

November 2017

No. 67

281ST ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



From Your Prez – Bain Black

Well here we are headed into the holiday season again. I can't believe that Thanksgiving is here already. This is the first newsletter since the DC reunion, and a wonderful reunion it was. For those who did not make it to our nation's capital, I regret that you could not join the 200 attendees who made the journey. Our hotel accommodations exceeded expectations and were a real value. The hotel staff was attentive, the Friday buffet and Saturday Banquet were delicious, and our guest speakers will be remembered for years to come. Some of the highlights:

- Placed ceremonial 281st wreath at the Vietnam War Memorial
- Conducted 281st MIA/KIA memorial service at the stadium adjacent to Tomb of the Unknowns, Arlington National Cemetery
- Placed 281st wreath at Tomb of Unknowns
- 12 Intruders interviewed by Vietnam War Commemorative Committee to be part of Library of Congress oral history of the war.
- Hosted speakers Joe Galloway, war correspondent for UP and BG Frank Tate, head of Army Aviation at the Pentagon
- Lady's social time in Chesapeake Room overlooking Potomac River and the capital from the top floor of our hotel.
- Coverage by Donna Renfroe and Paul DeWinter of Hall Radio (Lakeland, FL) to be included in a future documentary style report about the 281st.

These are only a few of the many highlights, but the best part of the reunion was the opportunity to be among fellow Intruders, family and friends.

Several line items on our budget were exceeded, most notably transportation costs and the cost for that ladies social. The bottom line exceeded

the budget by approximately \$5300, but few would argue that the reunion was a once in a lifetime event. My thanks to the many individuals that worked tirelessly to make this event a success. Thank you!

Plans for the Gettysburg 2018 mini-union are underway by your VP and Committee Chairperson Dennis Crowe as well as coordinator and "boots on the ground" Lou Lerda, Senior Member at Large. This reunion will be less formal, less expensive and promises to be a whole lot of fun. The gathering at Gettysburg, PA will be in middle to late September of 2018, so please leave your schedule open and plan to attend.



Following the unexpected death of Fred Mentzer, Don Budlong volunteered to become the editor of our 281st newsletter. He promised to do the job for three years and it is now time for someone else to take over. This will be Don's last newsletter, although he agreed to help his replacement for future editions. Don, thank you for your outstanding work over the last three years!! We need Don's replacement to step forward. Would you or someone you know be interested? Please contact me at 704-947-0602.

In DC Will McCollum handed over the gavel to me as President of your 281st AHC Association. Thank you Will for the great job you did in this position and thank you Intruders for electing me to lead our association for the next year. I'm honored.

Immediate Past President - Will McCollum

Our reunion in Washington, D.C. this year was one of the best that I have attended. Bain, you did an excellent job. I am impressed with our members and our Association. I believe we always have had, and still do to this day, have some of the best people ever. We are truly blessed.





What an honor it is serving with so many great guys on the Executive Board. I thank all of you for the privilege; it has been a good ride.

281st Scholarship Program

The 281st AHC Memorial Scholarship Fund was incorporated on July 11, 2007. Since its inception the fund has made 94 single semester scholarship awards ranging from \$1,000 to \$1,250 per individual per semester. Our records show that applicants have been awarded \$112,000.

Scholarships are awarded by a Scholarship Trustee Board which manages the fund and evaluates all applicants who apply. Any direct descendant of an individual who served in the 281st AHC or their spouse may apply for scholarship assistance. As long as grade and semester hour enrollment requirements have been met, a student could qualify for up to 8 awards for undergraduate or equivalent study. The 281st AHC Memorial Scholarship Fund is an IRS 501(c)(3) qualified non-profit organization. All donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

One-hundred percent of all donations go directly to the Scholarship Program. Every dollar donated and awarded gives a young person a better chance to succeed in life thereby bettering society. Each award is made in honor of a Missing in Action (MIA), Killed in Action (KIA), or Died after Tour (DAT) 281st Intruder.

For information about the program or assistance in completing the application contact the program Secretary - Dr. Karen Heintz- Forcht (336-638-7544 or kforcht@elon.edu).

This year \$9,590 was donated to the Scholarship Program during reunion registration. Additionally,

\$1,945 was raised at the reunion with the raffle of a quilt made by Susan Houston.

The affects of your donations, no matter how big or small, will benefit this country long after all of us are gone.

To make a donation, send your check made payable to 281st AHC Memorial Scholarship Fund, to Walt Pikul, CPA, Treasurer, PO Box 41035 Fayetteville, NC 28309.

