...."

"Colin Cahoon masterfully portrays the Vietnam helicopter war while honoring the pilots who fought it."

"I recommend this book to all Vietnam veterans, not just pilots but those who have looked up and wondered what it was like up there."

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"Colin Cahoon, the accomplished author and former Army Helicopter pilot himself, captured every detail of the emotions and actions of these American Pilots. A must read."

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"Wow! This book brings you to the edge of your seat! Hang on for a ride of joy, sorrow and bravery beyond measure."

Short Tour

Michael Kirkpatrick

On June 4, 1971, my 45-year career in aviation (another story) was almost ended before it started. I had soloed in July 1970 on my 21st birthday in a TH-55 at Ft. Wolters. I graduated Ft. Rucker in March 1971 and the Army decided I should go to OH-6 Transition at Ft. Rucker. (It was with some trepidation that I proceeded having been told all the way through WOC training not to worry about finding the LZ, it's usually marked with a burning Loach.)

After that course, I got orders for the "Air CAV Qualification Course" at Ft. Knox. There I flew around in an OH-58 with a combat experienced CW2 for two weeks learning (with some classroom instruction to go with) how to be a 'Loach' pilot. The course had constructed .51 CAL pits, bunkers, and other typical 'bad guy' structures for us to fly over and learn recognition. After a few weeks leave, I was off to McGuire AFB with an enroute stop at Travis AFB for my free ride to RVN.

Once I got to the Replacement Detachment in Bien Hoa (if memory serves) in May 1971, it was a foregone conclusion that I was going to be assigned to 'the CAV'. Sure enough, in a few days' time, I was off to the Air Cav Troop, 11th ACR in Tay Ninh. After a brief orientation, I started flying regular scout missions as a left seat observer/peter pilot. (Our Loach config was mini-gun, left seat observer carrying M-60 and ammo cans safety wired to the floor behind the left seat with as much 7.62 ammo in a continuous belt over the shoulder of the left seater that we could carry plus right seat pilot= gross weight.) I flew with a couple of experienced guys, but my most frequent mentor was Captain Walt Baum.

Walt patiently let me pick up to hover the heavily loaded OH-6 and back it out of the revetment and subsequent take-off with a Cobra on our wing. We did first light-last light recons, a night mission over Nui Ba Din, but a lot our missions were "over the fence" in Cambodia looking for signs of NVA or Viet Cong troop movements, etc. Walt let me fly at altitude to and from the AO and all the while he coordinated and navigated using all three radios (usually some of my ICS switches were down) while giving me full instructions on intercom of what we were about to do and how we were going to do it. Primary over the fence

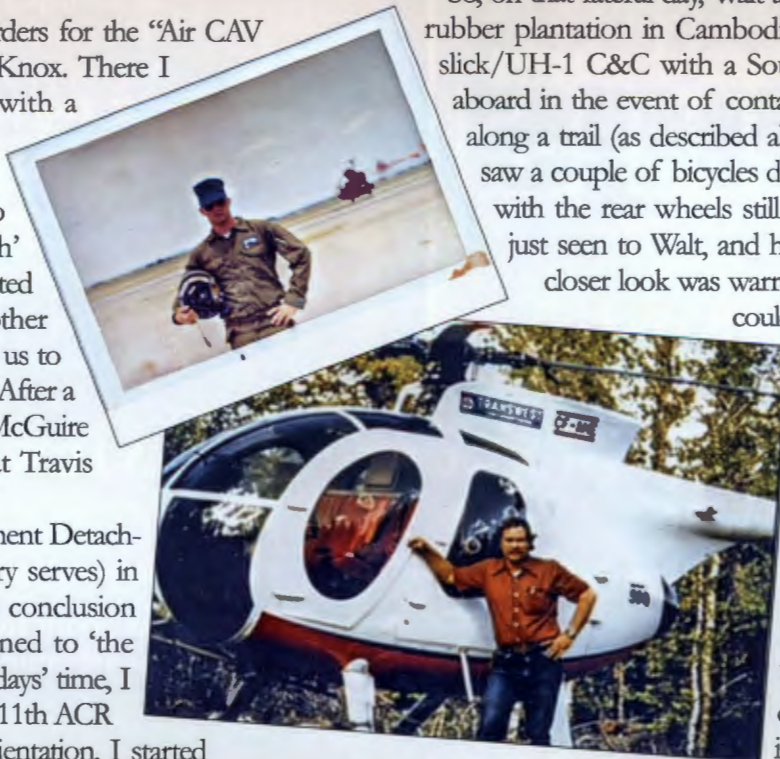
SOP was minimum speed 80 knots! Once on the deck Walt took over and we started "loaching." As a second tour scout pilot (OH-23s first time), Walt put that loach in attitudes and turns and wing overs pulling Gs I had never experienced in my short aviation career! All in the interest of being totally unpredictable as to where we were going next while reconning a trail or road. Needless to say, the Crew Chief brought me a bucket after the first few missions to 'clean up' my mess (breakfast or lunch) splattered on the side of the aircraft.

So, on that fateful day, Walt and I were doing a recon near a rubber plantation in Cambodia. We had Cobra cover and a slick/UH-1 C&C with a South Vietnamese liaison officer aboard in the event of contact. We had been doing S-turns along a trail (as described above) when I looked back, and saw a couple of bicycles ditched on either side of the trail with the rear wheels still spinning. I relayed what I had just seen to Walt, and he passed it upstairs to C&C. A closer look was warranted and we circled back. Walt

could not acquire looking left across the aircraft (left hand orbit to keep my M-60 on possible targets). That second pass I saw two bad guys; the left side of the trail guy was silhouetted in shallow water in the rice paddy, and I could see a straw sticking up. The right side guy was tucked in behind a bush but I got a good look and saw a camouflage uniformed leg sticking out. Walt was flying and communicating with the two

birds above and told me to toss a smoke grenade to 'mark' the target. With what could only be described as a lucky rookie/FNG toss, my smoke (purple) lands a few feet from the leg of the guy behind the bushes.

All this time Walt is talking to 'higher' asking to engage (those pesky ROE's that get aviators and warriors killed) and I have my M-60 trained on the purple smoke as we orbit with my finger on trigger/ safety off. Well, the guy with purple smoke in his face had no ROE and he knew he'd been seen. He stepped out of the bush, and I could see muzzle flashes from his AK-47. At that point, I cut loose with the M-60 returning fire and the shell casings were bouncing off my helmet visor. Walt had reacted by turning away from the target and I looked up to see flashing panel lights and we were descending like a rock. The last thing I remember is coming up on a tree looking large in the chin bubble. (Doctors called it traumatic amnesia.)



The rest of this story is third-hand from pilots and observers that came to visit me in the 24th Evac Hospital.

Somehow, Walt maneuvered away from that imminent collision with a tree using RPM, collective pitch and ALL his skills acquired as an Army aviator up to that point. We landed hard in a rice paddy (which cushioned our impact somewhat I guess) and that OH-6 broke in to its "frangible parts" rupturing the fuel cell on impact. As all this was happening our Cobra cover had put 2.75 rockets on the purple smoke as we were crashing.

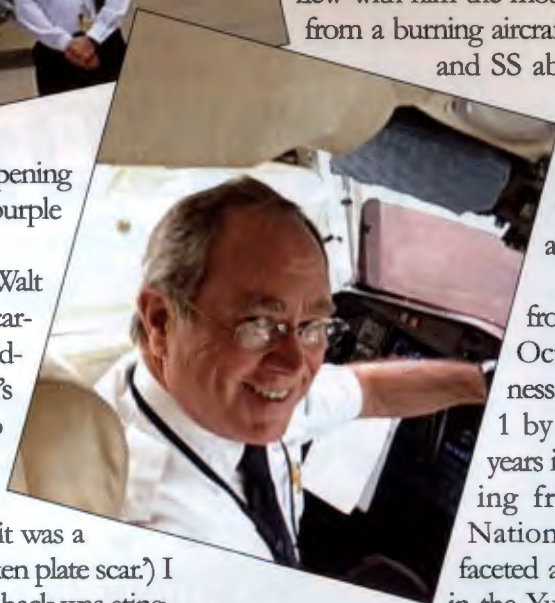
We were either on fire or about to be when Walt pulled me unconscious out of that left seat and carried me to our 'high bird' C&C who had descended to pick us up immediately upon hearing Walt's Mayday call! I awakened from my brief nap aboard the UH-1 with a large bandage covering my chin tied in a knot on top on my head. (I found out from Guard buddies later in life that it was a common loach pilot injury. Referred to as a 'chicken plate scar.') I remember telling someone on the Huey that my back was stinging and sat upright on the canvas seat along the front wall of the transmission. I was cradling my left arm which was also stinging. (X-rays later confirmed broken left arm/M-60 fell on it & compression fracture lower back). The guys who picked us up dropped us at an aid station to be triaged and relayed by Dustoff/ Medevac to the 24th Evac. I tried walking off the aircraft and wobbled a half step before getting grabbed and assisted to the aid station. I guess I had lost more blood than I thought I did! I got an air splint on my arm, transferred to 24th Evac for further treatment, and was soon enough on my way home via Camp Zama, Japan and Walter Reed Army Medical Center. (My experiences as a patient in Army Orthopedic Wards is another story as vivid in my memory as this war story!)

So, as the title suggested, I was in Vietnam 17 days with 21 combat hours on the 4th of June 1971 when we were shot

down. As I have reflected many times, I am and remain one lucky guy. I am convinced God had a plan for me that didn't include dying that day! Fifty years ago on June 4th, Walt Baum and a team of salty aviators (several second tour guys) orchestrated a finely tuned Army aviation "ballet" for a new guy they barely knew. In what is an often repeated aviator/warrior tradition, they "left no one behind" and in the process saved my life!

Because I was medically evacuated, I never saw anyone from Air Cav Troop again. I remember Walt because I flew with him the most and he pulled me unconscious from a burning aircraft (with reminder from his name and SS above mine on my purple heart orders). To Walt Baum and the guys in the Cobra and C&C Huey that day, I thank you from the bottom of my heart. I am alive today thanks to your efforts!

As a postscript, I was discharged from active duty at Walter Reed by October of 1971 and in the Tennessee Army National Guard as a W-1 by December 1971. I served 25 years in the Guard of three states retiring from the Pennsylvania Army National Guard. I enjoyed a multifaceted aviation career flying in the bush in the Yukon Territories, the Appalachian coal fields, the Gulf of Mexico, helicopter 135 charter, commuter airline-Dash 8's, corporate S-76/King Air and Falcon 50/900EX for the last 15 years retiring in December 2015.



WANTED!

MILITARY AVIATION MILITARIA

Buying:

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

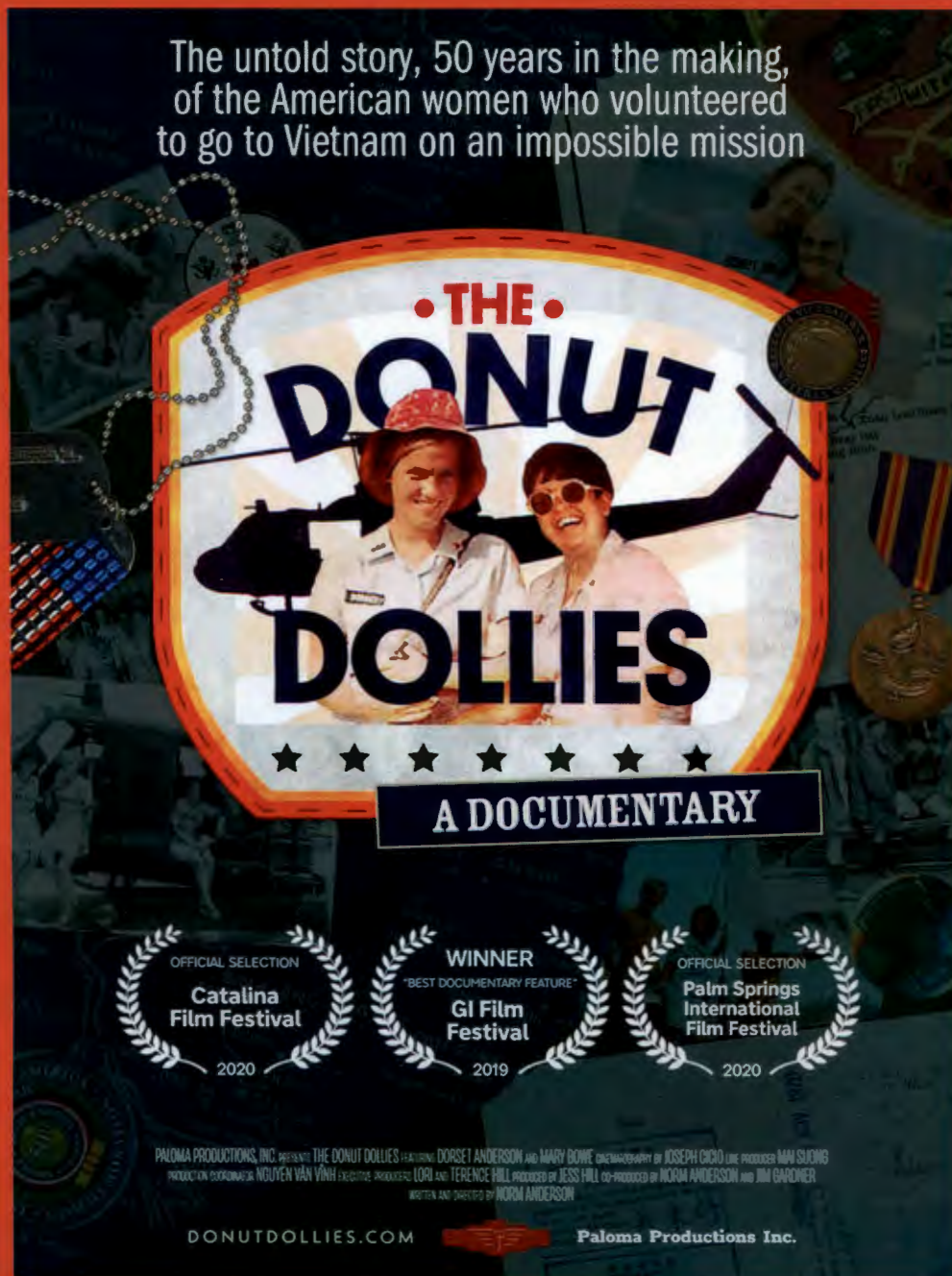
Please contact: Daniel Miller, Collector/Dealer
Phone/text: 202.841.3062
Email: Militbuff@aol.com

Also buying non aviation related militaria.



Exciting news with more details to be revealed!!!

VHPA has partnered with the producers of “The Donut Dollies” film to bring their story to the VHPA 2022 Tampa Reunion.



Q & A session with Donut Dollies and producers to follow screening.

Official times and details will be released at a later date.

VHPA would like to extend an invitation to Donut Dollies to attend the screening of this film!

GENERAL REUNION INFORMATION

TAMPA ★ FLORIDA

Last updated 07 December 2021

DUE TO THE CUT-OFF DATE FOR ITEMS TO BE PLACED IN THE JAN/FEB ISSUE, THE INFORMATION BELOW IS PRELIMINARY INFORMATION THAT MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. FINAL REUNION DETAILS WILL BE LISTED AT VHPA.ORG IN EARLY FEBRUARY 2022. PLEASE BE SURE TO CHECK THE WEBSITE FOR THE MOST CURRENT DETAILS.

