

# 281<sup>ST</sup> ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY

**"INTRUDERS"**

NHA TRANG  
1965-1970

Company Newsletter No. 29

Winter 2006

**Hey! Check out the new website..**

**How about the new PX?**

***AND START YOUR PLANS FOR ST LOUIS 2007 !!***



**Crowne Plaza Hotel St Louis**

***Lots of good stuff to let you know what's going on and what your association is planning for you.....***

***Read on.***

## *From the President*

**D**ear Intruders, our families, friends and those folks we have come to know and have become a part of our lives.

As we approach this holiday season, let us not forget why we celebrate. We have many things to be thankful for, our friendship, the freedom we enjoy, the right to worship as we choose and this great country we live in. As we say our daily prayers, let us remember the purpose of Christmas. Let's be thankful for this wonderful organization we belong to and the friendship we have made and renewed as the years have gone by. Let's thank our brothers and sisters who are in harms way this time of year for the sacrifice they are making to keep us free, and to help others to be free. Lets keep the families of the comrades we have lost this past year in our prayers so that they can continue to lead a fulfilling life.

We have had a great year. The past reunion in St Louis was a great success. We had good attendance and I hope that everyone had a great time. We owe a lot to the Intruders who put in countless hours so that we could enjoy our time together.

We are planning a good one for next year. This is a good time to start planning to attend 1-5 August 2007, again at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in St Louis. The room rate will remain the same as last year which is \$59.00. The reunion committee has been working hard to make this an eventful time for us. The hotel staff is excited we are coming back and will make our stay as best they can.

I and the Executive Board appreciate the wonderful support all of you have given to us. This is your organization and we want to make it what you want it to be. The success of the Association belongs to you and I thank everyone.

Joan and I would like wish all of you a wonderful Christmas and a prosperous and healthy New Year.

Darryl M. Stevens  
President

## *The V.P. Speaks*

**N**ew honorary member Capt. Mike Rush, son of member Jay Rush, has been elected for honorary membership in our assn. Capt. Rush was our contact person in Iraq for P Troop and a guest speaker at our 2006 Annual Reunion. Welcome Mike.

Plans for the reunion are continuing. The proposed budget has been approved. Attendee costs, registration, and room rates will remain the same. The reunion committee meeting (open to all) will be at the Crowne Plaza in St. Louis March 1st and 2nd 2007 to finalize plans. Fred Mentzer and Company will entertain Friday night "R&R Hawaii". Frank Little is planning the Saturday night banquet. Jack Mayhew, Norm Kaufman & Earl Broussard co-chair the Memorial Service. Fred Lewis will handle the hospitality room. Don Torrini has assumed responsibility for registration. Mrs. Frank (Cheryl) Becker has volunteered her keyboard (piano) skills.

There are no raffles planned at this time but door prize donations are welcome as we have had several already committed. As in past reunions there will be a souvenir for all registrants including spouses.

I have visited Awards Unlimited (AU) in Lincoln NE. with Fred Mentzer & recommended to the EB we further enhance our PX by using AU's service. The EB has approved this recommendation. On our new 281st web you will be able to click & order direct from AU. We will continue to have a PX section with items available at our Annual Reunion.

I thank everyone for their cards, e-mails, calls and prayers I received during my hip replacement surgery. I plan to enjoy the holiday season. Hoping everyone had a bountiful Thanksgiving. I wish all a Merry Christmas and a Joyful New Year.

Jay Hays  
Vice President  
Reunion Committee Chairman

## *The Chaplains Corner*

Well, here it is time for the winter newsletter and I find myself thinking about current events and how things never seem to change. Remember Christmas truces when we were in Vietnam? Both sides agree on a truce for 24 hours to honor the holiday and the next day it's business as usual. Some times the truce doesn't even last for the agreed time.

God sent His only Son into the world with a message for mankind. "Peace on earth, goodwill toward men." We really don't see much of that today. Somehow we missed the message.

There's a familiar saying that says: "The self-made man has a fool for a creator. Paul says exactly that when he writes in Romans, chapter 1. "Professing to be wise, they became fools."

Why? Because they refused to acknowledge God.

And doesn't it seem rather foolish to you that someone would observe a holiday when they acknowledge no one as the source of their blessings.

I received an E-mail the other day entitled "A Letter from God." Here are a couple of quotes from the letter.

