

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

## "INTRUDERS"

NHA TRANG  
1965-1970

Company Newsletter No. 22

Winter 2004

*To the veterans and families of the  
281<sup>st</sup> AHC Association a*



*Merry Christmas  
and a  
Happy New Year  
to all.*



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### *The 281<sup>st</sup> AHC Assn 2004 Annual Reunion a "Smashing Success"*

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#### *The Prez Says....*

Fellow Intruders,

The Executive Board approved three significant actions in the last two months:

1. Kelly Mayhew was given Honorary Membership for her outstanding contributions to the Association these past years.

2. The budget for the upcoming 2005 Annual Reunion in St. Louis, Missouri was approved, thereby releasing funds for its planning and execution.

3. A Standing Reunion Committee has been established to perform the necessary functions of planning for the 2006 Annual Reunion and follow-on years, thus providing a continuous unbroken effort of maintaining and

sustaining this vital part of reunion preparedness.

For those of you anticipating attendance at the August 2005 Annual, it would be appreciated if you send in your registration forms to Gary Stagman as soon as possible. Also, do not forget your dues payments, if required.

Finally, as we begin the Christmas period, I wish to express to you INTRUDERS and your families the very best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a safe prosperous New Year.

Mind the Standing Orders  
Call me if in doubt-- call me if in doubt  
about calling me

*Ray Oksa - President*

## *The Chaplains Corner*

Members & Families of the 281st AHC Association,

Marge and I would like to extend our best wishes to you all for a blessed and safe holiday celebration. Remember that "Jesus is the Reason for the Season."

At this time of year we especially want to remember all of our troops wherever they may be deployed. The other night at church we had a concert and the musician asked for a special request at prayer time. We take time to pray for the safety of our troops and always pray for the families of the young men and women who have given the ultimate sacrifice. But do we remember those whose lives have been changed forever? At this time of year I would like to remind everyone to pray for all of our young men and women who have been wounded. Their lives have been totally changed by the circumstances they now find themselves dealing with. Pray that they will feel God's strong and comforting arms around them and that God will help them overcome every disability they encounter.

I received the following article from one of the ladies in my church. As Christmas Day approaches it may help put in prospective the real meaning of the holiday.

*Norm Kaufman*

*281st AHC Association Chaplain*

### **There Was a Man**

At Christmas time there was a man, who looked so out of place.

As people rushed about him at a hurried pace. He stared at all the Christmas lights, the tinsel everywhere.

The shopping center Santa Claus with children gathered near.

The mall was packed with shoppers who were going to and fro.

Some with smiles, some with frowns and some too tired to go.

They rested on benches or they hurried on their way.

To fight the crowds for purchases to carry home that day.

The music from the stereo was playing loud and clear.

Of Santa Claus and snowmen and funny-nosed reindeer.

He heard the people talk about the good times on the way.

There seems to be some sort of celebration on the way.

And would you tell me who this is all dressed in red and white?

And why are the children asking "him" about a special night.

The answer came in disbelief, I can't believe my ear.

I can't believe you do not know that Christmas time is here.

The time when Santa comes around with gifts for girls and boys.

When they are asleep on Christmas Eve he leaves them books and toys.

The man you see in red and white is Santa Claus so sly.

The children love his joyful laugh and twinkle in his eye.

His gift packed sleigh is pulled by very small reindeer.

As he flies quickly through the air while darting here and there.

The children learn of Santa Claus while they are still quite small.

When Christmas comes "he" is the most important one of all.

The stranger hung his head in shame.

He closed a nail-pierced hand.

His body shook in disbelief, he did not understand.

A shadow crossed His stricken face.

His voice was low but clear.

"After all these years they still don't know."

And Jesus shed a tear.

~ Author Unknown ~

## ***The Treasurer (and PX Officer) Speaks...***

In order to continue offering embroidered merchandise at a reasonable price, The PX Officer is in the process of changing embroidery shops.

A new shop has been located and they are in the process of digitizing our

material. When they have completed this task we will be able to offer a more extensive choice of items to be embroidered.

Many of you may have noticed the PX page of the association web site "www.281stahc-assn.org" is undergoing changes. Some items have been dropped and others are being added. In addition, once we finalize our arrangements with the embroidery shop, we will be adding a shopping cart and pay pal feature to the web site. This project will take a little time so please be patient.

If you have any suggestions for PX items please contact Brian Paine at "bpaine@hal-pc.org". If there are enough requests for the same item we can add it to the inventory.

*Brian Paine - Treasurer*

### **Some Words from the Editor....**

The 2004 annual reunion at Vegas was up to the usual standard of your Association. In a word; "Outstanding"!