HOTEL RESERVATIONS WILL OPEN ON JANUARY 3, 2022

VHPA REUNION REGISTRATION IS ANTICIPATED TO OPEN BY MID-FEB 2022

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 (26 MAY 2022). Because of this, the VHPA Reunion Registration software is "forward looking" regarding dues status.

Reunion hotel: Tampa Marriott Water Street Hotel & Marina, 505 Water Street, Tampa, Florida 33602.

Reunion hotel reservations: There are at least three ways to make your hotel reservations while ensuring that you receive the VHPA Group Rate of **\$129 plus tax per night for single, double, triple, or quad over the dates of 26 MAY 2022 thru 29 MAY 2022 (based on availability).** The cutoff date for the hotel rate is **25 APRIL 2022.**

Please consider the following:

- Via the Reunion's personalized website, go to: <https://book.passkey.com/go/vhpa2022>
- Via www.vhpa.org, then Reunion Information and use the "reserve your hotel room link".
- By calling the hotel's reservation line at (888) 627-8405. You need to mention "Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association". **PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE HOTEL DIRECTLY or MARRIOTT'S CENTRAL RESERVATIONS NUMBERS.** You MUST speak to a Passkey Agent.

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 Tampa International Airport: Members can take a cab and request the flat fee cab rate of \$30 to and from Downtown and the Airport. Otherwise, average cab fares start at \$2.50 for the first 1/8 mile and then \$2.40 for each additional mile. Members may prefer Uber or Lyft and pricing will fluctuate. Blue One Transportation is the hotel's preferred shuttle and is offering VHPA a discounted flat rate of \$15.00 Per Person, each way. Please call (813) 282-7351 to pre-book your airport pickup and drop-off. Mention our group name of Vietnam Helicopter Pilots to receive the \$15 price. Our members can also call once you arrive at baggage claim but Blue One would recommend and prefer our members to pre-book so that they can have transportation readily available. They will also track your flight so they are aware if you have any flight issues/delays.

Parking: VHPA has negotiated a discounted price of \$21 per day for valet parking. The adjustment will be made on your final hotel statement.

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.

Vendor Area: If you are interested or know of anyone interested in becoming a Vendor for R2022 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. Space is limited this year so 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 Tampa so you can fit this history preserving events into your Reunion schedule.

Family-Friendly and Local Attractions: There are plenty of things to do around Tampa 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 the things to do around the city. Many attractions are within walking distance of the hotel or just a FREE trolley ride away. The Teco Streetcar is FREE for everyone and has a stop right outside the hotel. On the water, Pirate Water Taxi is available right outside the hotel. Ticket prices vary and are an ALL DAY PASS.

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

Ybor City has options like breweries, dining options, sightseeing, and the occasional loose chicken crossing the street. Also, there is the Florida Aquarium, Tampa Bay History Center, water sport rentals right outside the hotel, Sparkman Wharf for all your food needs, Busch Gardens, Museum of Science, Dinosaur World, Glazer Children's Museum, Zoo Tampa, and much, much more...this is only to list a few.

Volunteers: The Florida 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, Florida Chapter, gets "first shot" at the Duty Roster. If you are interested in volunteering you can contact Tom Rountree of the Florida Chapter at 352-362-4104 or trountree@tampabay.rr.com or contact HQ at 800-505-8472. BTW, husband and wife teams are welcome to volunteer.

Reunion T-Shirts - T-shirts will be a tan color this year 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 that will be determined at a later date.

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

Primary Attendee (Member or Subscriber) Registration - The early registration fee for the member is TBD through 30 April and TBD beginning 01 May.

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 TBD through 30 April and TBD beginning 01 May.

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 TBD.

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 Friday, 29 April 2022 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.

Reunion Refunds - The Executive Council establishes the official cancellation date (OCD) for each reunion. **The OCD for R2022 is Friday, 29 April 2022.** 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 unless covered by Guarantee Refund Insurance

(GRI) described below. **It is important to note that the following reunion registration items are non-refundable even with the purchase of GRI: registration fees, dues payments, directory orders, donations, or voluntary contributions plus any event designated as non-refundable.** For cancellations after the OCD, the GRI fee is 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. 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.

Guarantee Refund Insurance (GRI) Program - As part of their initial registration transaction, a PR may enroll in the Guarantee Refund Insurance (GRI) program by paying a fee calculated at 10% of event ticket purchases. If GRI is purchased with the initial registration, the GRI fee will be added to any paid events added to the member's registration. As mentioned above, registration fees, dues payments, directory orders, donations, or voluntary contributions are not included in this calculation. The GRI program allows the PR to receive a refund for him/her and/or their guests that have to cancel or have their reunion travel plans interrupted for any of the following reasons:

1. Sickness or injury of PR, a traveling companion or members of immediate families, which is diagnosed and treated by a physician or requires hospitalization during the time of the reunion.
2. Death of PR or immediate family member.
3. PR's involvement in a traffic accident, en route to the reunion that causes you to miss the reunion or a particular event.
4. PR's home is made uninhabitable by a natural disaster such as fire, flood, earthquake, hurricane, or volcano prior to or during the time of the reunion.
5. PR is recalled into active duty by the military that causes you to be unavailable to attend the reunion.
6. PR is served a subpoena or called to serve for jury duty during the dates of the reunion.
7. PR is quarantined during the dates of the reunion.

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. PR's enrolled in the GRI program and need to take advantage of the program's features are encouraged to contact VHPA HQ either by email or at the HQ desk at the host reunion hotel as soon as possible in the event of cancellation.

Mini-Reunions: 26 May through 29 May - 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.

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.). **NO OUTSIDE FOOD OR DRINK IS ALLOWED IN THESE ROOMS**

*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. **Space is limited this year so get your request in early!***

KIA/MIA Gold Star Family Sponsorship

Use this item to make a contribution that will purchase Gold Star Breakfast & Closing Banquet tickets for Gold Star Family members... Thank you for your generosity. If you would like to purchase a ticket to the Gold Star Breakfast for yourself, please go to the Gold Star Breakfast event to sign up.

O'Club: 26 May -11:00am – 11:00pm / 29 May - 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.

THURSDAY, 26 MAY 2022

J.C. Newman Cigar Factory Tour #1: 26 May – 11:30am – 1:45pm

This tour is a top to bottom exploration of El Reloj, the only cigar factory still in operation in Cigar City. Founded in 1895, J.C. Newman Cigar Company is a four-generation family business and is the oldest family-owned premium cigar company in the United States. VHPA guests will go through the process of cigar making by hand and on antique cigar machines, the Newman family legacy, the history of Cigar City, watch old cigar films in an interactive theater, browse rare cigars and gifts in the factory store, and much more. Three stories high, and one city-block long, this historic cigar factory will please cigar enthusiasts, history buffs, and those with interests in manufacturing and technology.

Capacity: This event is limited to 54 participants.

St. Petersburg City Tour w/Lunch #1: 26 May– 11:45am – 5:45pm

Join your Tour Guide, Todd, from Travel Is Fun Tours to discover all about St Petersburg, Florida - We're not just a suburb of Tampa! See some of the more than 500 beautiful Murals painted in each Years SHINE festival that attracts artists from all over the World. Find out how a coin toss determined the name of the city, learn about the founders and early history of St Petersburg, and learn about the very first commercial airline flight. We'll also visit St Petersburg's Iconic Pier and have a great lunch (included) at Doc Ford's. Did you know over 100 movies have been filmed in the St Petersburg area? We'll find out about those too! Plus we'll visit St Petersburg's affluent neighborhood Snell Isle. We think you'll go home with a deep appreciation for the Sunshine City and want to come back!

Capacity: This event is limited to 54 participants.

Tampa Water History Tour #1: 26 May– 12:00pm – 1:30pm

Our members will learn about how this city grew from a Spanish outpost to the fastest growing city in Florida. This tour takes VHPA guests step by step through the evolution. As you cruise along the waters in a roomy vessel, history unfolds all around you. These guides will have little known facts about the city and share them with you. Many locals have said, "I have lived here all my life, and I did not know that about Tampa." When you leave this tour, you will know more than most of the locals! Being one of the picturesque harbors in Florida, Tampa harbor abounds with history on all sides. The waterfront features museums, shipyards, and million dollar homes. See the Pirate ship, Gabriella, up close and learn our pirate history. Ask the guides, "What's a pirate beard in Tampa?" You will be surprised by the answer. View the most beautiful building in Tampa, The Plant Hotel. Learn how Tampa became a city, and who made it happen.

Capacity: This event is limited to 50 participants.

Zubrick Magic Theatre Show w/Dinner: 26 May – 2:00pm – 7:15pm

Illusionists Chris & Ryan Zubrick conjure up an exhilarating blend of sleight-of-hand, family-friendly comedy and breathtaking grand-scale illusions in a 70-minute private performance for VHPA guests. Conveniently located in downtown St. Petersburg, Florida, VHPA guests will take a 40 minute bus ride to the Zubrick Magic Theatre where this performance will guarantee to stretch smiles and drop jaws. VHPA guests will be walking away scratching their heads in disbelief saying, "How did they do that?!" This show has been ranked one of the top things to do around Tampa and received numerous awards. After the show, guests will take the bus over to Dr. BBQ for dinner. Dr. BBQ offers "new American barbecue" and sizzles with global flavors. Owner, Roger Perry, created these exclusive recipes by drawing on inspiration from his travels and the local tastes of St. Petersburg.

Capacity: This event is limited to 90 participants.

J.C. Newman Cigar Factory Tour #2: 26 May – 2:15pm – 4:30pm

This tour is a top to bottom exploration of El Reloj, the only cigar factory still in operation in Cigar City. Founded in 1895, J.C. Newman Cigar Company is a four-generation family business and is the oldest family-owned premium cigar company in the United States. VHPA guests will go through the process of cigar making by hand and on antique cigar machines, the Newman family legacy, the history of Cigar City, watch old cigar films in an interactive theater, browse rare cigars and gifts in the factory store, and much more. Three stories high, and one city-block long, this historic cigar factory will please cigar enthusiasts, history buffs, and those with interests in manufacturing and technology.

Capacity: This event is limited to 54 participants.

Tampa Water History Tour #2: 26 May – 3:00pm – 4:30pm

Our members will learn about how this city grew from a Spanish outpost to the fastest growing city in Florida. This tour takes VHPA guests step by step through the evolution. As you cruise along the waters in a roomy vessel, history unfolds all around you. These guides will have little known facts about the city and share them with you. Many locals have said, "I have lived here all my life, and I did not know that about Tampa." When you leave this tour, you will know more than most of the locals! Being one of the picturesque harbors in Florida, Tampa harbor abounds with history on all sides. The waterfront features museums, shipyards, and million dollar homes. See the Pirate ship, Gabriella, up close and learn our pirate history. Ask the guides, "What's a pirate beard in Tampa?" You will be surprised by the answer. View the most beautiful building in Tampa, The Plant Hotel. Learn how Tampa became a city, and who made it happen.

This event is limited to 50 participants.

Movie: 26 May – 5:00pm – 6:30pm

Exact movie showing TBD

Early Bird Gathering: 26 May – 7:00pm – 9:00pm

This social gathering continues the long standing tradition of having an appointed place and time for everyone who comes "early" to the Reunion to meet and greet others.

Note: No food is provided at this gathering.

FRIDAY, 27 MAY 2022

Golf Outing at Summerfield Crossings: 27 May – 7:00am – 3:30pm

This year we will play at Summerfield Crossings Golf Club at Riverview, FL. Your golf ticket includes bus transportation, green fees, carts, scorecards, complimentary range balls, one Power Pack, and lunch.

Visit for details <https://www.summerfieldgc.com/course/> about the course.

Capacity: This event is limited to 55 participants.

Breakfast: 27 May – 7:30am – 9:00am

This is the first of three breakfasts offered at this Reunion. The exact menu is TBD.

Tampa Water History Tour #3: 27 May – 9:15am – 10:45am

Our members will learn about how this city grew from a Spanish outpost to the fastest growing city in Florida. This tour takes VHPA guests step by step through the evolution. As you cruise along the waters in a roomy vessel, history unfolds all around you. These guides will have little known facts about the city to share with you. Many locals have said, "I have lived here all my life, and I did not know that about Tampa." When you leave this tour, you will know more than most of the locals! Being one of the picturesque harbors in Florida, Tampa harbor abounds with history on all sides. The waterfront features museums, shipyards, and million dollar homes. See the Pirate ship, Gabriella, up close and learn our pirate history. Ask the guides, "What's a pirate beard in Tampa?" You will be surprised by the answer. View the most beautiful building in Tampa, The Plant Hotel. Learn how Tampa became a city, and who made it happen.

Capacity: This event is limited to 50 participants.

J.C. Newman Cigar Factory Tour w/Columbia Group Lunch #1: 27 May – 9:15am – 2:00pm

This tour is a top to bottom exploration of El Reloj, the only cigar factory still in operation in Cigar City. Founded in 1895, J.C. Newman Cigar Company is a four-generation family business and is the oldest family-owned premium cigar company in the United States. VHPA guests will go through the process of cigar making both by hand and on antique cigar machines, the Newman family legacy, the history of Cigar City, watch old cigar films in an interactive theater, browse rare cigars, and gifts in the factory store, and much more. Three stories high, and one city-block long, our historic cigar factory will please cigar enthusiasts, history buffs, and those with interests in manufacturing and technology.

After the tour, the bus will take our guests over to Columbia Restaurant for a group dinner like never before. Columbia Restaurant is the oldest restaurant in Florida and the largest Spanish restaurant in the world. Situated in Ybor City “Cigar Capital of the World”, the Columbia draws off its history and the unique culture of the area to create an experience that will make for fond memories. VHPA guests will also enjoy a 15 minute private Spanish Flamenco Show, the traditional dance of Spain. The music, the colorful costumes, and the passion of the dance will transport VHPA’ers to the famous Flamenco cafes of Barcelona and Madrid. This buffet will include signature Spanish Main dishes, Cuban bread and butter, Columbia’s Original 1905 Salad, side dishes, dessert and freshly brewed coffee, iced tea, and soft drinks.

Capacity: This event is limited to 54 participants.

Writer’s Panel: 27 May – 9:30am – 11:00am

The panel is back and more informative than ever!!! Learn from VHPA members who are successful authors. They’ve told some of their stories, so if you don’t, who will? In the session, led by award and best-selling VHPA Life Member Marc Liebman, you’ll learn about how to get started. This session will be split into a short presentation on how to break down the process of writing a book into bite sized chunks. So you can get started. Then, you can ask the members of a panel of successful VHPA authors about their experience writing their books, finding a publisher, and selling them.

John and Mable Ringling Museum #1: 27 May – 9:30am – 3:30pm

The Ringling celebrates the legacy of circus owner and art collector, John Ringling, and his wife, Mable. It combines outstanding art and circus museums with a historic mansion and theater, occupying beautiful grounds and gardens in Sarasota, Florida. VHPA Guests will take a 45 to 60 minute bus ride to Sarasota where you will be given free rein to explore the Art and Circus Museums and Bayfront Gardens at your leisure. The Ringlings’ historic mansion, CA’D’ZAN, was built to resemble a Venetian Gothic Palace and is onsite to tour, as well. This tour will require lots of walking as the museum is large and spread out. Lunch is available onsite and IS NOT included with the ticket.

Capacity: This event is limited to 100 participants.