Interested in Going Back to Vietnam?

Fifty years after we were there, Nha Trang is barely recognizable. The air field we knew is almost gone. High rise hotels are all over the city and along the beach. Construction is booming! Wonder what their unemployment rate is. Nha Trang is becoming one of the most popular vacation spots in Southeast Asia. One former Intruder, Don Eliff (Wolf Pack 68-69), is living his dream, in Nha Trang. He and his wife Thanh recently purchased the Henry Guest House hotel which is located in the vicinity of the former officer's hooch. Remember where that was you old Warrants and RLO's.



If you are interested in spending some time in Nha Trang again or you just want to chew the fat with Don Eliff, his email is donelliff@yahoo.com. I'm sure he has a very special Intruder Rate at his hotel. Maybe he will show up at one of our Reunions with photos.

IRA's and New Rules – by Jeff Murray

Some of you have an IRA in some form or another. There is a new Rule out there that is in flux for the moment but is being enforced by almost every financial firm. It's called the "DOL Rule", or "Fiduciary Rule" named after a ruling by the Department of Labor (DOL). It basically outlaws transactional retirement accounts handled by a 3rd party. If you use a broker i.e. Ed Jones, Fidelity Advisor, etc, then you're affected. Most

brokerage firms have eliminated any commission sales in IRA's and have converted those accounts to fee IRA's where you pay a % of assets to manage, all transactions are included, no stock commissions for example. That is more expensive; it brings more revenue to the brokerage firm but it complies with the rule.

I didn't make this up. Brokers don't like it, clients are confused, but it's the law. Even though it's not final yet, everyone is following it because a broker can get sued if you don't. This is the only time in my 27 years of being a financial advisor that I have been able to charge more for something and compliance is happy. This has also thrown a lot of annuity companies out of the IRA business. So if you have an IRA and use a broker for anything and you haven't heard of this Rule; call them up and ask. I guarantee you've received letters about it but no one reads them. The only way around this is to do it yourself online with no help from anyone. If you want any more info, email me (Tamu73@sbcglobal.net).

For an update on the "DOL Rule", follow this link below to investopedia.com

<https://www.investopedia.com/updates/dol-fiduciary-rule/>.

The Rescue - a Movie – From Tom Ross

As many of you know, Tom Ross has spent the best part of the last 2 years plus on a project to bring his book, *Privileges of War* to the big screen. With regard to the movie, things are really on hold now as Tom and his agent/manager search for a new production company with the financial means to fund the budget required to properly tell the story. Tom is also contacting individuals who might be interested in funding the project. Everyone who has read the script says it is a wonderful story . . . he simply needs to find someone who believes it's a wonderful story and is willing to take money out of their pocket.



With regard to funding the film, anyone interested is welcome to call Tom at any of the phone numbers below.

(404) 495-3720 (Office)

(770) 242-0299 (Home)

(770) 380-0360 (Cell)

He has all the details and production resources required. Tom is confident that the film will earn all of the invested funds back in the first weekend of its release. He also plans an aggressive pre-release campaign and feels the project will be supported nationally. So, all of you Intruders that are sitting on a pile of cash, consider investing it in a very worthwhile movie which is in part, about the heroic actions of the 281st.

For the Ladies from Jack Mayhew

It was great to see so many of you in DC. I would like to share a moment of reflection with you. When we planned the Arlington remembrance event, Carmela Laspada offered the service of the two young folks who sang for us, and she asked what we would like them to sing. We immediately responded with, "The Wind Beneath My Wings". At the ceremony, we concentrated on remembering our fallen brothers. However, I can tell you that the song was for you ladies who blessed us with your attendance. You were, and are now, the wind beneath our wings. More and more ladies of the Association are coming forward and contributing to the success of the organization. Thanks for all of your help.

President Lincoln said that the Veterans programs were to care for our wounded in battle and their widows. I and others are not sure we are doing everything we can, and should do, to care for our widows. In speaking to several of the wives, we found that they were more than open to establishing communications with our widows and, where necessary, assist them in their time of need, and or help them find assistances. From my personal experience, I can tell you that we have widows living alone with little or no support. These are the ladies that sent us food packages and raised our kids while we were off to war. Let's see if we can repay some of the debt. Ms. Cheryl Becker suggested that we place a request for comment and interest from the association ladies and she will help organize the effort. Please send your comments to Cheryl by email to cherylbecker38@yahoo.com.