Well over 100 members, honorary members, families and friends attended. Although there were some organizing glitches in the early planning stages for the reunion, Bob Mitchell again came to the fore to organize a truly superlative event. "Good on-ya, Bob" and our heartfelt thanks.

Everyone had a good time at the Cocktail Party, many stories, remembrances, tall tales (I think John Korsbeck may have told one or two!) and was all around great fun!!

As usual, Jack Mayhew, our Remembrance Chairman, headed up the Memorial Ceremony for our KIA/MIA. A truly inspirational, emotional and

memorable experience. Great work Jack!

After the Memorial Ceremony the new officers for 2005 were sworn in and the Intruder of the Year was announced. Outgoing President Lynn Coleman presented the recognition plaque to Earl Broussard. Congratulations Earl, we're proud of you! But then, hey what else?, Earl's "Wolf Pack"!

And not to forget Kelly Mayhew (daughter of Jack) who again made sure that each and every aspect of the gathering did not falter. In particular Kelly insured that the 281<sup>st</sup> Hospitality Suite turned out to be one of the more memorable socializing spots at the reunion. Kelly, you are an absolute jewel!! Many, many thanks to you.

In appreciation of, and recognition for, outstanding contributions to the betterment of the 281<sup>st</sup> AHC Association the Executive Board unanimously voted Kelly Mayhew a Honorary Member. How about that!

Speaking of the Hospitality Suite, Jay Hays played a CD of a 281<sup>st</sup> action in Viet Nam that he'd had produced and paid for out of his own pocket. He had a number of copies along that were available to our members for a "contribution". As I recall he never did say how much this contribution should be and I know I'm going to hear from him for making this known. Sorry Jay, I but recognition has to be given where recognition is due!

So, we had a great reunion and for myself, I'm looking forward to another fantastic event at St Louis in 2005. I know you are also. See you there!

*Fred Mentzer - Editor*

## Notes and Comments

### ***Here's some action by the Executive Board concerning future reunions....***

Having had a MOTION and SECOND to incorporate a Standing Reunion Committee as an internal element of the 281stAHC Association and the Executive Board has unanimously endorsed this action, I hereby appoint Mr. Robert Mitchell as the Standing Reunion Committee Chairman. His experience as Reunion Committee Chairman for several years and the superior performance he has demonstrated in this capacity fully qualify him for this position.

It is expected that he and his committee will plan, coordinate and report periodically to the Executive Board on progress toward where and when the 281st AHC will meet in 2006 and future years, and a progress made toward attaining successful completion of intermediate goals. - Ray Oksa

### ***An email message from Tom Ross, 5<sup>th</sup> Group veteran and author.... A number of copies of his book "Privileges of War" were available in the Hospitality Suite at the Vegas gathering. One book was signed by Assn members during the course of the Reunion and sent to Honorary Member Tom.***

To the men of the 281st Assault Helicopter Company who took the time to sign a copy of "our" book for me . . .

You can't possibly understand how touched and honored I was when I received the book so many of you signed. As all of you know, the 281st plays a dominant roll in the book . . . as it should. One of the privileges of war was the opportunity to serve with men such as yourselves. When I felt safe on the ground . . . it was because the 281st was somewhere in the sky above me.

Please accept my humble thanks for this extremely thoughtful gesture.

Warm regards to each of you,  
Tom

### ***Following is a story by Jeff Murray that was to have been published in the last newsletter. But due to "space constraints" I had to leave it out. Here it be this time.....***

It was mid 1968 and I was away on a Delta mission to An Hoa. The Bandits rotated home and that meant my roommate, Dave Dolstein, was without adult supervision. He took it upon himself to cook up some beanie wienies one night, using our one metal pot with black plastic handle sitting atop our unauthorized double burner electric stove. He put the beans in the pan, added an inch or two of water and put the pan on the stove, then promptly fell asleep. He also neglected to punch a hole in the can. Snoring contentedly away Dave was jolted awake by a loud "BOOM" thundering through the compound, or so he thought. He bolted upright in bed and heard the incoming siren sounding off, accompanied by the sounds of cursing, yelling, and running, and as he peered our the window he saw a whole lot of men running, all headed in the direction of the BOQ bunkers. He also felt warm spots all over his chest and immediately thought he was wounded, but instead of pain he felt...hunger. The warm spots didn't hurt, they just stunk like burned beans. Dave peered out the window at all the troops heading for the bunker and immediately realized he was the reason for the clanging of the incoming siren, he was why men were clamoring towards the bunker in all sorts of combat gear, such as boxer shorts and steel pots, nomex pants and green t-shirts and a flight helmet, and the best one of all, a towel, dried soap and shower shoes. He was the reason some poor SF staff rat would have to fill out, in triplicate, a report detailing the night's combat operation and the swift response by the soldiers of the compound. Dave took appropriate action right away...he locked his door and crawled back into bed. Eventually the rest of the soldiers got to return to the sack as well, but upon arising the next morning none had the task of looking for an

unauthorized electric double burner stove, which had apparently vaporized, along with the indispensable metal pot with the black plastic handle. All was not lost however, for the handle was still there, sitting on the floor amidst the other BOQ room detritus. Mamasan was not pleased with the burnt bean clean up task, but she got over it, and a valuable lesson was learned by a Bandit

AC...never mess with advanced machinery unless someone is around to check your work.

