

281ST ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY

"INTRUDERS"

NHA TRANG
1965-1970

Company Newsletter No. 31

Summer 2007

Guess What?

It's Reunion Time !



*Get your registration in and join
everyone at the*

ST LOUIS AIRPORT PLAZA HOTEL

1-5 August 2007

DON'T MISS IT !

... Details in this Newsletter ...

From the President

I hope everyone is as excited as I am. The annual reunion of the 281st AHC Association is coming up fast. 1 August will be here before we know it. Get out your old grass skirts and get ready for a great R & R. The committees have worked hard planning and getting ready for us to have a great time. As we get older each reunion gets more important to us. The reunions gives us the opportunity to keep our friendships alive. Nothing can replace our great friends we have made in the 281st.

Call your 281st friends and make sure they attend our R & R. It will great to relax and enjoy each other. The Crowne Plaza has again given us a great package. Room rates at \$59.00 a night can't be beat. They have really gone overboard to ensure that we have a great time. They have a great staff to serve us. Let them know we appreciate them.

I would be remiss if I didn't thank all the committees for their hard work. It is not easy to do a reunion from a distance, but we manage to have a great time. Thanks to Gary for helping us out at the hotel. Joan and I are looking forward to seeing you in St Louis in August.

Darryl M. Stevens
President

The VP sends.....

This year we have "new blood" in the system and in true Intruder style they have stepped up and have taken charge of planning and running the reunion. Gary had his surgery and is back as our "boots on the ground" main man and is keeping the ladies at the hotel happy while handling the many details needed to keep us on our ETA. Working with Gary, Don Torrini has done a tremendous job with registration to include mail outs, name tags, signs and he is planning the refuse to be a victim workshop.

One of our early concerns was the guest speaker for Saturday evening. S.F. Sgt. Maj. Donald J. Taylor (Ret.), a former member of Delta and a great supporter of the 281st has accepted our invitation to be our speaker. Frank Little is responsible for the Saturday evening banquet with our own Joe Bilitzke serving as the MC. In addition to the Intruder of the Year Award there are a couple of surprise recognitions for us all that you will need to be there to witness.

Fred Mentzer, our NL editor, has finalized every detail for our R&R Hawaii Friday night gala.

Recently married he and Karen (who has been very helpful) will be relocating to the west coast the week of the reunion. Fred has several members on his committee that will see that his plans run smoothly.

Frank Becker set up our Grants Farm tour which is the former homestead of President U.S. Grant.

Other programs and activities include: Golf outing, Refuse to be a Victim, VETS Center PTSD workshop, Ladies Brunch, Membership Meeting, Memorial Service and Share Faerber the caricature artist will be back. She says she really enjoys the 281st group.

Fred Lewis has finished cataloging our memorabilia and it, along with the original 281st Guidon, will be on display. Bring your memorabilia to share with us and Richard Murray will make CD copies of photos and documents for those wanting to duplicate them. Fred is also handling the Hospitality Room and food.

I have received several calls and correspondence from committee members who have seen our reunion notice in at least 8 military publications. But we need your help in getting the word out. Bring a buddy and come join in and you will come back each year. This year we will also have three former unit commanders in attendance.

As in past reunions, the most enriching aspect is the camaraderie experienced with each other. Please call your friends and insist they join us. Our goal is to put on the best ever reunion and to keep the cost down. The great hotel is cheap and the beer is free. See you in Saint Louis

Jay Hays V.P.
Reunion Chairman

† The Chaplain's Corner †

It seems as if these newsletter deadlines keep coming quicker and quicker with each passing year. As I think about writing this column I want to try to convey a "zim-boob-bah" attitude as Fred Mentzer put it but I will probably disappoint Fred as I am disappointed that I will not be able to attend this year. A conflict with church business makes it impossible to be in two places at once.

I know that the gathering together for camaraderie is great fun. But I would like to remind everyone of the importance of remembering our fallen brothers. Some say that the Memorial Service is too hard on them and I understand that. It always puts a lump in my throat at those services too wherever they are held.