Vietnam Center & Archive Videos #1: 27 May– 11:00am – 12:00pm

While the VHPA has been working with the *Vietnam Center* and Sam Johnson *Vietnam Archive* at Texas Tech University (VNCA for short) for more than a decade, things ‘took off’ starting in 2015 when we were able to hire first one, then two and, for a time, three students to work exclusively on our legacy items and collections. Recently we developed four short tutorial videos specifically to address VHPA’ers questions and to show how you can add your pieces to our collective ‘mosaic history’ of helicopters in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War. We will also provide a ‘sitrep’ on our most recent accomplishments plus our two new initiatives.

Columbia Group Lunch: 27 May – 11:15am – 2:00pm

Our guests will head over to Columbia Restaurant for a group dinner like never before. Columbia Restaurant is the oldest restaurant in Florida and the largest Spanish restaurant in the world. Situated in Ybor City “Cigar Capital of the World”, the Columbia draws off its history and the unique culture of the area to create an experience that will make for fond memories. VHPA guests will also enjoy a 15 minute private Spanish Flamenco Show, the traditional dance of Spain. The music, the colorful costumes, and the passion of the dance will transport VHPA’ers to the famous Flamenco cafes of Barcelona and Madrid. This buffet will include signature Spanish Main dishes, Cuban bread and butter, Columbia’s Original 1905 Salad, side dishes, dessert and freshly brewed coffee, iced tea, and soft drinks.

Capacity: This event is limited to 100 participants.

J.C. Newman Cigar Factory Tour w/Columbia Group Lunch #2: 27 May – 11:15am – 4:00pm

This tour will start with a bus ride over to Columbia Restaurant for a group dinner like never before. Columbia Restaurant is the oldest restaurant in Florida and the largest Spanish restaurant in the world. Situated in Ybor City “Cigar Capital of the

World", the Columbia draws off its history and the unique culture of the area to create an experience that will make for fond memories. VHPA guests will also enjoy a 15 minute private Spanish Flamenco Show, the traditional dance of Spain. The music, the colorful costumes, and the passion of the dance will transport VHPA'ers to the famous Flamenco cafes of Barcelona and Madrid. This buffet will include signature Spanish Main dishes, Cuban bread and butter, Columbia's Original 1905 Salad, side dishes, dessert and freshly brewed coffee, iced tea, and soft drinks.

After lunch, the bus will take our guests for a top to bottom exploration of El Reloj, the only cigar factory still in operation in Cigar City. Founded in 1895, J.C. Newman Cigar Company is a four-generation family business and is the oldest family-owned premium cigar company in the United States. VHPA guests will go through the process of cigar making by hand and on antique cigar machines, the Newman family legacy, the history of Cigar City, watch old cigar films in an interactive theater, browse rare cigars and gifts in the factory store, and much more. Three stories high, and one city-block long, our historic cigar factory will please cigar enthusiasts, history buffs, and those with interests in manufacturing and technology.

Capacity: This event is limited to 54 participants.

Tampa Water History Tour #4: 27 May – 12:30pm – 2:00pm

Our members will learn about how this city grew from a Spanish outpost to the fastest growing city in Florida. This tour takes VHPA guests step by step through the evolution. As you cruise along the waters in a roomy vessel, history unfolds all around you. These guides will have little known facts about the city to share with you. Many locals have said, "I have lived here all my life, and I did not know that about Tampa." When you leave this tour, you will know more than most of the locals! Being one of the picturesque harbors in Florida, Tampa harbor abounds with history on all sides. The waterfront features museums, shipyards, and million dollar homes. See the Pirate ship, Gabriella, up close and learn our pirate history. Ask the guides, "What's a pirate beard in Tampa?" You will be surprised by the answer. View the most beautiful building in Tampa, The Plant Hotel. Learn how Tampa became a city, and who made it happen.

Capacity: This event is limited to 50 participants.

American Victory Ship #1: 27 May – 2:15pm – 4:45pm

One of the country's most historic icons, American Victory was built in 1945 in only 55 days and is now one of only 4 fully-functioning vessels in the USA having served in WWII, Korea, and Vietnam. Aboard the American Victory Ship and Museum, VHPA Guests can come aboard a fully-functioning 1940s era steamship. Experience an unforgettable voyage of discovery and relive history by visiting cavernous three level cargo holds, radio and gyro rooms, hospital, galley, weaponry, steering stations, flying bridge, signaling equipment, wheelhouse, mess halls, engine room, crew cabins, lifeboats, and cargo equipment, then gaze upon photographs, uniforms, medals, documents, and naval equipment. This will include a ticket for admission, the bus ride to be dropped off directly at the front entrance, and is self-guided. There is a café on site for food purchase.

Note: This tour has no air conditioning, requires lots of walking, and is not handicap accessible. There can be as many as 55 steps to access all areas of the ship.

Capacity: This event is limited to 100 participants.

Movie: 27 May – 3:00pm – 4:30pm

Exact movie showing TBD

StarShip Dinner Cruise: 27 May – 6:30pm – 9:30pm

Set sail on the waterways of Tampa Bay with Yacht StarShip and delight in a different kind of dining experience! Our members can expect unmatched service, exquisite views, and a delicious, freshly-prepared dining experience. Enjoy stunning sunsets, bright city lights of Downtown Tampa, breathtaking views, and entertainment as you sip and savor your way through dinner and cocktails. This private dinner cruise will pick up and drop our members off at the dock right outside the hotel. The dinner buffet will include salad, beef, chicken, and salmon entrees, mash potatoes, seasonal vegetables, dessert, coffee, and tea. DJ entertainment will be onboard with a dance floor for VHPA guests to dance the night away. Don't forget the camera for spectacular views of Tampa lit up at night.

Capacity: This event is limited to 300 participants.

SATURDAY, 28 MAY 2022

KIA/MIA Gold Star Breakfast: 28 May - 7:30am - 9:00am

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 sponsor guests for the breakfast you can use the Event Sponsorship section under Voluntary Contributions in [Step 2](#) of the online registration.

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. The exact breakfast menu is TBD.

John and Mable Ringling Museum #2: 28 May - 9:30am - 3:30pm

The Ringling celebrates the legacy of circus owner and art collector, John Ringling, and his wife, Mable. It combines outstanding art and circus museums with a historic mansion and theater, occupying beautiful grounds and gardens in Sarasota, Florida. VHPA Guests will take a 45 to 60 minute bus ride to Sarasota where you will be given free rein to explore the Art and Circus Museums and Bayfront Gardens at your leisure. The Ringlings' historic mansion, CA'D'ZAN, was built to resemble a Venetian Gothic Palace and is onsite to tour, as well. This tour will require lots of walking as the museum is large and spread out.

Note: Lunch is available onsite and IS NOT included with the ticket.

Capacity: This event is limited to 100 participants.

St. Petersburg City Tour w/Lunch #2: 28 May - 9:30am - 3:30pm

Join your Tour Guide, Todd, from Travel Is Fun Tours to discover all about St Petersburg, Florida - We're not just a suburb of Tampa! See some of the more than 500 beautiful Murals painted in each Years SHINE festival that attracts artists from all over the World. Find out how a coin toss determined the name of the city, learn about the founders and early history of St Petersburg, and learn about the very first commercial airline flight. We'll also visit St Petersburg's Iconic Pier and have a great lunch (included) at Doc Ford's. Did you know over 100 movies have been filmed in the St Petersburg area? We'll find out about those too! Plus we'll visit St Petersburg's affluent neighborhood Snell Isle. We think you'll go home with a deep appreciation for the Sunshine City and want to come back!

Capacity: This event is limited to 54 participants.

American Victory Ship #2: 27 May - 9:45am - 12:15pm

One of the country's most historic icons, American Victory was built in 1945 in only 55 days and is now one of only 4 fully-functioning vessels in the USA having served in WWII, Korea, and Vietnam. Aboard the American Victory Ship and Museum, VHPA Guests can come aboard a fully-functioning 1940s era steamship. Experience an unforgettable voyage of discovery and relive history by visiting cavernous three level cargo holds, radio and gyro rooms, hospital, galley, weaponry, steering stations, flying bridge, signaling equipment, wheelhouse, mess halls, engine room, crew cabins, lifeboats, and cargo equipment, then gaze upon photographs, uniforms, medals, documents, and naval equipment. This will include a ticket for admission, the bus ride to be dropped off directly at the front entrance, and is self-guided. There is a café on site for food purchase.

Note: This tour has no air conditioning, requires lots of walking and is not handicap accessible. There can be as many as 55 steps to access all areas of the ship.

Capacity: This event is limited to 100 participants.

Tampa Water History Tour #5: 28 May – 10:00am – 11:30am

Our members will learn about how this city grew from a Spanish outpost to the fastest growing city in Florida. This tour takes VHPA guests step by step through the evolution. As you cruise along the waters in a roomy vessel, history unfolds all around you. These guides will have little known facts about the city to share with you. Many locals have said, "I have lived here all my life, and I did not know that about Tampa." When you leave this tour, you will know more than most of the locals! Being one of the picturesque harbors in Florida, Tampa harbor abounds with history on all sides. The waterfront features museums, shipyards, and million dollar homes. See the Pirate ship, Gabriella, up close and learn our pirate history. Ask the guides, "What's a pirate beard in Tampa?" You will be surprised by the answer. View the most beautiful building in Tampa, The Plant Hotel. Learn how Tampa became a city, and who made it happen.

This event is limited to 50 participants.

Movie: 28 May – 10:00am – 11:30am

Exact movie showing TBD

Ed Fletcher's Early Bird Theatre w/Lunch: 28 May – 10:15am – 3:15pm

VHPA guests will take a bus ride to Ed Fletcher's Early Bird Theatre for a comedy play "The Long Weekend". This play is wicked wit and uproarious comedy by Canada's favorite playwright Norm Foster! Two couples come to a cottage where they discover fantastic truths and hilarious deceptions. The truth and lies of a friendship come to the surface during a weekend visit. There are plenty of surprises along the way in this biting comedy of manners. Before the show starts, enjoy a lunch to include: Virginia Baked Ham, Carved Top Round Roast Beef with Au Jus and Horseradish, Salmon Almondine, Seasonal Chicken Entree, and Meatballs in Marinara Sauce or Baked Ziti. Rounding out the menu we have our side selections which include Seasonal Rice, Mashed Potatoes, and Vegetables. After lunch, enjoy coffee and your choice of dessert as you prepare for the show.

Capacity: This event is limited to 100 participants.

Zubrick Magic Theatre #2: 28 May – 1:15pm – 5:00pm

Illusionists Chris & Ryan Zubrick conjure up an exhilarating blend of sleight-of-hand, family-friendly comedy and breathtaking grand-scale illusions in a 70-minute private performance for VHPA guests. Conveniently located in downtown St. Petersburg, Florida, VHPA guests will take a 40 minute bus ride to the Zubrick Magic Theatre where this performance will guarantee to stretch smiles and drop jaws. VHPA guests will be walking away scratching their heads in disbelief saying, "How did they do that?!" This show has been ranked one of the top things to do around Tampa and received numerous awards.

Capacity: This event is limited to 90 participants.

Vietnam Center & Archive Videos #2: 27 May – 2:00pm – 3:00pm

While the VHPA has been working with the *Vietnam Center* and Sam Johnson *Vietnam Archive* at Texas Tech University (VNCA for short) for more than a decade, things 'took off' starting in 2015 when we were able to hire first one, then two and, for a time, three students to work exclusively on our legacy items and collections. Recently we developed four short tutorial videos specifically to address VHPA's questions and to show how you can add your pieces to our collective 'mosaic history' of helicopters in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War. We will also provide a 'sitrep' on our most recent accomplishments plus our two new initiatives.

Quilter's Show & Tell: 28 May – 2:00pm – 4:00pm

This special meeting continues the tradition started at least nine years ago to present wonderful hand-made, American flag themed quilts to VHPA's and possibly local area veterans.

Tampa Water History Tour #6: 28 May – 4:00pm – 5:30pm

Our members will learn about how this city grew from a Spanish outpost to the fastest growing city in Florida. This tour takes VHPA guests step by step through the evolution. As you cruise along the waters in a roomy vessel, history unfolds all around you. These guides will have little known facts about the city to share with you. Many locals have said, "I have lived here all my life, and I did not know that about Tampa." When you leave this tour, you will know more than most of the locals! Being one of the picturesque harbors in Florida, Tampa harbor abounds with history on all sides. The waterfront features museums, shipyards, and million dollar homes. See the Pirate ship, Gabriella, up close and learn our pirate history.

Ask the guides, "What's a pirate beard in Tampa?" You will be surprised by the answer. View the most beautiful building in Tampa, The Plant Hotel. Learn how Tampa became a city, and who made it happen.

This event is limited to 50 participants.

Welcome / First Time Attendee Reception w/College of the Ozarks Chorale: 28 May – 7:00pm – 9:00pm

Traditionally this reception was the first official event for everyone to get together FOR SURE at a Reunion. Now it is just a "get together" at an appointed place and time for everyone who attends the Reunion. We'll position cash bars to make certain no one has to stand in a long line. Once again we will be entertained by the College of the Ozarks Chorale. They are known for their patriotic songs, and the college itself is a great supporter of veterans. This will be a highlight of the reunion that you will surely remember.

SUNDAY, 29 MAY 2022

Pre-Memorial Service Breakfast: 29 May – 7:30am – 8:45am

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 2021 Reunion in Charlotte, NC.

Memorial Service: 29 May – 9:00am – 9:30am

The Memorial Service has been part of the "Reunion's Fabric" for at least seventeen 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 – Cactus Moon Succulent: 29 May – 10:00am – 11:30am

Crystal Desi, Succulent Florist and owner of local plant shop Cactus Moon, will teach you how to make your own succulent garden out of a cigar box in this fun DIY workshop! Learn about the soil, care, upkeep, design, and more for these drought tolerant living arrangements. All materials are provided and guests will take home their creation! You choose your own souvenir cigar box (a variety of styles!) cacti, succulents and fillers (sand, gravel, rocks, moss, etc.). Bags will be provided to help transport your arrangement home on an airplane. Take home a piece of Tampa with this fun and creative take on a souvenir.

Capacity: This event is limited to 100 participants.

Annual Business Meeting: 29 May – 10:00am – 12:30pm

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

Henry B. Plant Museum: 29 May – 12:45pm – 2:45pm

The Henry B. Plant Museum is housed in the 1891 Tampa Bay Hotel, the Victorian railroad resort that defined the elegant frontier, now a National Historic Landmark. Unlike most museums dedicated to lifestyles of the past, it contains the actual furnishings enjoyed by the first guests to visit here. The Museum accurately reflects the opulence of turn-of-the-century America and the vision of American transportation pioneer, Henry B. Plant. Then, guests will step back in time and enjoy a single character performance that will bring turn-of-the-century Tampa Bay hotel staff and guests to life. VHPA guests will enjoy a performance of Henry A. Dobson, Spanish-American Solider, 1898. He will share his history of the army and Tampa with insight, honesty, and humor. Catch a glimpse of life at the hotel through the eyes of Henry A. Dobson.

Capacity: This event is limited to 54 participants.

American Victory Ship #3: 29 May – 1:30pm – 4:00pm

One of the country's most historic icons, American Victory was built in 1945 in only 55 days and is now one of only 4 fully-functioning vessels in the USA having served in WWII, Korea, and Vietnam. Aboard the American Victory Ship and Museum, VHPA Guests can come aboard a fully-functioning 1940s era steamship. Experience an unforgettable voyage of discovery and relive history by visiting cavernous three level cargo holds, radio and gyro rooms, hospital, galley, weaponry, steering stations, flying bridge, signaling equipment, wheelhouse, mess halls, engine room, crew cabins, lifeboats, and cargo equipment, then gaze upon photographs, uniforms, medals, documents, and naval equipment. This will include a ticket for admission, the bus ride to be dropped off directly at the front entrance, and is self-guided. There is a café on site for food purchase.