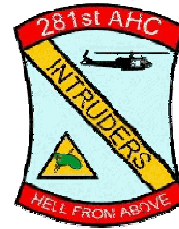
"It has come to my attention that many of you are upset that folks are taking My name out of the season."

"I don't care what you call the day. If you want to celebrate My birth just, GET ALONG AND LOVE ONE ANOTHER."

"Finally if you want to make a statement about your belief in and loyalty to Me, then behave like a Christian, or a Jew, or a Muslim, or just behave. Let people know by your actions that you are one of mine."

Have a happy & blessed Christmas  
and New Year!

Norm Kaufman  
Chaplain



## † IN REMEMBRANCE †

### **Gary Allen Fields**

Aug. 30, 1948 - Oct. 31, 2006  
Rat Pack Crew Chief & Gunner  
Viet Nam Aug 1969-April 1970

### **CRAIG SMITH ALBEE**

September 04, 2006  
Rat Pack Pilot - Maintenance Officer  
Viet Nam Apr 1969-Apr 1970

### **JOHNNY TURPIN**

October 11, 2006  
Bandit Pilot  
Viet Nam 1967-1968

## REST IN PEACE, BROTHERS



## *Remembrance*

We are still looking for help in our ongoing project of finding the families of those of our MIA/KIAs who have not been located or contacted. If you can spare a few hours please contact Norm or I and we will put you to work on a project that will fill your heart with joy.

It is that time of the year when we need your help in remembering our troops. It is an easy thing to do and one that will show our young men in harms way that we are standing with them. The cut off date to get packages to them by XMAS is upon us so DO IT NOW! Remember that most all units now have female members. Our staff is preparing to send packages to a ranger platoon that is commanded by a cousin of a member of the staff and he ask her not to forget the Ladies in his unit. (This is a great moral building project

for those of you who own or manage companies or organizations)

We are still finding folks that need help with the VA and in some cases just help in making it. If you know of anyone in need of assistance please send their name to Gary Stagman, Norm or I and we will see that they get all the help we can possibly provide. Thanks to Gary's super human efforts we have seen several members of our Intruder family get the help they need and deserve. Let's not forget our commitment to LEAVE NO INTRUDER BEHIND.

Norm, Gary & I wish each of you a very happy holiday season and the very best for 07. See you in Saint Louis in August.

Jack Mayhew  
Chairman Remembrance Committee

### ***From the Scribe***

**M**ini Reunions are fun, especially when a lot of folks show up. We had one at Brian Paine's this weekend, the 4<sup>th</sup> he has had I believe. It was my 3<sup>rd</sup>. Jack & Cindy Mayhew were there. So were Darrell, our esteemed president, and Joan, traveling in a camper. Chester, Delta "Runner", was there the entire time, made Brian an honorary Green Beret and gave Jack and myself a Delta pin for some past transgressions in their favor. We ate so much food that it is now 3:00 the following Sunday and I have eaten only one apple all day.

A lot of Delta folks showed up, a lot of Brian's friends, some of mine, and oh yeah, I forgot, Lee Brewer and his wife were there. I sat next to them at dinner Friday night. Brian arranged a shopping trip for the women, even got them Limo so they could arrive in style.

Took everyone to Thelma's BBQ which was a unique experience to say the least, and everyone departed without getting shot or mugged. Candi (Janie's friend) ordered a chicken sandwich which came as ordered...two pieces of bun with half a chicken in the middle, bones and all.

You know, some of you outlying guys need to consider coming next year, Brian really does it right, all by himself, all out of his own pocket, and it is memorable. Brian, you are One Great Guy and I'll be back again. My door is open as well.

Jeff Murray  
Secretary

### ***Notes and Comments***

#### ***And now some words concernng our new website and PX.....***

The new website is up and running. You can find it at: <http://281st.com> . Brent Gourley, our 281<sup>st</sup> AHC legal eagle, points out that <http://www.281st.com> works as well, especially if you get an error displayed when attempting to log on to the site. The new site is a "work in progress". Our webmaster, and former Marine, Bryan Marshall is working diligently to bring the site up its full glory shortly. If you have any comments, constructive or otherwise please let me know. Thus far, excepting for the growing pains, most of those who have logged on to the site are pleased with its appearance and functionality.