As I was doing my daily devotions the other day I read this scripture from Isaiah and it made me

stop and think. *The righteous perish, and no one takes it to heart; and no one understands that the righteous are taken away to be spared from evil. Isaiah 57:1*

I'm sure we have all asked why someone had to die in war. We all seem to despair about all the good things that our friends never got to do when maybe we should rejoice that God has saved them from a time of trouble.

If you were making a flower arrangement you would probably want all young and fresh ones rather than old wilted ones. Maybe God feels the same way.

Norm Kaufman
281st Assn. Chaplain

† **Tom West** †
499th Sig Det 1/66-5/67
Passed away 20 April 2007
Rest in Peace, Brother

†

From Frank Becker...
Reunion Committee

Grant's Farm Tour
Thursday, August 2, 2007
10:00 A.M.

Don't miss the Grant's Farm tour on Thursday. We will be taking a private coach to Grant's Farm. The farm was originally the home of President Grant. While he was a young officer stationed at Jefferson Barracks at St. Louis he went on a weekend pass to a friend's home and found out he had a beautiful younger sister. The rest is history, in which you can share. In 1848 Ulysses S. Grant and his new bride Julia Dent received 80 acres of Dent family land southwest of St. Louis as a wedding gift. In 1855, Grant started sawing and notching the logs that would be used to build a four-room, two-story cabin on the property. The cabin was completed in just three days with the help of friends. Grant established his farm and named it "Hardscrabble".

In 1885, the home passed out of the hands of the Grant family. It was sold to various people and was finally purchased by August Busch Sr. in 1907. In the intervening years, the cabin had been moved to Old Orchard, Mo., and displayed at the 1904 World's Fair. August Busch Sr. had the cabin moved and reassembled approximately one mile from its original location. In 1977, Anheuser-Busch restored the cabin to its present condition.

The Grant's Farm Tour includes a ride in an open air vehicle through the Deer Park with up close feeding experience with animals and fish. Visit the Clydesdale stables and take a tour of Grant's Cabin.

Major highlights of any visit to Grant's Farm are the educational and entertaining animal shows in the Tier Garten amphitheater. The Elephant Education show and Animal Encounters show highlight the talents of elephants, parrots, mammals, and reptiles.

The Budweiser Clydesdale Stables are home to approximately 35 Clydesdale mares, stallions and foals. Anheuser-Busch has one of the world's largest herds of Clydesdale horses and owns approximately 250 nationwide. Grant's Farm, where up to 15 foal are born each year, is proud to be one of the breeding operations for the world-famous Budweiser Clydesdales.

Lunch will be on your own. You will be able to purchase food at the Bauernhof, a 19th century German farmstead. The Brat Haus offers a variety of fare including: bratwurst, pretzels, pizza and chicken strips in an open-air setting. Children's meals and desserts are also available.

Don't fill up to much here as we will be stopping at famous Ted Drew's for frozen custard on the way back.

Frank Becker
Reunion Committee Member

Notes and Comments

Here's a first for this newsletter. How about the wedding of yours truly and the former Karen Voss! A bit of history and some pics follow.. Fred

Karen and I were kids together on the Presidio of San Francisco in the early to mid 1950s. Our fathers were both stationed at the Presidio and we went to church and Sunday school at the Presidio Chapel where we were married on Saturday, May 19th, 2007. We were high school sweethearts but too young to think seriously about marriage. I left following graduation from George Washington High School to accompany my family to Japan where dad had been transferred. Karen graduated a year later from Washington High and traveled to Denver to attend Colorado Womans College, which is now part of Denver University.

Our adult lives found us moving about and going in totally different directions. I spent twenty years in the Army, serving two tours in Viet Nam, over fifteen years in Germany and Belgium, retired in Europe and then went to work in the Middle East as a commercial helicopter pilot in the oil business. Karen worked in Public Relations and then moved to Lincoln, Nebraska where she ultimately became a partner in a printing

business and expanded her skills as a commercial artist and typographer. After over fifty years, we reunited thanks to friends and have realized that we are meant to be together.