Note: This tour has no air conditioning, requires lots of walking and is not handicap accessible. There can be as many as 55 steps to access all areas of the ship.

Capacity: This event is limited to 54 participants.

Closing Banquet: Registered Adults – 29 May – 5:30pm – 10:30pm

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

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

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

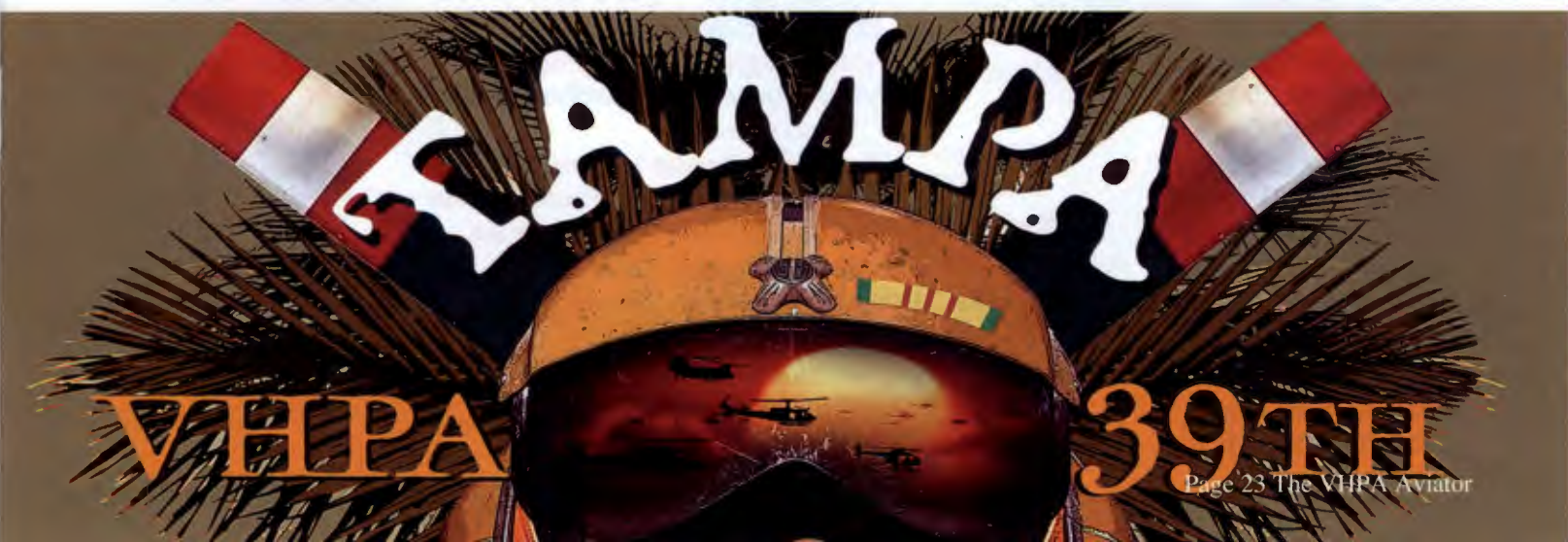
Closing Banquet: Registered Child <12 – 29 May – 5:30pm – 10:30pm

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 – 29 May – 5:30pm – 10:30pm

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

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



REUNION SCHEDULE

TAMPA ★ FLORIDA

Last updated 07 December 2021

TIME:

EVENT:

THURSDAY, MAY 26

9:00 am - 12:00 pm
9:00 am - 8:00 pm
9:00 am - 8:00 pm
9:00 am - 8:00 pm
9:00 am - 8:00 pm
9:00 am - 10:00 pm
10:00 am - 11:00 am
11:00 am - 11:00 pm
11:30 am - 1:45 pm
11:30 am - 5:30 pm
12:00 pm - 1:30 pm
1:00 pm - 5:00 pm
2:00 pm - 7:15 pm
2:15 pm - 4:30 pm
3:00 pm - 4:30 pm
5:00 pm - 6:30 pm
6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

HQ Registration Desk
Pre-Registered Packet Pickup
Welcome Desk
Pre-Ordered T-shirt Pick Up
Vendor Room Open
Mini Reunions / TOCs
Oral History Interviews
O' Club Open
J.C. Newman Cigar Factory Tour #1
St. Petersburg City Tour w/Lunch #1
Tampa Water History Tour #1
HQ Registration Desk
Zubrick Magic Theatre Show w/Dinner
J.C. Newman Cigar Factory Tour #2
Tampa Water History Tour #2
Movie - TBD
HQ Registration Desk
Early Bird / First Time Attendee Gathering

FRIDAY, MAY 27

7:00 am - 3:30 pm
7:30 am - 9:00 am
8:00 am - 11:30 am
8:00 am - 8:00 pm
8:00 am - 8:00 pm
8:00 am - 8:00 pm
9:00 am - 10:00 am
9:00 am - 8:00 pm
9:00 am - 10:00 pm
9:15 am - 10:45 am
9:15 am - 2:00 pm
9:30 am - 11:00 am
9:30 am - 3:30 pm
11:00 am - 12:00 pm
11:00 am - 11:00 pm
11:15 am - 2:00 pm
11:15 am - 4:00 pm
12:30 pm - 2:00 pm
12:30 pm - 5:00 pm
2:15 pm - 4:45 pm
3:00 pm - 4:30 pm
3:00 pm - 5:00 pm
6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
6:30 pm - 9:30 pm

Golf
Breakfast
HQ Registration Desk
Pre-Registered Packet Pickup
Welcome Desk
Pre-Ordered T-shirt Pick Up
Oral History Interviews
Vendor Room Open
Mini Reunions / TOCs
Tampa Water History Tour #3
J.C. Newman Cigar Factory Tour w/Columbia Lunch #1
Writer's Panel
John and Mable Ringling Museum #1
Vietnam Center & Archive Videos #1
O' Club Open
Columbia Group Lunch
J.C. Newman Cigar Factory Tour w/Columbia Lunch #2
Tampa Water History Tour #4
HQ Registration Desk
American Victory Ship #1
Movie - TBD
Banquet Seating
HQ Registration Desk
StarShip Dinner Cruise

REUNION SCHEDULE

TAMPA ★ FLORIDA

Last updated 07 December 2021

TIME:

EVENT:

SATURDAY, MAY 28

7:30 am - 9:00 am

8:00 am - 11:00 am

8:00 am - 12:00 pm

8:00 am - 12:00 pm

8:00 am - 5:00 pm

9:00 am - 10:00 am

9:00 am - 8:00 pm

9:00 am - 10:00 pm

9:30 am - 3:30 pm

9:30 am - 3:30 pm

9:45 am - 12:15 pm

10:00 am - 11:30 am

10:00 am - 11:30 am

10:15 am - 3:15 pm

11:00 am - 11:00 pm

12:00 pm - 6:00 pm

1:15 pm - 5:00 pm

2:00 pm - 3:00 pm

2:00 pm - 4:00 pm

4:00 pm - 5:30 pm

7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

KIA/MIA Gold Star Breakfast

HQ Registration Desk

Pre-Registered Packet Pickup

Pre-Ordered T-shirt Pick Up

Welcome Desk

Oral History Interviews

Vendor Room Open

Mini Reunions / TOCs

John and Mable Ringling Museum #2

St. Petersburg City Tour w/Lunch #2

American Victory Ship #2

Tampa Water History Tour #5

Movie - TBD

Ed Fletcher's Early Bird Theatre w/Lunch

O' Club Open

HQ Registration Desk

Zubrick Magic Theatre #2

Vietnam Center & Archive Videos #2

Quilters Show & Tell

Tampa Water History Tour #6

Welcome Reception w/College of the Ozarks Chorale

SUNDAY, MAY 29

7:30 am - 8:45 am

8:00 am - 11:00 am

8:00 am - 1:00 pm

9:00 am - 9:30 am

10:00 am - 11:30 pm

10:00 am - 12:30 pm

12:00 pm - 4:00 pm

12:30 pm - 11:00 pm

12:45 pm - 2:45 pm

1:00 pm - 5:00 pm

1:30 pm - 4:00 pm

4:00 pm - 6:00 pm

5:30 pm - 10:30 pm

Pre-Memorial Breakfast

Consolidated HQ Reg, Pre-Reg & T-Shirts

Welcome Desk

Memorial Service

Spouse/Guest Event - Cactus Moon Succulent

Annual Business Meeting

Consolidated Reg, Pre-Reg & T-Shirts

O' Club Open

Henry B. Plant Museum

Mini-Reunions / TOCs

American Victory Ship #3

Banquet Seating

Closing Banquet w/Entertainment

My Tours in RVN

How do you tell a story? I wish I knew; I just want to say I feel good about my service in RVN, I did nothing noteworthy. As did so many others, Air Force, Army, Marines, Navy, and Air America pilots and crews, I did what our country asked us to do. From the Pvt. to the SGT MAJ, the WO1 to the O6 doing what we were called on to do was everyone's job.

Of course, we remember a few little incidents that happened now and again. I was assigned to the 498th Dustoff during my first tour and can certainly say it was quite an experience. We flew many varied missions; each one a little different. I served with some of the bravest men encountered in my life. The crew chiefs, door gunners, and medics, were undoubtedly the best in the world. To ask them what they were doing would result in, "just my job, sir." I believe all of us, regardless of position or rank, simply wanted to do our job and come home in one piece.

My first tour was bounded by an area from Nha Trang to

Pleiku and all places in between. We picked up sailors off a mine sweeper and searched for downed F4 crews out of Cam Rhan Bay at on a very dark night over water (that was hairy). We took on too many KIA and WIA just off the coast at a place called Ninwah while being shot to pieces. That RED CROSS makes a good target.

My second tour was somewhat more relaxed. We flew CH-47Cs out of Liftmaster Pad in good old Phu Bai in support of 101st AB DIV. (very interesting). We also supported the Marines up at Vandergriff combat base. Back at Liftmaster, we assisted in a few air assaults in Hooks. We did not sleep very much at night due to 120mm rockets keeping us awake.

No real war stories, just plenty of work doing what soldiers do. I would like to say it like the late Bob Hope: "Thanks for the memories." For me and so many others it was a blessing to serve our country. GOD BLESS AMERICA

*By Life member Dorse 'Bud' Sherrill CW4 Ret.
Dustoff 13, Playtex 19A*

Friends of Vinh Son Orphanage (FVSO), Kontum, Vietnam

Patrick Leary, FVSO President and VHPA Life Member



The children have managed to maintain big smiles despite all the changes in their daily lives. Whether it's school closures, typhoons, masks or holiday cancellations, they find a way to stay connected.

FVSO is a 501©(3) non-profit group that provides support for the six Vinh Son Montagnard orphanages in the Kontum region of Vietnam and the Sao Mai orphanage in Pleiku. These facilities are home to over 700 Montagnard children who are cared for by dedicated Catholic Nuns. For 20 years, FVSO has been a major contributor to the well being of these very special children. Through tax deductible donations, FVSO provides food, medicine, dental care, education, shelter and emergency relief assistance. THANK YOU for your support!

To donate or to contact FVSO

Mail: FVSO, P.O. Box 9322-B
Auburn, Calif. 95604-9322

Web: FriendsofVSO.org

Email: FriendsofVSO@gmail.com

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.



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



"Passing the Torch"
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 CHPA Life Member
www.joeklineart.com



**WWI
 US Battlefields-France
 22—31 May**

**D-Day & Battle of
 Bulge 27 May—9 June**

Germany 13—27 August

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VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

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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

COVID, or is it an unwillingness to work, has struck again. For the last couple of years, we have enjoyed fellowship and a great meal during our Christmas party at The Barn Door. Not so this year. Citing a lack of staff, management stated they cannot take care of us this year as our group is too large for them to handle. There was a specific administrative reason for management's decision, but let's just say that it is an unfortunate decision indeed.

Not to be deterred, our extremely efficient and professional Senior Member at Large and Dining Coordinator Jim Boykin, started a quest to find an alternative venue, and find one he did. The Alamo Chapter of the VHPA will meet on 4 December at VFW Post 8800 in Startzville, TX. They have a fantastic venue and are excited about being our host. Well done Jim and many thanks to VFW Post 8800.

The group did have a great luncheon on 27 October at Gennaro's Trattoria in Canyon Lake, TX. The ladies were present to add a bit of decorum and keep the "This is no sxxt" tales somewhat truthful, well kind of. Gennaro's is a great place to enjoy lunch or dinner. Gennaro's is highly recommended by the community. I've included a couple of pictures as an enticement should you ever be in the area.

The council continues the process of early planning for the 2023 VHPA reunion, which will be held in San Antonio, 2-5 July 2023. As host chapter, we have many items to accomplish between now and then. Chip Brown will be our chapter president in 2023 and is ready and willing to lead the effort to ensure that the 2023 Reunion will be the best yet. As noted previously, San Antonio is a military town. Almost all restaurants and other commercial enterprises offer a 10-20% discount to military, active or retired. This includes spouses. There are so many activities that can be scheduled for attendees to choose from that it would take months for you to have the opportunity to enjoy them all.

The Chapter will participate in Wreaths Over America in San Antonio, which is scheduled on 18 December this year. Chapter members will volunteer to lay the wreaths and to contribute to the program. The Chapter will attempt to identify graves where VHPA helicopter pilots and Alamo Chapter members could be honored.

On another note, the chapter continues support of the Huey 369 project and the Vietnam Archives Project at Texas Tech.



The chapter continues to move forward with President Ray Vaske flying left seat. We are looking forward to 2022 under the leadership of President-Elect Dale Stout. 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 CHAPTER

The steel has been unloaded and construction progresses as you read this, the National American Huey History Museum (NAHHM) is coming to fruition!

Located on Route 31 in North Central Indiana, across from Grissom Aeroplex (formerly Grissom AFB), folks driving up and down this busy highway are watching the Museum take rise. Construction will continue through the winter and soon the ONLY museum in the world dedicated to the Huey helicopter will exist.

We still need your help! Although the building has begun and the structure will be complete, we are not yet fully funded. The Maintenance hangar will be complete, and the Restoration hangar will be complete but the interior of the Museum Building still lacks the funds to be completed.

This building is real; it's happening. With many, many donations of \$1000 or even less, with many donations of over \$1000 and a very few "large" donations, it's coming together. But we are yet to be fully funded. What more speaks of our legacy in Vietnam than the Huey? Even if our mission was in other aircraft, virtually all of us flew a Huey at one time or another. So, reach in them jeans and pull out some greens. Or as my preacher says, "Don't make me holler, don't make me shout; turn them pockets inside out!" Plus, your name will be on a bronze plaque at the main entrance to the museum with a minimum \$1000 donation.

Gentlemen, and ladies, I have been involved with this museum project since its inception and can testify that it is an extremely worthwhile project. American Huey 369 (including the Museum) is a 501 (c) (3) Charitable Organization; my understanding is that it would normally be a tax write-off. The time is now; help us build this important part of our legacy. It matters.

Phil Marshall



ARIZONA CHAPTER

We had an exceptional dinner last Saturday at Steak and Stone with some 15 people in attendance. Many attended the annual AAHF SW Chapter fly in where we had some 15 helicopters to include an Army AH64E Apache.