**Earlier this month the following email message came to the attention of the EB. This resulted in the board voting to spend \$500 for the purchase of phone cards. It must be noted that subsequently Walter Reed has become saturated with cards and put out the word that for the foreseeable future to please desist. However, other hospitals and organizations are an option. Many members have donated in addition to the Assn contribution. The project is presently ongoing. For further info contact Jack Mayhew: intruder06@comcast.net or (410) 451-4087.**

Subject: Support the Wounded

Yellow ribbons tied around trees and red, white and blue stickers on the backs SUVs saying "Support our Troops" are things that make civilians feel good but do nothing for the men and women actually in uniform.

So please consider the following:

The number ONE request at Walter Reed hospital is phone cards. The government doesn't pay long distance phone charges and these wounded soldiers are rationing their calls home.

Many will be there throughout the holidays. Really support our troops --Send phone cards of any amount to:

Medical Family Assistance Center  
Walter Reed Medical Center  
6900 Georgia Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20307-5001

**Got the next from Larry Salzman, "WolfPack 34" - 6/68-6/69, Girard, Kansas. Larry is active in the VFW Post 7479 in Girard (southeast) KS. While he was Post Commander he acquired a UH1-H aircraft from the KS Army National Guard for display in the Girard Vietnam Memorial park. He was also instrumental in making the Girard VFW post one of the few All American - All Life Member posts in the nation. Larry recently repainted the aircraft with the Intruder Unit Crest.**



**Here's an email from Earl Broussard in response to the message from Tom Ross...**

Subject: Re: Privileges of War

Tom,

There is one guy you should thank and that is Jay Hays for bringing the books and presenting his idea to us. Jay served the 281st with distinction in Nam and he continues to serve the unit still today. Thank you for including us in your book.

Earl Broussard

**Finally some words concerning the 281<sup>st</sup> Assn website, in particular the subordinate unit links.**

The Wolf Pack website was moved to the Association web over about two years ago. Links to other websites, i.e. Bandit, Rat Pack and Steve Mathews "Intruders" website are also found on the Assn website. For those not adept at maneuvering through web pages in can be a little daunting. **To find the platoon websites you need to click "Links" on the Assn Home Page.** There you'll find Logo's that are configured as "hot links". You merely have to click on the logo and it will launch the webpage associated with the link. Now you can bookmark the homepage for future surfing.

***A couple of photo's from the Vegas Reunion***



Earl Broussard and Kelly Mayhew



Jay Hays in the Hospitality Suite

***"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**  
Ray Oksa
- Vice President**  
Gary Stagman
- Secretary**  
Jeff Murray
- Treasurer**  
Brian Paine
- Senior Member@Large**  
Ken Hamilton
- Junior Member@Large**  
Jay Hays
- Immediate Past President**  
Lyn Colemanl

**APPOINTED OFFICERS**

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

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## Membership

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Membership is “*SLOWLY*” growing and the finding of new intruders has really fallen off, in the area of “*new*” finds. In fact we have gained in membership new members to make a total of “**302**”!! As I am also the 2005 281<sup>st</sup> AHC Reunion Chairman, I will not be working the membership side as hard as I probably should, but only have so much time..

I still am begging for more information that is contained in old orders, roster, etc. I have received some information (since last NL) on guys in the 1969 timeframe... That is the only year that I have almost no information to research for guys. I do have a positive side of all this is that in talking to guys, I am getting some directions to head in when they mention names in our conversations...

The next thing I want to discuss is in order for us to keep in touch with you, I must have current personal information, so we can get the information passed on to you guys.

I'm finding that a lot of folks are moving, changing E-mail address and telephone numbers, which make contact of any sort is just about out of the question. PLEASE keep your information on the master roster up to date.

### **Not membership but noteworthy information:**

It is coming upon the end of 2004 and in January 2005, your dues are due. Please remit promptly as I will be also working on your new 2005 annual reunion to be held in St Louis, MO – 3-7 August 2005...

Thank you for your continuing support, to the 281<sup>st</sup> AHC Association!!