Our dream was to be married at the Presidio Chapel and that indeed happened in May. Family, friends and guests who participated came from as far away as Germany, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Florida, New York and Alaska. And of course, Nebraska! The Wedding Party were housed at the Sausalito Alta Mira B&B Hotel. The rehearsal dinner and reception were held at the Paradise Bay Restaurant in Sausalito. All in all the small group of less than forty folks had a fantastic time. And it was great that we even had some 281st participation as can be seen from the pictures.

Karen and I are very sorry we won't be able to attend the reunion this year as we're moving from Nebraska to Oregon the end of July. Bummer! But we'll be there with bells on next year!



Fred & Karen Mentzer



Joe Bilitzke Hawk Hawkins Ken Smith

Now for a story, circa 1968, submitted by Jeff Murray

When I arrived in country I had no idea where I was going aside from Vietnam, 17th Group, 1st Aviation Brigade. Landing in Cam Ranh Bay and sleeping in a crowded room did nothing to alleviate that "...Where am I going..." feeling until they sent me to Dong Ba Thin. Still in a crowded room I was only slightly more aware of my future home than when I was back home in Charlottesville, Virginia, but there was this noisy 1st Lieutenant who kept me entertained, however inadvertently he planned it. He kept wearing a path from the hooch to the Club and introduced me to Canadian Club and Wa-Wa, as he called it. Finally after about two days of trying to keep up with this guy we got called into the Battalion Adjutant's office and he showed us a chart of all the units, and asked us where we wanted to go. I was not very smart but I thought I was eager so I raised my hand and said 155th. That 1LT smacked my hand and told me to try again. I had picked it only because the #'s looked cool but he told me to follow him and head for the 281st. The Adjutant told me the same thing. He said the 155th was full anyway. Lucky for me it turned out, one of my flight school buddies went there and came down south a few months later on a Huey with about 10 pilots sitting in the back and when they tried to take off they ran out of power, and only one pilot survived, and that was not my buddy.

I wound my way thru the 281st, somehow progressing to AC in the Wolf Pack platoon, managing to remain there until my tour was up. The unit was so thankful for my service that when it came time to DEROS they gave us a 5/4 truck and a driver and drove us to DBT, and guess who was sitting back there in the cab with me, both of whom were armed with unloaded M-16's. Yep, that same 1LT except now he was a Captain. Captains were darn hard to talk to but we managed a few stories.

We got to the Out Processing Station with about 2 days to go before they could get us out but that friendly Captain happened to be a frat brother of the manifest officer and darned if we didn't get on the next plane out that night. He even took me along. I thanked him by letting him be in my wedding, but he tells me he doesn't remember that part. I guess I either married a forgettable woman or the wedding itself was forgettable. Makes no difference, this Captain ensured my survival by steering me toward the absolutely very best unit I have ever served in plus he got me home two days early. Thank You Dave Mitchell.

A tribute to Tom West from LaRie Hamilton...

Tom West was a great person who could make you laugh and even thou he knew he had but a little time left on this earth he was determined to make the best of it show his friends he cared and always smile. That and his love of life were his trade Marks. He had a love of life yet had just as many things going on with health and life as the rest of us. His attitude I can only hope to have when told you only have a few months to live. Tom loved the 281st

and was a quite person . I wanted to say good bye to him in this special way as he was special and spent a great deal of time with me at the last reunion. To me he was one of those special brothers who watched after you yet didn't let you know he was at the time. He loved family and I don't believe I ever seen him without a smile.

Gary please see to it that Tom's wife gets this picture of Tom as his smile shows his love of life.



This from the Chat Net. Gary Stagman responded to an online inquiry from Art Gallagher's (Maintenance 1966-67) son about receiving the newsletter. Here's the return email from Thomas....