A link on the new website will shortly lead to the new PX and/or you can access the site directly at: <http://www.awardsunlimited.com>. The 281<sup>st</sup> PX is at the bottom of the menu on the left side of the screen. Our new PX is being provided to us by Awards Unlimited, a memorabilia and trophy company located in Lincoln, NE. Awards Unlimited is a large "American" firm which does business both nationally and internationally. They are truly a "one stop shop". As time progresses more and more items will be offered through the PX. Additionally, you will be able to order by credit card, Pay Pal, or check directly from the PX website. If you should have a particular item in mind that you believe would be of interest to the membership, please make your idea known to Jay Hays or myself. Give the new PX site a week or so to become operational. In the meantime you can still order items through Jay Hays, our trusty PX Manager, ....and Vice President, ....and Reunion Chairman, and ....etc, etc. - Fred



Fred & Jay with Awards Unlimited owner Larry Loomis

***A tribute to Brian Paine, former Treasurer, by Robin Hicks...our trusy VA rights expert.***

Brian, our association would not be what it is without you. Your hard work and genuine concern for the wellbeing of the association were seen and appreciated by me and I hold you in high regards for what you have done. You do things differently than many others, but it has been obvious to me that you are sincere and willing to make personal sacrifices for the benefit of the association. You showed frustration at all the teasing, pranks and jokes made about yourself once. I can only speak for myself, I participated in a few things and I want you to know that I will only do the teasing and joking to individuals that I like, respect and personally care about. In my case you are one of a very small and select group, I consider you one of the GOOD guys. Take a break from your official duties and enjoy being part of an Association you helped to build. If this sounds to mushy that's to darn bad because it is how I feel and I tell things the way I see them. - Robin

***Some brief membership notes from Gary Stagman.....***

T. "Jimmy" Barragan of Manchester, NJ, had successful Liver surgery on the 9<sup>th</sup> of November 06. He is at home and feeling better. Jimmy changed his Annual Membership to LIFE membership.

Richard Murry of Camden, AR, had successful back surgery on 17 November 06. He is home and now the only pain he has is the surgery area.

Charles E. "Chuck" Storrs, maintenance, 1967 – 68 has joined and is member number 334A.

***A note from Bonnie Ohmes concerning CSM Bob's recent serious bout with pneumonia. Our deepest condolences to the Ohme's on the passing of Bobs' mother.... On the same day that Bob was admitted to the hospital.***

Just a quick note to tell you that the breathing tube and the feeding tube were both removed today---he was/is able to breathe on his own and has had ice chips, water, apple juice and grape juice----will have soup tonight. He has no memory of this past 9 days and wanted to know everything that happened.

My, he was glad to get rid of the tubes. He is still on IVs and will have Dialysis again tomorrow and for how long, we don't know. But God has answered our prayers and we have to thank you all so much for that. He is so much improved----of course, wanted to know how his Mom's funeral went and I could only give him our kids' accounts since I thought I needed to stay with him at the hospital. He was so very sick.

Again, thank you for the prayers, calls, and help given to me during this terrible time. The old boy assures me he is here for the "long haul." Thank God! And, such good family and friends.

Love, Bonnie

***The following from Earl Broussard forwarding an email request from Chester Howard, Delta Recon. Anyone having any info, send it to Earl.....***

Moose Monroe, Delta Recon Team Leader and NCOIC in 1970 ask me to research and find a 281st AHC crew that pulled a team by McGuire rig we think in June or July 1967 (Operation Samurai II).

A hoist ship as Moose recalls picked up he and Larry Bartlett who'd had his jaw shot away. To reach the team the pilot did a little wood cutting so that upon lift off the slick had less power and Moose cut away and the Huey left with Bartlett. Another crew picked up Moose later. Word was the slick couldn't make it back to safety and landed somewhere and other slicks picked up Bartlett and the crew.

If anyone knows any or all of that crew please provide names and contact information. Please send out to all your contacts if possible.

***It appears that Gary Stagman has other duties..... Jack Mayhew writes.***

If anyone wonders what is going on in membership these days I am pleased to report that our chairman, Sir Gary has his hands full with a recent recruit. Appears that he has gone into baby sitting big time. Job one, taking care of toxic waste. I heard from Ms. Gary that he has been making use of the garbage disposal. If you are looking for him or have a lead for him he isn't going far from the house these days. Time to jump on him with leads and request for locating folks. - JM



*Gary's nieces 5 month old boy*

***This from John Korsbeck up there in Montany.....***

I just got a Thinking of You ' Veterans Day ' phone call from Paul "Smokey Joe" Leonard, Rat Pack Gunner/CE 1970. He asked me to send "Proud to Have Served with You" and hope everyone is doing well message to ALL 281st personnel and their families. - JK17

***A report from Hawk Hawkins, SAT Committee Chairman, on the passing of Gary Fields, along with a eulogy from Jack Mayhew....***

Tubby Brudvig and I attended the ceremony. While the ceremony was "private", a fairly large crowd (50-60) of family and close friends were present in a nice pavilion at the National Cemetery in Fayetteville, Arkansas. A gentleman (I presume was his brother-in-law) gave the eulogy, read the obituary and made comments about Gary's prowess as a high school athlete, his modesty (he had to be tricked into attending a Main Street Parade in his honor within his hometown of Gentry shortly after he got out of the hospital) and other comforting remarks in celebration of Gary's life. Per Gary's desires, the ceremony was short and ended with Taps. We were then invited to watch as his cremated remains were interred in the NE corner of the Cemetery. Overall, a very dignified and appropriate ceremony.

I introduced myself to Tacara and offered any assistance we could give, thanked her for years of caring for our brother and told her we would be establishing a remembrance page on our website. I also spoke with the gentleman who gave the eulogy and asked if he had written his comments down (he had) and asked him to email to me so that we could possibly use them on our remembrance page. I'll be forwarding them to Jack when received. - Hawk

Flight, we are saddened to pass on latest information from Gary's wife's who informed us that Gary could not last more that the next few hours. For those of you that did no know Gary, or have never heard the story, Gary survived a crash that killed the other three crew members by jumping from the out of control helicopter at approximately 300 feet, landing in a rice patty. He was immediately recovered and rushed to the hospital and on to the states where he remained in a coma for several months. His recover took the next several years and his health has never been good. While in the VA hospital he was cared for by a very lovely person named Tacara who became his wife and care-person for all these years. Over the past several years Gary has stayed close to his Intruder family and spent a big part of each day scanning the Intruder Assn web site. Our hearts and prayers go out to Gary and Tacara. Gary we shall miss you. - JM

***A message from Jack Serig on the passing of Craig Albee...***

I first learned of Craig from my daughter-in-law, Patty Compton. I didn't know him because we served at different times with the 281st. Patty and Craig were both Captains with Flight Options flying twin jets all around the globe. They were flying together one day when Craig brought up his Vietnam experience. Patty asked him if he knew of a Jack Serig who was her father-in-law. Craig told Patty he knew of me but we had never met. Craig and I finally met at our Las Vegas Reunion. We spent several hours talking about things in common. Craig advised me that he had contracted Parkinson's disease and he would have to stop flying with Flight Options. We corresponded several times after Las Vegas. The last thing I heard was that he had met a lady who also had Parkinson's and they would be married, and were. In the meantime Patty caught a very aggressive form of cancer and passed away in early ' 04. My eldest son, Art, had the good fortune of being married to Patty for a few short months before she passed. Both Patty and Craig were very high achievers. – Jack Serig

**Jack Mayhew writes of Johnny Turpin.....**

Johnny served with the 281st as a Bandit pilot during the 1967-68 time frame. At the time of his death Johnny was living in New Port News, VA and was employed by Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC), a diversified high-technology research and engineering company based in San Diego, Calif. He is survived by his wife Richaleen and one son.

**More on Brian Paines' recent X'Mas party. Jay Graves, Delta Recon, often flew as gunner with the Wolf Pack circa 1967-68 and Chester Howard was a Delta runner.....**

Intruders, this is not BP but I am using his system. Thanks to his and Marilyn's generosity we have had a great weekend in Houston. Intruders from the area and some of us from other places got to watch Jeff suffer through the A&M Game, all the ladies going to the ACE Hardware party and more food that we could eat. The highlight of the weekend was spending time with Jay Graves and Chester Howard and watching them make BP an Honorary Member of the Delta Assn. (They even presented him with his own Green Beret which he has yet to take off.) His pictures have been posted on the photo section of the web under Current events-2006 XMAS party. You missed a great party and Jint, Thelma sends her love. - Jack Mayhew

OK folks.... That's it for this newsletter. As always, if you would like to write a story, make an announcement, hold a Mini Reunion or to merely comment, let me know. In the meantime have a ....



**MERRY CHRISTMAS  
AND A  
HAPPY NEW YEAR!!**



***"Sure the LZ is secure, I'm whispering because I have a cold. Trust me."***

**281ST AHC ASSOCIATION, INC.**

Established 4 July 1999



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**Vice President**  
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