P.S. from Cheryl Becker - I speak for all the ladies when I say thanks to our guys for making our wonderful Ladies Event possible. We had a beautiful room, good food, and wonderful entertainment all because the men wanted us to be happy. Thank you guys! We love you! And a big thanks to Theresa Petrevitch for using her wonderful talents to make us all laugh and have a great time.



IN MEMORIAM

Corbin Eugene Humphreys was born November 11, 1946 in Houston Heights, Texas. He was a Wolf Pack crew chief from July 1967 to May 1968. He passed away August 29, 2017 at the age of 71 in Richmond, Texas.

Eldon Brack was born in San Francisco on June 17, 1945. He served with the 281st as a maintenance technician from April 1967 to April 1968. Eldon passed away on November 30, 2010 at the age of 65. He was survived by his son, Eldon, III and daughter Mindy.

David E. Peacock was born April 11, 1947 in Rochester, NY. He served at a Bandit crew chief and door gunner from June 1970 to December 1970. David passed away on May 8, 2015 at the age of 68. David was survived by his son Eric Peacock and two daughters, Katrina Peacock and Traci Babcock.

Jackie W. Glendenon was born in 1937 in East Stone Gap, VA. He was a line chief with the 145th Air Lift Platoon in 1965-66. Jackie passed away on December 31, 2014 at the age of 77. He was survived by Margaret, his wife of more than 50 years, his daughter Micki and sons David, Mark and Paul.

James A. Atkins was born on May 1, 1943 in Gardendale, AL. He passed away there on June 27, 2017 at the age of 74. Jim was a Rat Pack crew chief and door gunner from December 1968 to November 1969. Jim was survived by Jean Petrich, his soul-mate of 15 years.



Trubee A. Kroth was born in Somers Point, NJ in 1947. He served as a Wolf Pack door gunner from May 1967 to April 1968. Trubee passed away on August 22, 2015 at the age of 68. He was survived by Anne, his wife of 43 years and their two daughters, Annemarie and Helen.

Olden F. Durham was born on December 1, 1934. He served with the 281st in 1968 and passed away in Crestwood, KY on January 12, 2010 at the age of 75.

Peter Sarris, who was a Rat Pack pilot from April 1970 to December 1970 passed away in November 2016.

May they all rest in peace

To read more about any of our Intruders that have died after serving in Vietnam (DAT), please click on the link below (or copy and paste it into your web browser) for an alphabetical list by last name and their story.

<http://www.281st.com/281Remembrance/dat/index.html#A>

Remembrance – Frank Becker

The first of November it was my honor to deliver a flag case to the family of a 281st pilot Al Rampone. Even though Al had passed away earlier in the summer his wife was very understanding of our situation with the reunion and other activities that delayed me in getting it to her. Barbara Rampone, Cheryl and I had a very nice visit and as with most 281st people, in a short time, it seemed we had known each other for 50 years. When I gave her the flag case with the plaque inscribed with Al's name and dates of service in the 281st, she said she was going to cry. Barbara said Al always talked so highly of the 281st. He also later served with the National Guard so he could keep flying helicopters.

Several years ago she asked Al if he wanted to be laid out in his "dress blues". Al responded, "I'm an aviator! Lay me out in my flight suit". When Al's time came, their son, an Air Force pilot secured a flight suit. At the cemetery during the ceremony, there was a helicopter "flyover". Of course they were not hueys; probably Blackhawks.

I also gave her an Honorary Membership Plaque that the EB had approved for her. As we were leaving after visiting with Barbara for more than two hours, I asked

her if she would like to read our book, *Above the Best Book*. I had one in the car and left it with her.

During the 3 hour drive home that evening, Cheryl and I thought it was well worth it just to talk to her, the appreciation we felt and her appreciation of the 281st family.

Intruder Sick Call

Don Jutz, a/k/a Zorro suffered a stroke last year and is still recuperating in Wisconsin. Don was a pilot in the 281st from 11/66 to 9/67. A card or call would certainly lift his spirits. So would a care package. His contact information is:

Room 112 Saint Andrews
3800 North 92nd Street
Milwaukee, WI 53222
Cell Phone: [850-387-4610](tel:850-387-4610)

Jay Hays is still in a wheel chair recovering from knee surgery. If he continues to stay off his feet and listens to Dr. Doris' orders, we will see him at our Reunion in 2018. We missed him in Washington this year although thanks to technology and his son Jason, we were able to see and talk to Jay and Doris via Skype in the PX. ↓↓↓



Jay is thankful for all of the cards and phone calls he has received during this recovery. So don't stop now, keep those calls and cards coming.

Here is Jay's contact information to encourage him during his recuperation:

Phone: 330-770-2278
Email: Jhays@haysenterprises.com

Rose Boarman has been battling cancer for some time now. It has recently spread to her ribs and spine. She has beaten it before and will beat it again. Our thoughts and prayers are with her.

Three Generations of Cartwright in Service

Intruder Al Cartwright is very proud of his family. Especially his two sons and one grandson in this photo to the right. The Cartwrights believe in service to their country and community. In the photo from left to right are son Lt. Kent Cartwright, fireman/paramedic; LTC (RET) Al Cartwright; grandson 2nd Lt. Evan Cartwright, Florida National Guard; and son Assistant Chief Keith Cartwright, fireman/paramedic. You may have seen sons Kent and Keith at our 2016 Reunion in Fayetteville, NC.



WANTED

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

(Yes, for this Newsletter)

Yes, this job is in very high demand. As you can see from the photo to the left (←) Jay Hays is saying, "YES, I want that job!" And Doris is saying, "oh, Jay, NO you don't". So the job is still available.

Here is what you need to know about the position:

- Must be able to read, write and type in English
- Easy job – you only work 4 times per year
- Yet, you get paid for the entire year
- Pay is great – salary doubled this year
- You set your own work schedule
- Unlimited days off and holidays, with pay
- You get insider scoops on Intruder stuff
- You are your own boss (kind of)
- Association life members pay no annual dues
- No employer random drug tests
- Can be an Intruders wife or girlfriend or both
- Men – may interview a lot of pretty women
- Ladies – may interview a lot of young men
- More Great benefits – too many to list

Call Bain Black for more info - 704-947-0602

Reunion 2018

Lou Lerda – Sr. Member at Large

Boots on the Ground

The 2018 “Mini” Reunion plans for Gettysburg, PA are underway. At everyone's request, and in the true spirit of keeping it mini, we are operating on the KISS principal while arranging time for the Reunion essentials such as:

- Remembrance of our MIA's and KIA's,;
- Ladies fun time during our members meeting;
- A Hospitality Room

I've had several local groups offer support for a barbeque and some local entertainment. I am also going to view several locations for lodging and RV accommodations within close proximity to each other.

We have overcome the hospitality room issue and there will be no hotel parking fees. There will be public transportation to many sites in Gettysburg. I am very encouraged by the support and cooperation that has been extended to make this a great first attempt at a total unit “mini” event. I'll keep you all posted on particulars as they become available and are approved by our Association's Executive Board.

If you have any questions or would like to volunteer to help out before, during or after the reunion, contact our **VP & Reunion Chairman, Denny Crowe**, email below.
denny@oldcrowe.com

Happy Thanks- Giving



War stories

Remembering the 281st AHC

In our last Newsletter we published a story by Don Taylor entitled *Wrong Valley – Wrong LZ*. You will recall, Don Taylor is a retired Special Forces Sergeant Major and spent time with B-52, Project Delta. In this issue we are featuring another one of his stories which is posted on the Project Delta web site entitled *Remembering the 281st AHC*. Below is an excerpt from his story.

Probably the greatest bit of flying expertise of the Vietnam War was when CWO-2 Donald Torrini, a 281st pilot, pulled Jerry Nelson of the A Shau Valley. It is highly doubtful that if any helicopter unit other than the 281st had supported the Project during that deployment, a pilot would have gone to such an extreme effort to extract a recon team from what had appeared to be a hopeless situation.

Here is a link to the full story:

http://www.projectdelta.net/remembering_the_281st.htm

Time to Move On

I have been editing and publishing our Association's quarterly Newsletter for a little more than 3 years now. Initially I looked at it as a challenge. I took previous editor's (Fred Mentzer) last issue, deleted the content and started over. Then I thought, that was Fred's Newsletter, I need to make this mine. So I gave the Newsletter a make-over and have been changing it, ever so slightly each time it gets published.

So, if you have been reading this issue, you must know by now that this is my last issue as editor. It is time for me catch up on things I've been neglecting while on the EB and compiling the Newsletter, and move on. I've enjoyed this as much as anything I've done with the 281st. It's time to move on.

Don Budlong, Editor

**Once an Intruder
always an Intruder
We will never forget**