Yes sir, I am Arty Gallagher's son. He is alive and well, still in Bayonne, NJ, but at a different address. After retiring from the Police Department in 1998, he purchased a tavern, Danny Boys Pub, Bayonne, NJ 07002. He moved immediately to the apartment above the bar. I have all the information you need to update his profile. Tell me what you need to know. If you need to send anything to him, please send them in my name, Thomas P. Gallagher. The reason behind it is my Dad is so distantly private from his past that he will, without doubt hesitate to follow up on anything about Vietnam. All my life I have asked my Dad about his time in action and I was always met by only Yes and No answers. He never, ever had a story to tell. And being my fathers son, I know there are plenty.

Sir, thank you very much for your fast response, I look forward to the chance of becoming part of my Dads life and the people like yourself who helped bring him home alive.....Thomas P. Gallagher

Must'a been John Korsbeck's granddaddy..... Yuk, yuk... - Fred

"When I die, I want to die like my grandfather -- who died peacefully in his sleep. Not screaming like all the passengers in his car." -- Author Unknown

CSM Bob Ohmes recovers and returns to us from an extended hospital stay. Bob and family will be at the Reunion. Jack Mayhew sends.....

Hay Intruders, here is a great example of how Intruders treat minor health problems. CSM Bob walked out of the hospital after 5 months of intensive care and is on his way back to his almost normal life. Many thanks go to his lovely and carrying wife Bonnie who deserves a big solute from all of us. It's great to have him home and planning for the reunion. (Don Ruskauff of Alaska, remember he is looking forward to seeing you at the reunion.) He is certainly an inspiration to all of us. If you have not done so drop him a note and if you live in the KS area go see this man who gave his all for us.

Welcome home again, CSM Bob.



Tragic news from Lee Brewer

From: wleebrewer@aol.com
Sent: Wednesday, July 04, 2007
To: HQ_281AHC@yahoogroups.com
Subject: Request Prayer's

To my Friends:

Mikki and I yesterday received the news that no parent or grandparent ever wants to receive. Our 4 and 1/2 month old grandson Benjamin Franklin Brewer son of James Ray Brewer passed away in his crib on the 2nd of July. From all appearances, the child died from choking due to food obstruction in the throat. Resuscitation efforts by his father were unsuccessful. Mikki and I request only your prayer's for James and his family and us. That is the most rewarding thing you can do for us at this time.

Thank you for being our friends and being there. Lee Brewer

Condolences....

From: Jack mayhew
Sent: Wednesday, July 04, 2007
To: Lee Brewer HQ_281AHC@yahoogroups.com

Lee, there are no words that I know that can express our sorrow for your loss. Know that we are all here for you and your family if you need anything or just want to talk. Jack

From: Fred Mentzer
Sent: Wednesday, July 04, 2007
To: Lee Brewer HQ_281AHC@yahoogroups.com

Dear Lee,

We are shocked and grieved for you and Mikki. Please know that you are in our thoughts and prayers at this time of profound loss.

Karen and I share in your grief. Please pass on to James and his family our sincerest and heartfelt condolences.

Fred and Karen Mentzer

From: Norm Kaufman
Sent: Wednesday, July 04, 2007
To: Lee Brewer HQ_281AHC@yahoogroups.com

Dear Lee and Mikki,

Please accept from Marge and myself our deepest sympathy and condolences. We don't understand God's purposes at times like these. I hope this little poem can help ease your grief. Please convey our message and this poem to your son.

Norm and Marge

The Broken Chain

We little knew that morning that God was going to call your name.
In life we loved you dearly, in death we do the same.

It broke our hearts to loose you, you did not go alone;
For part of us went with you, the day God called you home.

You left us peaceful memories, your love is still our guide;
And though we cannot see you, you are always at our side.

Our family chain is broken, and nothing seems the same;
But as God calls us one by one, the chain will link again.

-- Author Unknown --

The following posted to the Chat Net by David Dosker.....

"Packages to Justin"

Posted by: "David Dosker" ratpack13@sbcglobal.net

Mon Jun 25, 2007

I want to take the opportunity to thank Norm Kaufman's Church and Jeff Murray's Bank for send goody packs to Justin in Afghanistan. He called for Father's day, which was a great surprise.