We have many members who are also members of the Southwest Chapter of AAHF. Many of both worked the Mesa Veterans Day Parade in which we had our UH1M, and also the Phoenix Veterans Day Parade where we had our OH6A. It should be noted that the UH1M came to us two years ago from the Northern CA chapter of VHPA. Thanks to Ken Fritz and his team!

All the best and hope all had a great Thanksgiving.

Dave Sale



VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES



CALIFORNIA NORTH CHAPTER

Our chapter hasn't been doing much with the lingering Covid mess, but we're still alive and figuring out things to do for next year. The activities of other chapters are inspiring us to do more together. Some of our guys have been doing some interesting things: Al Doucette has been very active with his flying model plane group. They had a flying exhibition of 1/5th scale where Al was one of the cooks for the big dinner they shared. Ed is still driving his old tractor. Ken Fritz has a new implement for his newer tractor and after designing a new solar system for a friend's resort in Fiji; he has been tearing his hair out trying to get a container of goods shipped to Fiji. He says this is far more difficult than anything one reads about in the newspapers. Dave Anderson is still tuning his Huey simulator with VR, and he says it's almost ready. When he's satisfied the system will work well enough, we'll go to his place and



humiliate ourselves on it. At present, our only event is planned for 25 JAN at Fuso, an Italian restaurant in Vacaville for a luncheon get together.

Curt Knapp submitted this link about our former helicopter 563, which is now cared for by the AAHF in Arizona:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nqqEAYceNrE>

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all our friends in VHPA. We are confident 2022 will be better than 2021! Please watch our website for news between Aviator newsletters and stop in to say hello and join us if you're in the area.

www.vhpacn.org

Ken Fritz

President, VHPA-CCN

Dave Anderson

Secretary, VHPA-CCN

FLORIDA CHAPTER

Outstanding?! Sure! Magnificent?! You better believe it! Exceptional?! It goes without saying! Our 28th annual reunion, September 23-26, 2021 was absolutely FUNtastic, and very much welcomed and appreciated after the COVID-19 pandemic caused the cancellation of last year's event. It was held at the beautiful DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Tampa Airport, within a 15-minute drive to the George M. Steinbrenner Field (Spring Training Camp of the New York Yankees baseball team) and only one mile from the very popular and vibrant Westshore Plaza Mall where our ladies took a "field trip" during our annual meeting! It was the perfect location for this year's annual reunion.

After completing our administrative and logistical tasks of set-



The Double Tree by Hilton Hotel at Tampa Airport – Front Desk Registration Counter



The Double Tree by Hilton Hotel – VHPAF LOACH on Static Display in Parking Lot.

ting up our registration tables, hospitality room, and sales store, we strategically parked our LOACH in the front parking lot of the hotel. It was then time for FUN, FOOD, and FELLOWSHIP! One highlight was enjoying dinner at the Columbia Restaurant in Tampa's historic Ybor City, a landmark since 1905. Today, it's Florida's Oldest Restaurant and the world's largest Spanish restaurant. It was also named One of America's

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

Most Historic Restaurants by USA Today. The restaurant offered classic elegance in a Mediterranean style setting where we enjoyed award-winning Spanish-Cuban cuisine in old-world-style dining rooms. Needless to say, a great time was had by all!

The highlight of our final day was the evening Banquet. Our guest speaker, Lieutenant Colonel Robert A Kazmarek, is currently the Deputy Director, Center for Adaptive and Innovative Statecraft, Joint Special Operations University, MacDill AFB, Florida. He is a graduate of the United States Military Academy, and was recently selected to command the 2nd Assault Helicopter Battalion (UH-60), 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, in Fort Drum, NY. LTC Kazmarek has deployed four times in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom (2005-06), Operation Enduring Freedom (2007-08 and 2010-11), and Operation Freedom's Sentinel (2017). He delivered an exceptionally inspirational and motivational message, comparing and contrasting Vietnam era helicopters with present-day helicopter capabilities to include weaponry, and technological advances in avionics, navigational, and communications systems. His presentation was very well received by all.

Our last event of the year was in support of the Vietnam Memorial Traveling Wall in Naples, FL for Veterans Week, November 10th through the 14th. We took our static display OH-6 and setup beside the Wall. The event was exceptionally well-planned, coordinated, attended, and appreciated by all. One of our goals is to provide an opportunity for everyone visiting the Wall to see a helicopter that flew in Vietnam and to be able to talk to our VHPAF pilots and crewmembers about their experiences in Vietnam. We spoke with hundreds of veterans and their families, and one wife made a point to stop back by after her husband had spoken with us to say thanks. She also said her husband had never visited the Wall previously and this was the first time he had ever talked to anyone about his experience in Vietnam! Our 'mission accomplished'! By the way, we also recruited four new members. Imagine that!



Annual Meeting attendees, including our Associate Member, Susan "Donut Dollie" McLean.



The Columbia Restaurant – The laughter, excitement, and anticipation of a splendid feast.



The Hospitality Room – "where stories, like fine wine, get better with age and memory!"



Banquet Guest Speaker, LT Colonel Kazmarek, receives gift from President Randy Woods.



Banquet Guest Speaker – LT Colonel Kazmarek giving his presentation.



Dining in the Columbia Restaurant's classic elegance and Mediterranean style setting.



Cori Higgins (the Naples Event Coordinator) is flanked by Tom Tomlinson (VHPAF Treasurer) on her right, and Tom Rountree (VHPAF Event Coordinator) on her left, along with VHPAF President Randy Woods (wearing the colorful 'Cobra' shirt) posing in front of our OH-6 static display.

Submitted by Dr. Joe Ponds, VHPAF Chapter Secretary

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

GEORGIA CHAPTER

On Saturday, November 20, 2021, 15 intrepid Aviators met at the Come-N-Get-It Family Restaurant in Marietta, GA. November is the month when officers are elected. After an excellent briefing by GA Chapter Member Doug Lackey in which he brought up a number of ideas for growing the Chapter by expanding our meeting locations to areas more convenient to members living in other parts of the Atlanta Metro Area, and having the Chapter become more involved with other Veteran organizations, the election was held. Doug Lackey is the new GA Chapter President, Skip Bell is Vice President, and Gary Earls is the Secretary-Treasurer. The GA Chapter members are excited about the new direction in which the organization is moving and are looking forward to this next phase in the organization's evolution.

A quote from the new Chapter President should offer new structure to this group:

"From the reaction of the members present to my presentation, to have elected me as their president, I am indeed humbled. For those members who did not attend, you may rue this day! We are going to be very busy developing many opportunities."

"This will be an exciting time for us as we take our combined experiences in a war zone and move to seek out opportunities where we can initiate better representation of the VHPA in the state of Georgia. Our objectives will be focused upon joint participation with other Veteran Groups within the State. We will conduct scheduled membership gatherings in other areas around Atlanta to broaden the existing membership participation. We will generate outreach programs which will pursue potential new members and develop the awareness structure to inform others that we are unique. We will take advantage of our uniqueness and share our stories and contribute these legacies to those who follow."



Following the election, a Special Award was presented to Skip Bell for his "Outstanding and Selfless Performance" as the Chapter, President During the Year 2021.



Ops Director Steve Wages takes Skip Bell through 16623's Flight History in Viet Nam and other parts of the world.

Side Note: If you are ever in the Atlanta area, take some time to go visit the great folks at Army Aviation Heritage Foundation at the airport in Hampton, GA. Visit their website at www.armyav.com. They have rebuilt many Hueys and Cobras and have a very busy calendar. Just to smell the hangar is worth the trip. It is still the same as it was those many years ago!

Carl "Skip" Bell
Vice President



Steve shows us the deep history on the 40th Cobra ever built including unit photos taken in Vietnam.

MICHIGAN CHAPTER

The Michigan Chapter continues to hold gatherings and other events as winter starts to set in.

Earlier, on September 1st Mark Benjamin held another monthly gathering in Traverse City and filed an AAR. In the September 1st Traverse City photo the participants were: left to right around clockwise John Leffler, President, Grand Traverse Area Veterans Coalition, Ed & Chris Canright, Carol & Lee Luck, Bob Matlis, Sandy McLeod, Mark Benjamin, Bob Kutulis, President, NW MI MOAA, and Chris & Joe Meredith. This was an active group with lots of laughs and I just can't remember what we talked about but it was fun!!!

October 6th saw another Traverse City gathering which attracts high level members of veterans' groups and other professions to



the events. Identified in the October 6th Traverse City photo were left to right: Bart Halliday; Pixie & Bob Matlis; Ron Hofmeister, VP, Grand Traverse Area Veterans Coalition; John Leffler, President, Grand Traverse Area Veterans Coalition representing more than 8500 veterans in Northwest Michigan; Paul Fitzsimons, Architect who designed the Huey 369 Facility in Peru, IN; Mark Benjamin, Tomahawk 23; Jerry Wright, Tomahawk 29; Don Pond; Walter Topp, retired Chief Pharmacist at Munson Hospital in Traverse City provided an update on Covid 19 and treatments available in the area; and Barry Witt. Mark reported it was a nice group with lots of good stories and laughs.

Repeating an event from June to include photos Mark Benjamin representing our Michigan Chapter teamed up with 222

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

None at a car show in Kalkaska. 22 2 None is a non-profit organization that works to raise awareness and provide support to end veteran suicide by helping veterans to continue Fighting the Fight Within. The car show had over 100 entries with the proceeds going to 22 2 None. An unused grade school building, called Belay My Last Barracks was recently purchased by 22 2 None, provides transitional housing for veterans and a place for new beginnings. This facility provides support and assistance to veterans making a sometimes difficult transition from war to peace in civilian life. The Barracks offers Peer Support Meetings, a lounge/game room, movie theater area as well as a workout room. In the future, it will be adding more programs designed to assist veterans with various aspects of life, work, and leisure. With plenty of connections in the military and veteran communities, Mark was joined by several distinguished veterans at his Michigan VHPA display.

Glenn Youngstedt organized a group from the chapter for a trip to the National Museum of the US Air Force in Dayton, OH on October 27 & 28 to see the hundreds of aircraft on display. The aircraft ranged from the early Wright gliders to the most current aircraft in the Air Force inventory. Everyone got a real workout covering the over million square feet



22 2 None Belay My Last Barracks.

of exhibitions and aircraft. Thanks to our tour guide Bob Pinizzotto, a volunteer at the museum, we learned some interesting facts about many of the aircraft. Everyone agreed we could have spent a whole week touring and learning more about the history of the Army Air Corps to the Air Force. Everyone agreed it was well worth the trip and highly recommend a visit. Shown standing in front of UH-1P in the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force photo are L to R Glenn Youngstedt, Charlie Opie, Tom Burgess, Jim Opie, Ken Hand, Bob Rich, John Geary and Jim Heyn.

November 3rd in Traverse City the lunch gathering had just four attending: Ed Canright, Pat Mullen, Mark Benjamin, & Walter Topp. Mark reported a great discussion as they talked about VA medical benefits, should we feel guilty, pride in Vietnam service, post-Vietnam flying, and lots of good laughs.

A distinguished and diverse group teamed up to replace dead and dying trees at the Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Monument in Traverse City Michigan on November 18th. Joe Berry donated three replacement trees for the ones that died at the



September 1st in Traverse City.



October 6th in Traverse City.



L-R: Tim Goldsmith, LCDR USCG (ret); Mark Benjamin, CDR USCG (ret) and Vietnam Vet 100B MOS; Greg Caskie, Chief Petty Officer, USCG (ret), Greg was a Rescue Swimmer; John Peterson, U.S. Army and Afghanistan veteran; Dave Wenkel, U.S. Marine Iraq war veteran; Ray McDaniel, U.S. Marine vet and President 22 2 None; John Leffer, U.S. Army Vietnam vet and President with 8,500 members strong of the Grand Traverse Area Veterans Coalition

Distinguished Veterans at 22 2 None Event.



October 6th in Traverse City.

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

monument. A volunteer crew assembled as Mark Benjamin reported: What a group!! Took us about 45 minutes and this group was laughing at the 33 degrees and 25 mile an hour winds the entire time!!! I even offered food and drink as payment, but no one took me up on it except Don Pond and he bought MY breakfast. DEDICATION!!!!

Pictured in the Welcome Home Vietnam Veteran Work Crew 1st photo are L-R: Joe Berry, former AD@ USCG; Scott Schwander, Grant Traverse County Sheriff's Deputy (27 yrs) Ret; Tom Haase, Commander USCG Ret; Curt Erickson, CWO4 USCG Ret; Mark Benjamin, VHPA, Commander USCG Ret; Walter Topp, VHPA.

In the 2nd photo are L-R: Retired Grand Traverse Sheriff Deputy (27 years) Scott Schwander; Grand Traverse County Facilities Manager and former AD2, USCG, Joe Berry; Curt Erickson, CWO4 USCG (Ret); Tom Haase, Commander USCG (Ret); Ed Canright, VHPA, LTC MI ARNG (Ret); Walter Topp VHPA, Chief Pharmacist, Munson Medical Center, Traverse City MI (Ret). Not pictured: Don Pond, VHPA, OHARNG.

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 12 non-Michigan residents on our roster so don't let that stop you from joining us.

by Rich Deer, President



Welcome Home Vietnam Veteran Monument Work Crew.

NORTH ALABAMA CHAPTER

Several members attended the First Cobra Hall Reunion in Savannah, GA. Many of the events got cancelled, but aviators can still have fun. We only had four of the NAVHPA chapter members, Bob Monette, Chuck Canfield, Marshall Eubanks, and Sam Maki attended. Eubanks and Maki were RVing. And only two of us were Snake Drivers. Perhaps Canfield and Eubanks figured Snake pilots needed adult leadership from Huey pilots, so they came along. Because some of us have been to Savannah before, we didn't join in some of the events. But we did enjoy the great Low Country Boil. The folks that set it up did a fine job. There were some great speakers and slides of Cobras and Vietnam. Oh, to be a young stud puppy again!

After the Cobra Hall Reunion, while camping near Bonifay, FL, the Maki's were notified of a death in the family. Sam checked with Gulf State Park and informed them of the situation and the Eubanks and Maki's got in early. This helped the Maki's leave their trailer and head back to Huntsville to attend the funeral. On the way, Sam's diesel Ford took a dump. Limped into the Ford dealer in Birmingham, AL, rented a car and made it home for all the services. After paying a bill from hell, the Maki's and diesel headed back to Gulf Shores. Due to many



things happening to the "normal RVer's", this year wasn't normal. But we overcame it all and still had a great time. Every evening, we had a gathering at someone's rig. Even had a shrimp fest of our own. Marshall did some "Shrimp Mercedes". We managed to eat 10 lbs. of shrimp. Look up that recipe. One evening the Haas's made a great German meal. Another evening the Bisson's made a Taco Soup. No one starved, that's for sure. Most of us headed for home on October 27th. As always, it was a great time.

While many members were off camping, October 2021 provided the North Alabama Chapter the opportunity for another great day of support from the NAVHPA and BUC-3 to our community. We were asked by one of our sponsors, YULISTA, to support their annual Response and Emergency Team 'Training and Demonstrations' for the third year running; and of course, we said YES. We towed BUC-3 to the Huntsville Executive Airport on October 26th. The event, held on the 27th, included, Fire & Rescue, Medical Evacuations of personnel from BUC-3, the Alabama Air Patrol Hoist & Recovery extractions and more. Yulista as always, made a handsome donation to the NAVHPA. Oh yes, they also washed BUC-3 in preparation for our upcoming Veterans Day Events so we old guys didn't have to.