**Have a safe and joyous holiday season!!!! From me to you!!**

Gary Stagman  
Chairman, Membership Committee  
2525 Reveres Route  
Granite City, Illinois 62040  
Tel: 618-797-1336  
Email: COOTER@Charter.Net

## ***2005 281st AHC Reunion...***

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The location and dates for the 2005 reunion have been set. The 281st AHC Association will be celebrating the 40th anniversary of the formation of the 281st Assault Helicopter Company, Dixieland style in St. Louis, Missouri from 3 August through 7 August 2005.

In recognition of our service to our country, the [Crowne Plaza Airport Hotel](#) has presented us with a package too good to refuse. In addition to shuttle service to and from the airport, local casinos, local malls and eateries, and the metro link rail to downtown, it is providing us with a boardroom and hospitality suite for our 4-day stay. We will also have a meeting room available for our Friday night and Saturday functions. The individual room rate for a double or single is **\$59.00** per night. The hotel Contact numbers for reservations are:  
**1-314-291-6700 or 1-800-227-6963**

Tell them you are registering for the 281st AHC reunion in August 2005 (**Use Code: AHC**). These rooms have been flight tested for quality and comfort by committee members and they far exceed the requirements set forth by our membership.

The advance party will be arriving on Wednesday, 8/3/05. There will be registration in the Hotel Lobby, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, starting at 1000 daily until 1500 hours... The Hospitality Room will open each day except for the Friday nite festivities and on Saturday will be open after lunch until 1800 hrs. It will re-open after the Saturday nite banquet and Sunday morning and will close by 1200 hrs... The PX will be open every day at 1000 hrs and will only be closed during the times the hospitality room is closed for various functions. A golf outing is planned tentatively Friday morning.

On Thursday there is a Busch Brewery and Historic Tour, costing \$19.00 per person and must have at least 30 attendees for it to go as scheduled. On Friday there is a City Tour scheduled, in which it costs \$35.00 per person and it must have at least 30 attendees for it to go as scheduled.

Saturday we will have the Annual Membership meeting from 0900 to 1000 followed by the Remembrance/Memorial Service from 1030 to 1130. Lunch will be a Deli Style Buffet (Hosted) from 1230 to 1430. The room will have to be emptied out so the hotel staff can time to get it prepared for the Association Banquet at 1900 hours and raffle of items. Sunday will be departure day, with the Hospitality room being open until 1200 hours.. Please help us achieve the goal of at least 300 or more attendees. Call all your friends and see if you can get them to commit to 2005 in St Louis. We want to make this the best one yet!!

Make plans now to celebrate our 40th Anniversary Dixieland style in St. Louis!

**NOTE: If anyone attending has any requirements for special meals, Please let me know so that arrangements with hotel can be coordinated as to your special requirements.**

**Gary Stagman**  
**2005 Reunion Committee Chairman**

**2005 281<sup>st</sup> AHC Association Reunion & 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Registration**

**Must be Mailed Not Later Than 30 Jun 2005**

3 – 7 August 2005, Crowne Plaza Airport Hotel, St Louis, MO (Room Rate \$59.00 nightly)

**“Host Hotel reservation deadline is 3 July 2005 for reduced rates”**

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

**INFORMATION FOR NAME TAG:**

(Name) \_\_\_\_\_

(Unit on Name Tag –6<sup>th</sup> ALP, 145<sup>th</sup> ALP, 2/171<sup>st</sup>, 281<sup>st</sup>, 483<sup>rd</sup>, 499<sup>th</sup>, Platoon): \_\_\_\_\_

Guests' Name Tags: #1 \_\_\_\_\_ #2 \_\_\_\_\_

(Extra Guests put on back side)

**ATTENDING 281<sup>st</sup> 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 2006 Annual Membership Dues are enclosed			\$ 25.00	\$ _____

**TOURS: (Must have 30 or more to book the tour) (Bus holds max 46 persons)**

4 Aug 05 – Anheuser-Busch Brewery & Historic Tour (3 hr)	#Guests ____ X	\$ 19.00	\$ _____
5 Aug 05 – Sightseeing St Louis City Tour (6.5 hr)	#Guests ____ X	\$ 35.00	\$ _____

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

**TOTAL DUE -----\$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**PAYMENTS:** Check or Money Order made payable to “281<sup>st</sup> AHC Association”. Please include your dues to help us keep the monies straight.

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

Registration \_\_\_\_\_ As Required \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this completed form along with your Check / Money Order:

**TO:**

Gary L. Stagman  
2525 Reverses Route  
Granite City, IL 62040-6148 Telephone: 618-797-1336 Email: [Cooter@charter.net](mailto:Cooter@charter.net)

Please use the area below for specific comments or requests:

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