He is back working in the hanger, nights. Was supposed to be on guard duty but was needed to run a team doing maintenance.

He thinks that he will be home for R&R in September. Otherwise it is hot. Doesn't get out on the economy. They don't have a Marie and Friends! Can't say much about what is going on due to OPSEC.

Again his thanks and mine for your thoughtful packages. If I have forgotten anyone, Apologies and Thanks.

Dave Dosker

Some words from the Editor concerning matters Reunion and other tid-bits.....

If you haven't already done so..... GET YOUR APPLICATION IN for the Reunion! It's not too late. Even though the application says that 1 July is the last day for reduced rates at the Crowne Plaza Hotel that's not necessarily the case. The deadline is not written in stone. If the hotel does not give you the reduced rate then contact Gary Stagman and he'll "get'er done". Also, Gary as Membership Chairman has asked, in fact "implored", that folks keep him informed of address changes, to include email. He says that his poor old knobby knee's are skinned to the bone from begging members to keep him up to date!

I'll add my own request as to address changes; please let me know, particularly of any email changes, or the newsletter ain't gonna get to you in a timely manner! Further... many service providers are upping security and blocking any email senders who are not on the receivers "friends list" or similar listings. When I send out the newsletter I do not have time to request to added to each individuals acceptable senders list. If you want to continue receiving the email newsletter than please add myself and the 281st AHC.

With regard to the Newsletter you will find a library of current and past NL's on the 281st AHC Association website. Just click the Commo Section link on the home page.

And finally, something I stumbled onto on the Internet. No need to say more..... - Fred

Come With Me, My Brother

Come with me, my Brother; to the past which seems so near;
The past of fallen soldiers and young men overwhelmed with fear;
Fear of loss and fear of death in a place so far from home;
Compelled us all to anger; at times you feel alone;

Come with me, my Brother; tell me of your pain;
The jungle heat, the stench of blood and endless monsoon rain;
I want to know about your friends; the guy who died that day;
Talk about your demons in that place so far away;

Come with me, my Brother; abandon the lonely road;
For 30 years, you've held it in, that very heavy load;
Our time is short; life is dear; Brother, why can't you see;
That through your tears, I'm here to help and try to set you free;

Come with me, my Brother; let's go and see our parade;
Of flags, of guns, of bands and such; of heroes we are made;
What's done is done; our time has come; the War has finally passed;
We'll cry and hug and celebrate, our welcome home at last;

Come with me, my Brother; passing to the light;
One thing to do before we go, knowing that it's right;
He fought and died just as we; I only wish we knew;
How to heal our wounds with Charlie; for he's our Brother too.

Come with me, my Brother.

*John G. Moisan, Fort Pierre, SD
(US Army – 1LT Signal Corps - 1969-71)*

OK folks, that's about it for this newsletter. Attached are the Reunion Registration Form and the Schedule of Events. Fill out the form and mail it, or fax it, or email it, or smoke signal it to Don Torrini, and call the hotel.

DO IT NOW !

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

281ST AHC ASSOCIATION, INC.
Established 4 July 1999



EXECUTIVE BOARD

President
Darryl Stevens
Vice President
Jay Hays
Secretary
Jeff Murray
Treasurer
Butch Jones
Senior Member@Large
Frank Little
Junior Member@Large
Fred Lewis
Immediate Past President
Gary Stagman

APPOINTED OFFICERS

Awards – Frank Little
Membership Committee Chairman - Gary Stagman
Remembrance Committee Chairman - Jack Mayhew
Historian - Bob Mitchell
Internet Groups Administrator - Brent Gourley
Commo Committee Chairman – Fred Mentzer
Legal Advisor - Brent Gourley
Reunion Committee Chairman – Jay Hays
Survivor Assistance Chairman - Marshall Hawkins
Memorabilia Sales Committee Chairman – Jay Hays
Chaplain - Norm Kaufman
Newsletter Editor/Public Relations
Fred Mentzer

**281st AHC Association
42nd Anniversary and 2007 Annual Reunion
Crowne Plaza Airport Hotel
St Louis, MO**

Tuesday: 31 July 2007

This is advanced party set up day, Registration, Hospitality Room, PX, and Meeting Room. (Including any decorations)

Wednesday: August 1, 2007

Registration in Hotel Lobby 0900 to 1500 or later as required.