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

NAVHPA continued to support the annual Wreaths for Veterans program, which we have been supporting since 2013. This program lays wreaths on veterans' graves in Huntsville's Valhalla and Maple Hill cemeteries. From November first to the fourth, 27 NAVHPA members and spouses, working along with other community volunteers, helped clean, fluff greenery, attach new red bows, and re-box nearly 3500 wreaths. Everyone enjoyed the camaraderie during these work days as well as the great lunches provided by the Wreaths for Veterans Board and volunteers. On November 16th and 17th, these wreaths were placed on veterans' graves in the two Huntsville cemeteries. NAVHPA members and spouses helped other volunteers unload, distribute and place wreaths. After the wreaths have been placed, the volunteer says the name of the veteran and thanks them for their service. It is heartwarming to see volunteers of all ages, from 15-18-year-old high school JROTC students to 75-80-year-old Vietnam veterans honoring these veterans in the same respectful and dignified manner.

On November fifth, 18 NAVHPA members and spouses attended the Cullman Military Heroes dinner honoring combat veterans living in the community. The event was held at Stone Bridge Farms in Cullman, AL. Part of the program recognized combat veterans and groups in attendance with a brief synopsis of their combat achievements. NAVHPA attendees collective combat achievements (valor awards and combat flying hours) were recited and greeted with loud cheering and applause from the 300 in attendance. Cullman does a great job of continually recognizing veterans and their achievements. The next day, Saturday, November 6th, NAVHPA displayed our UH-1C/M gunship at the Cullman Veterans Day Celebration in Sportsman Park. This annual event military



NAVHPA President Marshall Eubanks (l), Don Bisson (center) and Secretary Sam Maki (r) prepare Shrimp Mercedes at Gulf State Park, AL.

pictures by Kae Walker.



Yulista firefighters practice evacuating injured passengers from BUC-3.



NAVHPA members and spouses attending the Veterans Banquet in Cullman, AL.



Wreath Fluffing is a community event that is heavily supported by the NAVHPA.



Wreath laying at Valhalla Cemetery November 16th, 2021.



Exhibiting BUC-3 in Cullman made a big impact on the community.



NAVHPA receiving a check from USAF COL(R) Ken Brown, Cullman event organizer.

displays, programs, an auto show and a free lunch for all veterans and their families. The event organizers always make a contribution to our operations fund. Attendees really enjoy seeing a Vietnam helicopter, especially those who spent time in the back of a Huey.

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

Finally, the annual Veterans Day parade was held on November 11th through downtown Huntsville AL. We towed BUC-3 with a "crew" of us old Vietnam vets and a trailer for those of us (and there seem to be more each year) who didn't feel up to a brisk two-mile walk. Ugly weather was on the horizon so the organizers moved the parade an hour early. This resulted in several members and spouses not being able to get there after a dump truck pulled a sign down on the Interstate about an hour before the parade started. As always, the community turned out to wish us well and honor the service of all veterans.



BUC-3 and NAVHPA "People Trailer", in line for the Veterans Day parade start.



Even threatening weather could not keep the Huntsville public from the parade.

The North Alabama Chapter meets in Huntsville, on the sec-

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

We had a good turnout for our November meeting, 15 members were present for the meeting. We gained a new Member, John Weksler; we will report on him when we get more information. Many stayed for lunch following the business part of the meeting, and to listen to Pat McLarney's presentation, (see below).

At the August 2021 meeting, Chapter Member Major Robert T. White (Ret), "The Last POW", was interviewed about his experiences leading up to and after he became a Vietnam POW. Chapter Member Cliff Lawson recorded the Interview. His Story will be submitted in a later issue.

At the November meeting, Member Pat McLarney, Class 64-2W, provided us with a slide show and presentation of his time in Vietnam during his tour from 1964 to 1965 with the 118th Avn Company. Their insignia was the "Thunderbirds". Pat shared with us his experiences as a "Blue Tail" flying a B model Slick. Many of the early iconic helicopter pictures contained images from the 118th Avn Company Operations "Thunderbirds".

On Oct. 9, 2021, Chapter members Mike Silva (left) and Dale House, two Colorado-based helicopter pilots, were each honored with the FAA's Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award. The most prestigious award bestowed by the FAA for pilots certificated under Part 61, the award recognizes pilots who have exhibited professionalism, skill, and aviation expertise for more than 50 years. The two received their awards at a special event in Lakewood, Colorado, hosted by the Colorado Aviation Historical Society.

A few months ago, we reported that Member Don

and Tuesday of most months at 6:00 PM (1800). 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. Our web site is <http://www.na-vhpa.org>. Come on out!! We know all those war stories need to get out of your system. We need new ones.

Ralph Weber

Rice's granddaughter, Chyanne, a student at Legend High School, here in Denver, was going to provide an opportunity for our members to record interviews about their war time service.



Chapter Member Major Robert T. White (Ret).

With the help of another student who ran the audio and visual equipment at Legend High School several members participated in oral interviews. The interviews were conducted by Chyanne and went well. Copies of the interviews will be provided to the members.



That's Pat McLarney explaining, in typical aviator form, how the unit supported a Special Forces Camp near Tay Ninh.



Chapter Member Major Robert T. White (Ret).

Meeting Schedule and other Information:

We normally hold meetings once a month, on the third Wednesday, at 10:00 hours at the American Legion Post #1, I-25 and Yale Avenue.

Visit our Web site at www.RMCVHPA.com for any updates. We continue to look for artifacts for the Museum. Please contact our Chapter President and Museum Curator, Dale House with anything you'd like to donate or loan to the museum. We can be contacted through our mailbox at: RMC.mailbox@yahoo.com

In the meantime, Stay Safe, and above all Stay Healthy.

**Dale House
President**

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.

AVIATOR REPORT completed for 8 New Members and covers the period 07.29.21 to 11.29.21

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

NEW MEMBER FILE FOR THE AVIATOR built on 14 October 2021

Brooks Dennis H.
Deerfield Beach Florida
Army
71-27 71-23
129 AHC

Dunlap William J. 'Truck' **
Enterprise Alabama
Army
68-513 68-23
238 AWC

Hubbard George R.
Williamsburg Virginia
Marine Corps
HMM-265 in 68-69; HMM-
263 in 68-69

Lewis John D **
Fayetteville North Carolina
Army
203 ASHC in 67; 199 AVN in
67-68; C/1/9 CAV 1 CAV in
70; D/1/9 CAV in 70-71

Lowry Raymond M
Centralia Illinois
Army
68-25
170 AHC in 68-69

Macrae Duncan **
Lexington South Carolina
Marine Corps
69-4
HMM-263 in 69-70

McDonough Ranney W. **
Bellaire Texas
Army
67-12
187 AHC in 67; IIFFV ARTY
in 67-68

Pencek Barry D. **
Acworth Georgia
Marine Corps
HML-367 in 70

Rechner Hubert 'Hugh' **
Honesdale Pennsylvania
Army
67-12
336 AHC in 67-68; 604 TC
CO in 71-72

Thompson David S. **
Rogers Arkansas
Army
67-25 67-23
2/20 ARA 1 CAV in 68; 2/20
ARA 1 CAV in 69; C/228
ASHB 1 CAV in 69-70

NEW MEMBER FILE FOR THE AVIATOR built on 05 December 2021

Berger James E. 'Jim' **
Bonita Springs Florida
Army
67-1 66-23
199 LIB in 67-68

Chasse Paul A. **
Boca Raton Florida
Army
69-10
Driscoll Joseph L. 'Joe' **
Seaside California
Marine Corps
HML-367 in 70-71

Fisher Walter **
Jupiter Florida
Army
4-57
129 AHC in 65-66

Garcia Albert B 'Bert' **
Summerfield Florida
Army
71-6
238 AWC in 72; 60 AHC in
72

Gates Anthony A. **
Hensley Arkansas
Air Force
37 ARRS in 71-72

Hanks Thomas E **
Calvert City Kentucky
Army
68-25
B/7/17 CAV in 68-69;
HHT/7/17 CAV in 69

Jordan Larry D **
Apollo Beach Florida
Army
71-16

Kelly Robert W. **
Willow Park Texas
Army
67-5 67-3
D/227 AHB 1 CAV in 68

Knisely Benjamin Merlin **
Sarasota Florida
Army
67-20
498 MED CO in 68

Lentsch Rolvin Charles **
Marietta Georgia
Army
68-22
A/25 AVN 25 INF in 69

Morin Robert E. 'Bob' **
Melbourne Florida
Army
69-20
B/7/1 CAV 101 ABN in 70-71

Murray Merrick C. 'Bud' **
Melbourne Florida
Army
63-1W
128 AHC in 66-67

Otte James R. 'Jim'
Sun City Center Florida
Army
69-27
C/7/1 CAV in 69-70

Plemmons Patrick F.
Athens Georgia
Army
69-16
68 AVN in 69-70

Russell John G. **
Orange Park Florida
Army
67-7

Waldron David P. **
Gig Harbor Washington
Army
71-33 71-25
D/17 CAV; 48 AHC

Wemlinger John V. **
Onkama Michigan
Army
71-8
765 TC BN in 71-72; 388 TC
CO in 72-72

NEW IMAGE / PATCH

With the VHPA Executive Council's unanimous endorsement, on 6 August the members at the Annual Business Meeting in Charlotte passed a motion to approve the artwork below as an authorized image / patch for the VHPA. It will not replace the current VHPA logo. The rationale for the artwork chosen was as follows:

- The font on the existing VHPA logo is difficult to read.
- R.V.N for that font looks like R.U.N.
- The Huey is the iconic image from the Vietnam War.
- The three red stripes on the yellow represent the flag of South Vietnam.
- The blue represents the sky.
- As helicopter pilots, we received an Air Medal.

Current Past President Art Jacobs initiated this project with his own money and owns the registered trademark. He was also the Executive Council member responsible for our upgraded plastic Life Member cards which replaced the old paper ones. Regarding the new image, Art said, "I wanted something more modern, more artistic, easier to read, and an image that more quickly conveys what we did in Vietnam. The image doesn't change our history or tradition, it just communicates it more clearly."

Look for an announcement in an upcoming issue of this magazine for how you can order a patch or shirt (the patch will be the standard 3.5 inches). Art also said he plans on car decals and coins as well. You can reach him at art.jacobs.tn@gmail.com if you have any questions.



Notice to Book Authors!

Someone is plagiarizing my books on Amazon and Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP) is doing nothing to stop it. On 2 December 2021, I brought the 1st of 15 different offenses to KDP and was promised action within 1 to 2 days. As of 18 December, nothing has been done and the 15 fake books with MY content are still available on Amazon. Each book is word for word my work but with a different cover and a different "Author". When I question KDP about the delay, I get a form letter back which usually has nothing to do with my concern. Oh, yes, they don't take phone calls.

What is ironic is that the aircraft on the covers of the fake books are usually not VN helicopters and one cover shows a private jet and airline pilot...with aviator sunglasses, of course! The earliest abuse I could find is in May of 2021.

While searching KDP books, I found one (Viet Nam?) Author's book 3 different times, 3 different covers and 3 different "Authors". While I could not identify the real Author or title, it appeared to be a novel about a Warrant Officer James Whit as the main character.

For whatever reason, they seem to like plagiarizing Vietnam books.

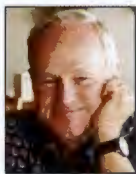
Phil Marshall
DMZ Dustoff 711, 1969
dmz.dustoff@yahoo.com

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

Due to limitations of space, most of the obituaries in Taps have been reduced in size; some slightly, some considerably. Often there are extensive details of more interest to a neighbor or other acquaintance. If you wish to obtain more information it is available on vhpa.org.

Boehnke, Roger H. USA, COL Ret.; Flight Classes: 55-1/55-4; RVN: 63-64 117 AHC, 68-69 1 TC BN; BS, LM (OLC); Callsign: Dragon.



Roger H. Boehnke passed away with his family by his side in Houston TX, on September 26, 2021. He was born on July 30, 1930 in Sioux City IA. Roger graduated from Iowa State University in 1954 with a B.S. and M.S. in Natural Resources Management. He then spent 20 years of active duty in the U.S. Army.

He was assigned to the Pentagon where he led the Army's Helicopter Maintenance and Logistics Program. Roger was the Commanding Officer of the 1st Transportation Battalion at Naval Air Station Corpus Christi, Texas, before retiring from the Army in 1974.

After retirement, Roger moved his family to Colorado Springs, where he became a realtor. He then began working as a Principal in the Rudolph Company, a real estate development and construction company. Later, he co-created and operated Francis-Boehnke Construction. Roger formally retired in 2000.

He is survived by his loving wife of 67 years, Margaret 'Jean'

***Branning, Thomas E. USA; Flight Classes: 65-7/64-9; RVN: 65-66 I CORPS AVN CO, 68 242 ASHC, 69 HHC/269 CAB; Callsign: Muleskinner 16.**

Thomas Branning of Henderson NV died on April 21, 2021, at the age of 84. No other information provided.

***Brassell, Lawrence B. USA, CW4 Ret.; Flight Classes: 71-25/71-23; RVN: 71-72 HHC/52 CAB, 72 B/7/17 CAV, 72 H/17 CAV; Callsign: Scalphunter 14.**

Lawrence "Larry" Beall Brassell, age 75 of Wilsonville AL, passed away on November 4,

2021 at home with his loved ones. Larry was born and raised in Pensacola FL, where he developed a passion for the outdoors. He served in the United States Army for 23 years as a helicopter pilot.

Upon retirement, Larry and his family settled in Gulfport MS. He lived there for 25 years before moving to Wilsonville to be closer to his children and grandchildren.

He is survived by his loving wife of 45 years, Karen Gilmore Brassell.

Reprint with biographical content added...

***Burgess, Ronald E. USA, CW4 Ret.; Flight Classes: 71-43/71-37; RVN: 72-73 F/9 CAV, 73 388 TC CO; Callsigns: Saber 82/Helping Hand 82.**



Ronald E. Burgess went home to his heavenly family on September 1, 2021 with his wife by his side. He died from Multiple Myeloma as a result of his service in Vietnam. He was born September 28, 1950 in Princeton WV, then grew up in Norfolk where he graduated from Norview High School in 1968 where he got the nickname "Smokey". He joined the Army in 1971, became a helicopter pilot until retirement in 1996.

After retirement, Ronald resided in Woodbridge VA. While stationed in Enterprise AL, Ron became a trained volunteer paramedic and credited for 12 births. He was a member of Disabled American Veterans where he served helping many veterans receive their benefits. He was also a member of Veterans of Foreign Wars and American Legion. Ronald received his Masters in Computer Science while stationed at Fort Bragg.

He retired in 1996 and relocated to the Northern Virginia area where he was employed in the computer field.

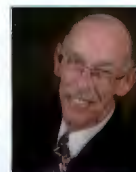
He is survived by his wife, Linda.

***Carnathan, James F. USA; Flight Class: 69-19; RVN: 69-70 D/3/4 CAV; DFC (3 OLC); Callsign: Centaur 15.**

James Carnathan was born on August 25, 1947 and passed away on October 17, 2021.

Following his active duty, he established a plumbing business, training his younger brothers to join him in the successful venture.

Current, Ronald W. USA, CW4 Ret.; Flight Class: 69-15; RVN: 69 498 MED CO, 69-70 247 MED DET; Callsigns: Dustoff 34/Dustoff 54.



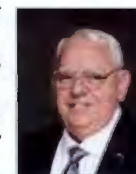
Ronald W. Current passed away October 30, 2021 in Woodstock GA. He was 73 years old. Ron grew up in Illinois and Iowa and attended Newton High School before joining the Army as a helicopter pilot in 1969. He later graduated from Troy University with an Aviation degree.

After flying Dustoff, he went to Thailand where he flew fixed-wing aircraft in support of intelligence-gathering missions in Southeast Asia.

With 20 years of flying all manner of helicopters and airplanes that the Army had, Ron accepted his first civilian flying job as a charter pilot and shortly thereafter became the Chief Pilot of Printpack, Inc. in Atlanta GA, where he molded the professional flying organization that Printpack still has into one of the finest in the business aviation industry.

Ron is survived by his wife, Candy.

***Flanagan, John E. USA, MAJ Ret.; Flight Class: 67-1/66-23; RVN: 67-68 B/1/9 CAV 1 CAV, 69-70 ASA; DFC (OLC), BS (OLC), PH, ACM; Callsigns: Saber Blue 37/Vanguard 626.**



John E. Flanagan died October 14, 2021.

John was born in Brooklyn NY on November 6, 1946, and entered the Army through the draft. He served on active duty for 20 years.

Upon retirement, the Flanagans settled in Radcliff KY, where he entered the defense contracting business in the training and simulation arena culminating as the CEO of Bedrock Company Inc.

John was active in the community and served as the principal officer or board member of several bodies. He is past master Camp Knox Masonic Lodge No. 919, Scottish Rite, KARAM Grotto, KOSAIR Shrine Temple, National Sojourners, Heroes of '76, Optimist Club of Radcliff, Vine Grove Community Leadership Program, VFW Post No. 10281, American Legion Post No. 113, AUSA, MOAA, VHPA, Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association, and Radcliff Small Business Alliance, among others. He served on Radcliff's Planning and Zoning Commission for many years and represented Radcliff on LTADD Workforce Investment Board.

He is survived by his loving spouse of more than 52 years, Anne "Snooks".

***Forns, Richard J. USA; Flight Classes: 68-501/67-25; RVN: 68-69 114 AHC; Callsign: Cobra 2.**

Richard Juve Forns, of Mont Bellvieu TX passed away on November 16, 2021. Richard was born June 19, 1943. No other information provided.

Foster, Loren N. USA, Ret.; Flight Class: 57-7; RVN: 65-66 611 TC CO.

Loren Foster of Pace FL, passed away on June 12, 2018. Following his military service, he spent 20 years with PHIL. No obituary posted.

***Fraker, William W. USA, COL Ret.; Flight Class: 56-12; RVN: 65 197 AHC, 65-66 334 AHC, 67-68 189 AHC, 68 268 CAB; DSC, SS (OLC), LM, DFC, BS (OLC), MSM, PH (2), ACM (V); Callsigns: Playboy 16/Raider 26/Saber 3.**

William Wesley "Bill" Fraker of Apison TN passed away on November 7, 2021. He was born May 14, 1932. He graduated from Red



Bank High School in 1951, from Atlantic Armstrong State University, Savannah GA., in 1970 and from the US Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth KS., in 1971.

Bill joined the 181st Field Artillery Battalion, Tennessee National Guard in April 1950. He entered active US Army in July 1954 as a Sergeant First Class. He was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant, Artillery in November 1955. Bill was twice inducted into the US Army Field Artillery OCS Hall of Fame.

Bill taught Sunday School for 14 years at First UMC, De Funiak Springs FL. He was a member of the Army Aviation Association of America, Special Forces Association, Special Operations Association, Chattanooga Chapter of MOAA, 145th and 52nd Combat Aviation Battalion Associations, 189th Combat Aviation Company (Ghostriders), 197th / 334th Armed Helicopter Companies, American Legion, Vietnam Veterans of America and the VHPA.

He is survived by his wife, Jeanette.

Gilbert, Macdonald G. USA; Flight Classes: 70-5/70-3; RVN: 70 C/158 AVN 101 ABN, 70-71 158 AVN 101 ABN; Callsign: Phoenix 32.



MacDonald "Mac" George Gilbert of Salisbury NC passed away on November 17, 2021 at his home. He was born October 4, 1950 in Corpus Christi TX.

After his active duty, he worked alongside his wife as a fresh-cut floral broker, and was an avid Cobra car enthusiast.

He is survived by his wife of 48 years, Carolyn.

Groman, Michael F. USAF, Ret; Flight Class: 72-14AF; RVN: 72-74 21 SOS 14 ACW; Callsign: Knife.



Michael Francis Groman passed away on April 2, 2019 in Waco TX. Michael was born on December 20, 1948 in Waco TX. He graduated from University High School in 1967 and then was accepted into the United States Air Force Academy. After graduation from the Academy, he

served in the United States Air Force.

After 20 years of service Michael retired from the Air Force and was employed as a computer programmer for 18 years at Texas Life Insurance Company in Waco from where he also retired.

He is survived by his wife, Lori.

***Hogan Kim P. USA, CW4 Ret.; Flight Class: 66-17; RVN: 66-67 129 AHC, 67 176 AHC; Callsign: Musket 12.**



Kim Patrick Hogan, died peacefully in his home in Gulf Breeze on September 29 after a courageous battle with cancer. Kim was born on September 11, 1945 in Chicago IL. Following high school Kim attended The University of Illinois, earning a BS in Art/Design. After graduation he enlisted in the Army.

After returning to the States, he was a flight instructor before working with his father and brother-in-law Ollie E. Saarinen building homes in Illinois and South Florida. Kim's love for flying took him to New Orleans and the Louisiana Air National Guard and his employment with Air Logistics flying helicopters in the Gulf of Mexico. Following retirement, he moved permanently to Pensacola Beach in 2001.

He was a member of Elks Lodge 497, Krewe of Wrecks Mardi Gras Krewe, served on the Parish Council for Our Lady of Assumption Catholic Church and was a member of the Knights of Columbus.

***Hunt, Terry C. USA, CW4 Ret.; Flight Classes: 68-521/68-39; RVN: 69 C/101 AVN 101 ABN, 69-70 HHC 1 BDE 101 ABN; Callsigns: Black Widow/Griffin.**



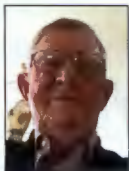
Terry Craig "TC" Hunt of Granger IN passed away November 9, 2021. Terry was born June 21, 1948, in South Bend IN.

Terry graduated in 1966 from South Bend Central High School. After graduation, he joined the United States Army. After retiring from the USAR, he was then called to serve his community and was sworn into the Indiana State Police Department. Terry first

began his career in Lake County and then moved to St Joseph County working as a master trooper at the Indiana Toll Road, Northern St Joseph County Patrol and special projects.

Terry retired in 2000 after 28 years of service. After retirement, Terry continued his passion for the community and was deputized as a US Marshall to serve at the courthouse for several years. Terry's final calling was to work as a Pilot for Memorial Hospital's Air Ambulance service, Air Angels/Medflight.

***Hurst, Dale W. USA; Flight Class: 60-3FW; RVN:65-66 1 CAV DIV, 68-69 HHC/14 CAB AMERICAL; Callsign: Arab 5.**



Dale Hurst was born in Greensburg IN, on January 10, 1932. He passed away on November 11, 2021.

In 1954 the Army decided they wanted Dale to join them for a time by presenting him a friendly Draft Notice. Once in and through basic training, they thought his talents would be best used on Tanks. He disagreed, deciding instead to become an officer by going through Officers Candidate School. He began his official career in aviation, starting in Fixed Wings and then moving onto Helicopters which became his true aviation passion.

Along the way, he received his Bachelor of Science Degree from Benedictine College in Atchison KS. Twenty-two plus years later, he retired from the Army and began his second career as a helicopter pilot with Air Logistics.

Travel was a passion for Dale. An exciting move to Cairo, Egypt, found him instructing Egyptians how to fly Helicopters with Air Logistics.

He is survived by his wife, Judi.

Jogerst, David J. USAF; Flight Class: 59 G H; RVN: 65-66 58 ARRS, 66-67 38 ARRS DET 2, 67-68 38, ARRS DET 3, 68 38 ARRS DET 7; Callsigns: Lemon Drop/Pedro.

David J. Jogerst passed away October 29, 2021 of heart failure. He was 88. No other information provided.

He is survived by his wife.

***Joyce, Donald R. USA, CW4 Ret.; Flight Class: 55-F; RVN: 62-63 1 AVN CO, 64-66 JUSMAG THAILAND, 67-68 179 ASHC; DFC (OLC), LM; Callsign: Gold Eagle 4.**



Donald Romaine Joyce passed away on May 22, 2021. He was born on September 10, 1932 in Jersey City NJ. He joined the Army National Guard and was an artillery NCO until he went to active duty. Later, he applied for Warrant Officer training and graduated from the 1st Helicopter Class in Fort Rucker AL. He always loved flying, in fact, he would say... if the Army only knew that he would have flown for FREE he loved it that much.

In 1975, he retired from the United States Army and was inducted into the Army Aviation Hall of Fame in 1986. Don was a member of the VHPA (Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association) and the USAWOA (United States Army Warrant Officer's Association).

Kramer, Arthur USA, MAJ Ret.; Flight Classes: 68-12/68-18; RVN: 68-69 175 AHC; BS, PH; Callsign: Outlaw.



Arthur Kramer of Williamstown VT died on September 8, 2021 at his home. He was born January 1, 1943 in Arlington MA and raised in Cambridge and Reading MA. Arthur attended Central Catholic School in Lawrence MA. He graduated from Norwich University in the Class of 1966.

He served in the US Army, New York Air National Guard and Vermont Air National Guard as a helicopter pilot for over 30 years. Arthur taught 7th Grade American History at Tupper Lake Middle School in New York. He retired in 2000.

He is survived by his wife, Annie.

***Lavallee, Roland USA CW2, Ret.; Flight Classes: 68-11/68-17; RVN: 68-69 128 AHC; PH Callsigns: Tomahawk 69/Gun-smoke.**

Roland C. Lavallee, of Myrtle Beach SC, flew to his final LZ on Friday, October 15, 2021, after a courageous fight with cancer.

He was born in Burlington VT on December 27, 1941.

He graduated from Rice Memorial High School. He then joined the US Navy as an Ordnance man. He worked at IBM, where his career was interrupted by his call to serve his country again as a helicopter pilot in the Vietnam Conflict. Roland was medically retired from the Service due to wounds suffered in combat. He then returned to Vermont to raise his family and resume work at IBM where he crafted a career in Cryogenic and Vacuum technologies. Renowned for his expertise in these fields, he taught classes in these disciplines across the country.

***Lynch John R. USA; Flight Classes: 64-6W/64-6; RVN: 64-65 118 AHC, 145 AVN; PH; Callsigns: Thunderbird/Bushranger 71.**



Jack Lynch of Wolfeboro NH peacefully passed away on October 6, 2021 surrounded by his loving family. Born on October 22, 1942, he was raised in Pepperell MA and later found home in Duxbury MA.

After serving his beloved country, Jack turned his love of aviation into his career as a commercial airline pilot, flying for Northeast and then Delta Air Lines. He retired as a Delta Captain, flying the Boeing 767ER out of JFK to Europe. He was a member of the St. Katherine Drexel Church.

He is survived by his wife, Joanne.

***Maxwell Richard C. USA; Flight Class: 69-21; RVN: 69-70 B/7/1 CAV.**



Richard C. "Smokey" Maxwell passed away on October 18, 2021 in Grand Junction CO. No other information provided.

***McCoy, William R. USA, CW4 Ret.; Flight Classes: 70-27/70-29; RVN: 70-71 C/7/1 CAV; Callsign: Comanche 39.**



Ross McCoy was born on August 8, 1949, in Vallejo CA. Ross passed peacefully on the night of November 22,

2021 at Mercy San Juan Medical Center in Carmichael CA.

Growing up in a military family, they moved often and eventually settled in San Diego CA, where Ross spent the majority of his childhood.

Ross graduated from Castle Park high school in Chula Vista CA in 1967, and was soon after drafted to fight in the Vietnam War. Having a love of aviation, he decided to apply for Army flight training.

After his active duty, he earned his degree in Accounting from San Jose State University and was licensed as a Certified Public Accountant in 1979. He began to build his practice while continuing to fly Hueys for the Army around Northern California. He continued to run his private practice as a CPA until his final years. He remained active with the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association and his local VFW post 8990 in Fair Oaks, CA. He was also founding member and past President of VHPA-CCN. Ross will be remembered for his kind and soft-spoken ways.

Meehan, John A. USA; RVN: 65 C/227 AHB 1 CAV.



John Alan Meehan, formerly of Collinsville IL, born December 7, 1930 in Granite City IL passed away on March 18, 2016 at the Caseyville Nursing Home in Caseyville IL.

John graduated from Watseka High School in Watseka IL in 1948. He retired after 30 years of service as a printer for the St. Louis Post Dispatch. After retirement, he was a golf instructor at Disney World.

He was a Post Commander for the American Legion Post 8 in Winter Haven FL.

He is survived by his wife, Marilyn.

***Miller, Paul F. USA, CW4 Ret.; Flight Class: 67-9; RVN: 68 A/7/1 CAV, 68-69 336 AHC; DSC; Callsigns: Apache/Warrior.**



Paul Felix Miller of Shelbyville passed away 9 October 2021 at his residence. Felix was born 10 June 1946 in Bedford IN. He graduated from Bedford High School in 1965 and immediately enlisted in the United States

Army on 6 July 1966.

He also served three tours in Iraq as Customer Service Representative for Rolls Royce Engines on the OH-58D Kiowa Scout Helicopter. He also previously served as the Commander at the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars. He also served as the Chef de gar at the 40 & 8. He was the founder of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilot Association of Indiana.

He is survived by his wife, Sharon.

Nenstiel, Jared S. USA; Flight Classes: 68-24/68-42; RVN: 69-70 173 AHC; Callsign: Robinhood 25.



Jared S. Nenstiel of Indialantic FL passed away February 23, 2018 at West Melbourne Health & Rehabilitation Center. Jared was born on June 13, 1943 in Clay Center KS.

Upon separation from the military, he remained active with veterans and veteran groups. He was particularly interested in helping the hurting vets to heal. He was active in the PointMan ministries. He retired from Civil Service in 1998 as a DOD Contracts Administrator.

He is survived by his wife, Carolyn.

***Oden, James R. USA, CW4 Ret.; Flight Classes: 55-K/56-10; RVN: 64-68 478 HHC, 68-69 478 HHC; DFC, BS (OLC), PH; Callsign: Hurricane 27A.**



James Russell Oden of Rogers AR passed away on November 21, 2021, at his home in Rogers. He was born July 18, 1927 in Hammon OK.

James proudly served his country in World War II, Korea, and two tours in Vietnam as an artillery man and helicopter pilot from October 1945 until his retirement in 1973, for a total of 28 years. During retirement he flew for a forestry company for over 10 years throughout the United States and Canada.

James was a life time member of the VHPA also, 60-year member of the Masonic Lodge, a 32nd degree, Scottish Rite Member. A life member of the Order of the Purple Heart, a

life member of the VFW, a member of MOOA, past President of Sojourners Chapter 70 and a member of the Military Hall of Fame.

Jim Oden was known throughout Army Aviation during the Vietnam era as the OIC of the test to create "instant LZ's" by dropping modified 10K pound Air Force bombs from a CH-54 Skycrane while assigned to the 478th Heavy Helicopter Company in Vietnam during October 1968.

***Owens, George W. USA, LTC Ret.; Flight Class: 56-8; RVN: 65-66 68 AHC, 66 118 AHC; DFC, BS (OLC) Callsign: Thunderbird 6.**



George W. Owens died September 11, 2021 at UMass Memorial Hospital, Worcester MA. He was born in Shiloh NC, October 27, 1928, and has resided in Shirley for over 50 years. When serving in the armed forces he resided throughout the United States as well as in Europe, Korea, and Vietnam.

George entered the United State Army as a Private in April 1947 serving for nearly 23 years, retiring in March 1970. After retiring from the armed forces, he worked for Sears and Roebuck Company for twenty years. He attended the First Baptist Church in Leominster.

He is survived by his wife, Maria.

Phipps, Stephen K. USA, Ret.; Flight Class: 67-3; RVN: 67 45 MED CO/57 MED DET.

Stephen Phipps died on October 4, 2021 at OSF Hospice House in Peoria IL. He was born in Lancaster OH on August 2, 1945.

Following his Vietnam service he worked for Anchor Hocking. In 1987, he joined the National Guard (AGR).

He retired in 1992 and became the program coordinator of HGD Corp. until 2013. In retirement he volunteered his services to Big Brothers, Catholic Social Services, and as president of a local drug board. He was also a church Vice-President, Precinct Committeeman and Crisis Intervention Advocate.

He is survived by his wife, Leslie.

***Price, Robert D. USA, LTC Ret.; Flight Class: 60-2; RVN: 66-67 228 AVN 1 CAV, 69-70 2 SIG GRP; LM, BS (OLC), MSM, ACM (V); Callsign: Satellite.**



Robert Dawes Price, 87 years old, died peacefully on the 28th of September 2021 in Tampa FL. Bob was born in Boston, graduated from Northeastern University, then served over 24 years as both Signal Officer and Army Aviator.

Upon retiring in 1981 at Fort Rucker AL, he and his wife moved to Brandon FL, where he became a wood craftsman and wife, Gunni an artist.

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

Reinhart, William R. USA; Flight Classes: 70-7/70-5; RVN: 67-68 1 LOG, 70-71 11 ACR; Callsigns: Thunder Horse/Blue 32.

William R. Reinhart of Brodheadsville passed away November 15, 2021 at St. Luke's Hospital Monroe Campus in Stroudsburg PA. William was born in Easton PA on February 2, 1946.

He was a member of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilot Association. He was also a member of the American Legion Post 927 in Gilbert. William had owned and operated Reinhart and Rusk Construction in Sciota for many years.

He is survived by his loving wife, Terry.

***Robinson, Thomas L. USA; Flight Classes: 70-17/70-15; RVN: 70 236 MED DET, 71 237 MED DET; SS (OLC), PH; Callsign: Dustoff 712.**



Thomas Robinson of Granite Bay CA, died peacefully in his sleep after battling cancer for 25 years. He was born in Sioux Falls SD. He graduated from Norte Del Rio High School in 1968 and entered the Army in 1970.

After his service, he finished his business degree and became a Senior Divisional Executive for American Express Financial Services.

He is survived by his wife of 43 years, Caprice.

Seely, Daniel C. USA; Flight Classes: 69-19/69-15; RVN: 69 A/229 AVN 1 CAV, 70 B/227 AVN 1 CAV; Callsign: Black Bandits.



Daniel Clayton Seely entered eternal rest on September 12, 2021. Dan was born on October 6, 1943 in New Orleans LA. and was a resident of Metairie LA for most of his life. He graduated from Jesuit high school class of 1961 and the University of Southern Mississippi.

He is a retired Sales Representative for Pulaski Furniture.

He is survived by his lifelong best friend, Adele Dierker.

***Steine, Joel R. USA, LTC Ret.; Flight Class: 56-13; RVN: 62-63 UTT, 65-66 1/9 CAV; DFC, LM; Callsigns: Red 2/Bullwhip 8.**



Joel R. Steine of Killeen TX, died September 26, 2021. Joel was born September 29, 1933. He spent the majority of his childhood in Warrenton GA., which he called home. Upon graduating from high school, he attended The Citadel, graduating with a BS in Civil Engineering in 1954. He entered the Army in that year as a second lieutenant.

After duty in Vietnam, the Army sponsored his enrollment in graduate school at the Georgia Institute of Technology where he earned an MS in Operations Research. Medically grounded from flying status in 1967, he operated seaports in Thailand and the Azores in addition to staff assignments. He served in the Army for 27 years, retiring in 1981. Upon retirement, he was a consultant to the Army for 14 years in the field of aircraft maintenance, serving as a corporate director of studies and analyses. He was a Certified Professional Logistician.

Again retiring, he and his wife, Judy, moved to Killeen in 1996. He was a director of the Cen-Tex Humane Society, and served on Killeen's Planning and Zoning Commission, Civil Service Commission, Zoning Board of Adjustment, and several special commissions.

He is survived by his wife, Judith.

Stivison, Samuel R. USA; Flight Classes: 68-14/68-22; RVN: 68-69 119 AHC; Callsign: Alligator.



Sam was born in Boise ID, on August 2, 1944. He graduated from Boise High School in 1962 and some of his best friends are from that class. From there, he went to Boise Junior College for two years and graduated from University of Idaho in 1967 with a degree in business finance and an Army ROTC commission as a second Lieutenant. He entered active duty and completed Infantry Officer Training and Army Rotary Wing Aviator training on his way to Vietnam. He served in the National Guard in Maryland, Idaho, and Utah after his active duty.

Sam worked as a civilian for the Air Force in Brigham City UT. Sam began working for the FBI in 1977. He was an FBI agent in Seattle and Los Angeles. Sam treasured his time with the FBI, but he wanted to raise his family in Boise. Sam and family returned to Boise in 1985 when he accepted a contracting position with the US Bureau of Reclamation. He went on to a contracting position with the US Department of the Interior, Office of Aircraft Services (OAS) at the National Interagency Fire Center. After 36 years of government service, he retired in 2005. He was an Idaho STAR program instructor.

He is survived by his wife of 44 years, Sandy.

***Thies, Larry D. USA; Flight Classes: 70-43/70-41; RVN: 71-72 129 AHC; Callsigns: Bulldog 14/Thor.**



Larry Thies, of Fenton IL passed away on November 15, 2021 at home. Larry was born on April 13, 1949, in Caledonia MN. He graduated from Caledonia High School in 1967 and later enlisted in the Army in 1969.

Larry worked in the pipeline industry for many years, first with Murphy Brothers as Vice President and corporate pilot and later on with Continental Fabrication Services and Michels Corporation. Larry was an active member of St. Peters Lutheran Church, serving as a deacon and singing in the choir. He did so much work behind the scenes.

Verbael, Russell D. USMC, LTC Ret.; Flight Class: 65; RVN: 67-68 HMM-165, 68 HMM-164, 70 VMO-2; Callsign: Buffalo City.



Russell V. Verbael passed away on September 13, 2021, in Yuma AZ. He was born in Great Falls MT on December 1, 1940. He lived in Dutton MT all his growing years, graduated from Dutton, then graduated from Northern Montana College in Havre MT. Following graduation, Russ was commissioned a 2nd Lt. in the Marine Corps, went to basic training in Quantico VA, and then since he qualified, went to Pensacola, FL for flight training.

After his military service, in the fall of 1989, Russ moved back to Dutton MT. He soon found himself involved in his own old car business, Montana Collector Cars. Once again, he loved what he was doing and was successful at buying, repairing, and selling cars. With his love for airplanes, he soon became involved with the EAA and owning his own plane, a RV-4.

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

*Weissinger, William D. USA; MAJ, Ret.; Flight Classes: 67-19/67-17; RVN: 67-68 119 AHC; SS, DFC, PH; Callsign: Gator 519.

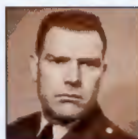


William David Weissinger died on October 12, 2021. He was born on May 17, 1944. After Vietnam, he continued his military career as a helicopter instructor pilot in Ft. Rucker AL; with a tour of duty in South Korea; and as a flight safety officer in Ft. Knox KY.

After separating from active duty, he moved to Texas, continuing his military service in the Army Reserves and retiring at the rank of Major. Also at that time, he began working for MacDonnell-Douglas at NASA-JSC, where he was hired on a contract to support the early years of the Space Shuttle Program as part of the planning and support team for Mission Control, working in Mission Control on the very first Space Shuttle flight. He continued his work on another contract at NASA as a Lockheed-Martin employee.

Reprint with biographical content added.

*Williams, Charles J. Jr. USA, CW4 Ret.; Flight Class: 55-L; RVN: 64-65 I CORPS AVN CO, 69-70 118 AHC, 69-70 1 AVNBDE; DFC, BS.



Charles 'Bubba' Williams died on September 9, 2021. He was born on October 29, 1931 in Westport MD, but raised in Prince George County, Virginia on his family's farm.

He needed his parents' consent in 1948 to enlist in the Army at age 17. As an infantry soldier in the Korean war, he distinguished himself in battle, earning a Bronze Star with V Device, and quickly advanced in rank to become a senior NCO and drill sergeant. In 1955, he was selected for flight school to become a warrant officer helicopter pilot, and of the 48 candidates, only 17 graduated.

Even though he worked full-time during the day as a soldier, he studied in the evenings and received a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Nebraska.

After retiring from his 31-year Army career, he continued with aviation and excelled as a commercial pilot with the Commonwealth of Virginia's Department of Aviation. He was the state's Aviation Safety Officer publicly speaking to promote aviation safety throughout the state, and was selected as one of the governor's pilots to be type-rated in the Commonwealth's Citation II jet. He held instrument multi-engine commercial pilot and flight instructor ratings in both helicopters and fixed wing aircraft. He was awarded the Master Pilot Award – the Federal Aviation Administration's most prestigious award.

When not flying or with his family, Charlie was busy socially. He was a Master Mason of the Ancient Free and Accepted Masons and in 1975 served as Master of Alt Heidelberg Lodge # 821. He was also a Shriner, serving as President of the European Shrine Club in 1976. He was a Dad Advisor of the International Order of DeMolay in both Germany and Virginia, and a brother of Prince George Masonic Lodge # 115. He also enjoyed being a Sojourner and Hero, patriotic subordinate bodies of the Blue Lodge for Master Masons who are also military officers. He was active

in both the York and Scottish Rites. He enjoyed his years as a member of Ye Anciente and Secret Order of Quiet Birdmen, and was also an officer in the Virginia Aviation Historical Society. He served as an advisor to the Hanover County Airport.

*Winkel, Paul P. Jr. USA, COL Ret.; Flight Class: 57; RVN: 65 D/229 AVN 1 CAV, 65 B/229 AVN 1 CAV, 68 USARV, 68-69 611 TC CO, 69 765 TC BN; SS, BS (OLC), MSM; Callsigns: Preacher/Orange One.



Paul Patton Winkel, Jr., age 90, passed away at his home in Sterling VA, on September 16, 2021. His strong heart finally gave way. Paul spent 31 years in the Army, having graduated from West Point in 1956.

Paul worked diligently on making sure that others he had served with in Vietnam received the recognition they deserved. He also wrote a book about his experiences, entitled Air Assault "Slicks" at War, which is soon to be published.

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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.

Auer, Mark E. USA; Flight Class: 63-3W; died on October 27, 2021.

Baliles, Kenneth R. USAF, COL Ret.; RVN; 66-67 AFAT-7, 66-67 217 SQDN VNAF; DFC (OLC), BS, MSM; died on September 28, 2021.

Baur, David H. USAF, MAJ Ret.; Flight Class; 58-1 US; RVN: 66-67 38 ARRS DET 3; Callsign: Pedro; died on September 20, 2018.

Beardsley, Stephen Guy USA, LTC Ret.; RVN: 65 A/1/9 CAV 1 CAV; died on November 2, 2021.

Benoit, William R. USA, COL Ret.; RVN: 282 AHC, 183 AVN; DFC; Callsigns: Black Cat/Headhunter/ Seahorse; died on November 22, 2021.

Cameron, William G. USAF, COL Ret.; SS; died on April 14, 2020.

Chessher, David E. USA. Ret.; Flight Classes: 68-21/68-37; BS (OLC), ACM; died on November 12, 2021.

Crain, Frankie S. USA; Flight Class: 71-39, died on April 20, 2017.

Hampton, Bruce R. USAF; RVN: 71 37 ARRS; died on September 19, 2021.

Heinle, Gerald M. USA Ret.; Flight Class: 70-4; RVN: 71-72 135 AHC; DFC; Callsign: Taipan; died on October 24, 2021.

Holmberg, Richard USA; BS; died on November 14, 2021.

Horner, Gerald W. USA; Flight Classes: 68-20/68-34; died on May 12, 2021.

Kalakauskis, Francis E. USA, MAJ Ret.; Flight Class: 69-8; BS (OLC), ACM; died in 2021.

Ladd, Roger G. USA; Flight Class: 69-50; died on October 2, 2021.

Mcfadden, Jerry R. USA, Ret.; Flight Class: 66-5W; died on October 9, 2021.

Lemau, Minh Q. VNAF; Flight Class 71-8, died on November 7, 2021.

Momii, Isamu S. USAF, LTC Ret.; died on September 20, 2021.

Morton, Gary W. USA; Flight Classes: 70-31/70-29; DFC (OLC), ACM; Callsign: Deadbone 22; died on September 25, 2021.

Rodgers, Robert R. USMC; died on September 29, 2021.

Rogers, Jack A. II USA; Flight Classes: 68-509/68-13; died on November 16, 2021.

Rogers, Robert P. USMC, Ret.; died on October 26, 2021.

Sawyer, Eric S. USA, Ret.; Flight Class: 67-20; died on November 5, 2021.

Scott, James W. USA; BS, PH; died on October 3, 2021.

Kenneth W. Steger USA, MAJ Ret.; Flight Class: 65-18; DFC (OLC), BS (2 OLC), ACM (V); died on October 1, 2021.

Villanueva, Filemon Jr. USA; Flight Class: 67-22; died on September 12, 2021.

Watkins, David C. USMC; died on November 21, 2021.

Yocom, Donald G. USMC; died on June 20, 2015.

~ BOOK REVIEWS ~



Marc Liebman, a VHPA Life Member, is a retired Navy Captain and Naval Aviator who flew combat search and rescue missions during the Vietnam War. He is also the author of five published novels with more coming.



The Grotto, Book One, Phu Bai Vietnam, 1969 - 1971, Harold Walker, Dragonfly Publishing, ISBN: 978-0-6921608-2-4, 447 pages, soft copy \$19.99



The Grotto, Book Two, Marble Mountain, 1970, Harold Walker, Dragonfly Publishing, ISBN-978-1-7371686-0-7, soft copy \$19.99

Finally, books about Marine Aviators and helicopters in Vietnam!!! This is a two-fer because The Grotto Books One and Two are the story of Marine Helicopter Squadron (Medium) HMM-262 that

covers two plus years. They were flying the twin engine, tandem-rotor H-46 that was introduced during the Vietnam War and retired in 2015! These two books are categorically the best researched and written memoirs I have read in years. LTC Walker's writing is precise and informative and his books are an education on the Marine Corps unique terminology as well as how Marine helo squadrons operate.

There are plenty of helpful diagrams and photos that support the fascinating stories. Walker keeps the reader interested, even if one is not a Marine Aviator. Bottom line: The Grotto Books One and Two books are a must read. The only higher praise I can give is that both will stay on my bookshelf because they are wonderful sources for research if (maybe when) I write another novel

Vietnam Helo Operations-VHPA Rotorheads Return 23 Apr - 6 May & 27 Nov

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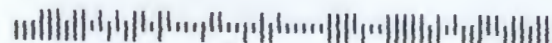
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