PX & Hospitality Suite Opens 0900 to 2400 or later

EB meeting 1600 PM board room ...

Sightseeing, visiting and meals on your own

Thursday: August 2, 2007

Registration in Hotel Lobby 0900 to 1500 or later as required.

PX & Hospitality Suite Opens 0900 to 2400 or later

Sightseeing, visiting and meals on your own

Grant's Farm Tour (10:00 – 15:00 PM) 5 Hrs \$15.00 per person, bus can hold up to 57 persons. Also Included is a stop at Ted Drew's Frozen Custard.

Friday: August 3, 2007

Registration in Hotel Lobby 0900 to 1200

PX & Hospitality Suite open 0900 to 1500 (Reopen after Hawaiian Nite Party)

Dare to be safe – Presented by Don Torrini at 9:00 AM - 1200

Vets Center Presentation by VA Rep at 2:00 PM – 4:00 Families included

Bars set up outside of Hawaiian R & R Center 17:30 – 22:30

Hawaiian R & R Buffet 18:00 – 19:00

Various events (Crowning of King Kame'a Weights'a & fun and games)

Hawaiian Music thru out the evening.

Caricaturist starting at 5 pm to when ever she is tired.

Saturday: August 4, 2007

General Membership Meeting 0900 to 1200

Ladies Brunch 09:00 – 12:00 Hosted By Crown Plaza General Manager

Memorial Service 1330 to 1500

Cash bar 17:30 – 22:30

Association Banquet and Speaker at 1900 ...

PX & Hospitality suite reopens after Banquet

Sunday: August 5, 2007

FAREWELL - PX & Hospitality suite open in AM

Bloody Mary's and Mimosas available in AM in Hospitality Room.

Check out and return home

Have a safe trip home and see you next year!!!



**REUNION 2007
"R&R HAWAII"**

281st AHC Association Reunion Registration

Reunion Form Must be Mailed No Later than 30 Jun 2007

1 – 5 August 2005, Crowne Plaza Airport Hotel, St Louis, MO (Room Rate \$59.00 nightly)

****Call 314-291-6700 and ask for in house reservations using "AHC" as the code****

"Host Hotel reservation deadline is 1 July 2007 for reduced rates"

Mem #	Last Name	First Name	MI
Address		City	State ZIP () Home Phone

Current EMAIL Address: _____

INFORMATION FOR NAME TAG: Name _____

Dates in country with the 281st AHC (or an associated unit): _____

Guests' Name Tags: #1 _____ #2 _____

(Please list additional guests on the back of this form)

ATTENDING 281st Reunion: Registration Information

Member:	Reunion		\$ 100.00	\$ _____
Guests: (16 & up)	Reunion	#Guests _____ X	\$ 100.00	\$ _____
Children (11-15 yrs)	Reunion	#Guests _____ X	\$ 50.00	\$ _____
My 2008 Annual Membership Dues are enclosed			\$ 25.00	\$ _____

Registration for children 10 & under not required but encouraged. Parents responsible for meal costs.

TOUR: Must have 35 or more to book the tour. (Bus holds max 57 persons)

5 Aug 07 – Grants Farm (Busch) Tour \$15.00 ea _____ # Attendees = \$ _____

TOTAL DUE ----- \$ _____

PAYMENTS: Check or Money Order made payable to "281st AHC Association" and mail this form with your fees to:

281st AHC Association
c/o Don Torrini
1 Biscayne Drive
Edwardsville, IL 62025 Tel: 618-656-4555 Email: donaldo12@aol.com

HELP: Yes, I wish to volunteer!!!! I will be happy to do my share and assist with:

Registration _____ As Needed _____ Other _____

Please use the area below for specific comments or requests:
