



281st Assault Helicopter Company Association

"INTRUDERS"

NHA TRANG
1965 - 1970

NEWSLETTER
NUMBER 48

Summer
2012

IT'S TIME !

(No, it's not too late)

**REGISTER NOW FOR THE
14TH ANNUAL REUNION
of the**

281st AHC Association



**1 – 5 AUGUST 2012
CROWNE PLAZA HOTEL AIRPORT
ST LOUIS, MO**

From the Prez.....

Fellow Intruders

August 1st is rapidly approaching and once again it's time to get the travel bag out and start packing. Dust off the GPS or make those flight reservations and prepare to head for St. Louis and the 2012 Intruder Reunion. This year's Reunion Committee, headed by Jim Baker, has been hard at work ensuring that everything will be ready when you get there. The details I'm sure you will find in other articles in this Newsletter. One thing I am sure all the past Reunion Committee Chairmen would say is that the only way the Reunion is really a success is if YOU are there!!! So call your Intruder friends (especially those that haven't been to a Reunion) and tell them you will meet them in St. Louis on August 1st.

While the annual reunion is always the biggest thing on the Intruder calendar there are other activities in which your Association is involved. The Remembrance Committee is deeply committed to the effort to "account for" the approximately 1200 (ten of which are Intruders) service members still believed to be in Vietnam. You are asked to contact your Senators and Congressman to let them know that they should ensure the MIA Recovery effort continues to be funded and DOD pressured to complete the mission. Don't just accept their form letter answers but follow-up on how they actually vote by providing positive or negative feedback as appropriate.

The Book Committee continues to work on the "281st book". While progressing nicely they are still in need of stories that accurately depict life in the 281st during your tour of duty. Brian Paine is the contact point for any of your stories that show the most dangerous, heroic, or humorous events during your assignment. Send them to Brian by snail mail or as email attachments, or better yet bring them with you to the Reunion which is the cutoff date.

As I hope you are aware the G Company Intruders who took our "Intruder Call Sign" back into combat and who the Troop Support Committee supported during their recent deployment to Afghanistan have all returned safely to Fort Drum from a very successful

deployment. The Committee is winding down its involvement with G Company since it was re-flagged as C Company and its call sign changed. The Committee is currently open to supporting another unit.

Additionally, the History Committee is working on getting the Presidential Unit Citation awarded to the 281st AHC and an "Ad Hoc" committee is working on getting a memorial stone placed at Army Special Operations Command Headquarters on Fort Bragg. So, my fellow Intruders there are many areas you can help your Association even if you don't have the time to be an Executive Board member. Grab an EB member at the Reunion and let him know where you can help. See You in St. Louis!!

Ed Haas – President

A word from the VP.....

As Vice President, the only thing I have to talk about is our upcoming reunion. It's going to be a good one this year, and runs from August 1 thru 5. Starting, and ending, with good times and camaraderie, we've got live entertainment on Friday night, and what a guest to speak to us on Saturday night. Bill Robinson was a POW in North Vietnam for seven years. He was not an officer, a Navy or Air Force jet pilot, but an enlisted man – one of the very few. What an interesting perspective he will have to give us. All the usual reunion activities are also scheduled during the week, including what should be the most important business meeting we have had in five years. Go to the Association website www.281st.com to find the reunion registration packet for all the details about registering and attending the 2012 reunion. As an added bonus, we expect several members of the G Company Intruders, who have returned from deployment in Afghanistan, to be in attendance including Captain Brian Middleton, the Intruder 6. They should provide some interesting new war stories.

Thinking about the reunion reminds me of how proud I am to have served in the Army's first Special Operations Helicopter Company. That we were the first has been officially recognized and memorialized. The things we accomplished over forty years ago laid the groundwork for what

is today the Army's 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment. I think about the guys who were there then, whether with me or not - the ones who are still here and those who are not. We should all get together again to say "great to see you again", and "good job". I hope to see as many of you as can make it at the reunion.

Jim Baker
Vice President and Reunion Chairman

The Sec'y on Father's Day.....

Another weekend has passed and I spent part of it perusing the 281st website. I wasn't particularly looking for anything, I was just reminiscing. After all, Memorial Day had just passed and I heard from Linda George that she saw Walt Stobe at The Wall, that was nice because I haven't seen Walt since the Houston reunion and I kind of miss that guy. He lives about one block from a Bank of America but I doubt they will send me up there on business, I may just have to wing it.

Anyway, this being the age of social media my kids signed me up on Facebook, something they soon came to regret as I torment them daily on it, especially when they post something dumb. For example, my middle daughter posted yesterday what a great book 50 Shades of Gray is. Great Book?? Just what a dad wants to hear. Now the other two want to borrow it. Even greater. But yesterday being Father's Day one daughter (the same one) found a picture of me walking around the tent area at an An Hoa Delta site with no shirt on, at least it looks like me, albeit about 50 pounds lighter. Well, that prompted the others to copy it and before I knew it about 50 of their friends chimed in, including some of my old high school classmates. Comments ran the gamut from "Man, you were a stud" to "Who is that?" and finished with "Does he always frown?" Of course the week prior those same daughters posted nice things about veterans so all is well.

On Father's Day my almost two year old granddaughter came over, I got the hose out and filled up my two very expensive rubber pools and let her face plant herself in them for about 3 hours, and despite all of the attention I was paying I still have my wife saying things like

"Wouldn't it be nice if we had a real pool?" I reminded her we had one in Savannah and didn't like it, but I fear her memory is fading. She had to sign up for Social Security last month and still hasn't gotten over it, even when I chime in that I have my Medicare card.

Getting old, it ain't fun but it sure beats the alternative.

Jeff Murray
Secretary

About the Elections from the JML.....

The request for nominations for the offices of Vice President and Junior Member at Large were sent out in the middle of May for a twenty day period. As of the 5th of May I had only one nomination for Junior Member at Large and no nomination for Vice President. Therefore there will be no election.

Don Budlong was the only nominee for Junior Member at Large. Don will be the new Junior Member at Large. Don worked in the engine shop from February of '68 until January of '70.

I will be resigning my position of Senior Member at Large to serve as Vice President.

I'm deeply disappointed at the lack of interest in the democratic process in our association .

That's the bad news; the even worse news is you have lost your Bitching rights. If you don't participate in the process you can't say anything negative.

The Reunion Committee has done a great job at putting this year's reunion together with some new things to do and see.

See You in St. Louis.

Jim Christensen
Junior Member at Large

Membership Man.....

"DUES" have come in very slow (I say this probably every time in the newsletter (I keep hoping that it will be a reminder to send them in). The current dues year is: 1 August 2011 to 31 July 2012. With the dues being included on the reunion registration form has

helped immensely! It could also be better too. But then again I have others that have paid ahead.

I want to thank everyone that has been sending me their new information to update the master roster, this saves postage and you get your newsletters faster and to up-date your information faster, just send a email to me at: Cooter@charter.net . If for some reason that you do not receive your newsletter by email or snail mail, which probably means that your Address or Email Address are both not current, you can go to www.281st.com and click on newsletters and you can print it off. It also helps if you are a member and have your dues current..

Again thank you for your support and have a very Safe and wonderful Spring and Summer season. Be safe and of course "WELCOME HOME"!!

Gary Stagman
Membership Chairman

REMEMBRANCE

For the past few months we have been concentrating our remembrance efforts on our ten Intruders that are still unaccounted for. First, our efforts have been aimed at insuring that the Department of Defense, (DOD) Staff Officers, who are responsible for planing and coordinating the activities of the teams on the ground in Vietnam have the best information that we can provide them. Next, with the help of several Intruders we are making an effort to keep the pressure on our congressional representatives so as to make sure that they remind the DOD folks that there is a strong interest in finding all of the missing individuals and that funding for the operation is continued. As you read this, DOD has six recovery and two investigative teams on the ground in Southeast Asia. We need to see that effort doubled!

To date we have made some progress: First, we have established a good contact at the DOD level and have reached out to this individual with information on Nine of the Ten missing Intruders. The only individual that we we have not touched is WO Danny Sulander who was KIA in Dec of 1966. His situation begs the question as to why he was not recovered along with WO Donald Harrison, SP4 William Joseph Bodzick and SP4 Lee Joseph Boudreaux, Jr. who were also KIA as part of his crew and were recovered. If you can help us with the Sulander situation please let me know. Remember, small bits of information when joined helps to form the big picture. Next, Thanks to the efforts of Intruders from several states we have contacted members of the congress and senate to ask for their help in putting pressure on the DOD to push harder to find all of those who are still missing. We still need help in this effort and if you have not done so please contact your representatives today and ask them to assist us in bringing our ten Intruders home. You can find your representatives by visiting <http://www.usa.gov/Contact/Elected.shtml> at this site you can find your congressman and senators by simply logging in with your local zip code. Please do not send mail to them at their Washington Address as it will be diverted to the screening facility which adds weeks to the process. Send it to their main state office.

You might have noticed that the Secretary of Defense, Leon Panetta visited Cam Ranh Bay, a few days ago and that he is the most senior American official to visit Vietnam since the war ended. His stated mission was to encourage the Vietnamese to increase their support of the efforts to locate and return the 1,200 Individuals still missing. If you have time please drop him a note of thanks for his efforts and remind him that from our small unit there are still 10 individuals unaccounted for. If we all push hard we can see our fellow Intruders returned home soon.

The Honorable Leon E. Panetta, Secretary of Defense, 1000 Defense Pentagon, Washington, DC 20301-1000

Jack Mayhew
Remembrance Chairman

The End of the New Intruders



1 June 2012

The era of the G Company Intruders has ended. Since May 2010, the 281st Intruder Association has been supporting the newest Intruders. It began with an e-mail from (then Company Commander) CPT Brian Middleton. His e-mail to me explains the inception of this support.

Sir, my name is CPT Brian Middleton. I am the company commander of an Air Assault Helicopter Company (G Co., 2-10 AVN, 10TH CAB, 10TH Mountain DIV (LI), Fort Drum, NY). My company was stood up to meet the needs of our upcoming deployment to Afghanistan in October 2010,

Since my Battalion (2-10 AVN) draws its lineage from 10 BN, and our main effort will be to support both conventional forces and Special Forces in the mountains of Afghanistan, we felt it appropriate to draw from the 281ST AHC. We are inspired by the sacrifices, dedication, and perseverance which were so greatly displayed by the Intruders that we have chosen that as our call sign.

During the deployment of our G Company Intruders, your Association provided support to them. For example, during the Christmas season, you generously provided over \$3000 worth of "goodies" which were purchased, packaged and sent to G Company in Afghanistan. Please see the Intruder web site for a complete chronology of their activities. (http://www.281st.com/G%202-10%20BN%2010%20RGT/troop_spt_cmte.html)

The G Company Intruders have since returned to CONUS and their homes at the 10th Mountain Division in New York. But with the fast moving war footing faced by the military, they are not remaining as a cohesive unit at Ft. Drum.

CPT Brian Middleton was the Intruder 6 during the Afghanistan deployment. Following his tour, Brian was replaced with a new commander, CPT Jim Coker. In April, CPT Middleton sent the following information to us:

I don't know if Jim Coker has informed you or not, but Golf Company will officially be reflagged as Charlie Company and the Intruder call sign will be changed with it. This will be happening at Jim's Change of Command mid-May. The Intruders made one more run at combat this past year adding to your great history and for now the call sign will be waiting for another worthy conflict to return.

And so, the era of our newest Intruders draws to close. CPT Middleton and all the members of the deployed Intruders have been invited to our August reunion. It remains to be seen how many will actually be attending. Many members have been re-assigned to other units and are scattered far and wide.

The Troop Support Committee will stay in contact with CPT Middleton and we hope to see him and many members of the newest Intruders in St. Louis. In the meantime, we will be looking into other units which may require assistance and support during this time of continued conflict. If you know of a unit that would qualify, please let us know.

Joe Bilitzke
Chairman, 281st AHC Intruders
Troop Support Committee

NOTES & COMMENTS

From Jay Hays, PX honcho,

The last news letter had an article about the PX resulting in sales of about \$900.00 and several members sending in dues with PX payment. Thanks to the members responding, to Gary Stagman Membership Chairman and Fred Beck Treasure for their work getting the check(s) to the correct accounts. Their attitude was "whatever makes it easy for the membership". Awards Unlimited our primary PX supplier has done a good job supporting our requests and managing our PX web page. They have discontinued the blue denim shirts but we have found a local supplier that will do the



individual requests. *Photo is of our Reunion Chairman "Rat Pack 15" wearing his shirt.* These can be ordered with a platoon patch or the Intruder Patch, long or short sleeve (we need your size). Cost with patch is \$38.00 plus shipping. If you are attending the reunion order your shirt by July 4th and I will bring it to the Reunion and save the shipping costs. This year the Reunion Committee has included a T- shirt with your registration, so as one member said "they are giving you the shirt off their back". See you in St. Louis!

For PX orders contact me at: jhays@haysenterprises.com or call office: 330-392-2278 cell: 330-770-2278.

Jay Hays PX Grunt

281st Book input..... Brian Paine

Guys...I need help...

I've been working on the book for the 281st and it is progressing nicely. I have compiled a number of stories but am now in the need of stories which can accurately illustrate life in the 281st. I am looking for stories that represent the most dangerous, heroic or humorous events during your stay over there. This is your opportunity to be a part of the recorded history of the 281st. This will be the last call. Please submit your writings by e-mail attachments to bpaine@magphotos.com or snail mail to Brian Paine, 22407 Rippling Shore Court, Katy, TX 77494 or bring them to the reunion which will be the cut off date. I will be there to take notes or submissions you might have.

If you have any questions or comments please contact me by e-mail or phone 281-693-3210

Thanks in advance and see y'all at the reunion
Brian

Galkie junior, fledging helicopter pilot.....

Gentlemen,

I wish to thank you guys on behalf of Adam and myself for the many emails of encouragement. How I



wish though that I could take all I learned in Vietnam and years after and do a mind-meld on him. He will be in puddle jumpers for a while and probably will scare himself a time or two. Now that he realizes that he is kind of following in the old man's footsteps he should listen more. When he has some time we WILL sit down and talk about choppers for a while. He needs to hear it from me with intermittent verification from other chopper pilots. He needs to realize that all choppers are "Female" and will subtly tell you when they want attention unless you elect not to listen, then they WILL get your attention. He needs to know to listen to her with his ears and his body, mostly his feet and butt. He needs to know she will pull her

heart out for him but would rather not do that. He needs to enjoy the purr she will give off when finally heading home after a tiring day. He needs to know that in time he will be strapping her on and not so much strapping himself in. I suspect that he will read again "Vietnam Moments" but with a different mindset the next time around. I hope he then goes to the other stories on the 281st site and eventually tells me he wants to be like you guys too.

I kind of feel like I'm passing the 281st torch to him and that it will be in good hands. He is here because you guys covered my ass when it needed to be covered and I thank you for that and for allowing me to return to normal life and have him. Be content in the fact that he is now living his dream and all because his mother paid for a tourist chopper ride in the Smokies. After that, he put two and two together.

John Galkiewicz

From the Editor.....

By the time you receive this newsletter the reunion will only be a month or so hence. But fear not! It's never too late. Don Torrini will gladly process your registration. If you need the registration form go to our website [http//281st.com](http://281st.com), click Bulletin Board and then 2012 Reunion Registration Packet, click the link (it will open in the Adobe Reader) and then print out the packet or save it to your computer. Be sure to call the Crowne Plaza Hotel in-house reservations at **314-291-6700**, rate code "AHR", to reserve your room.

Our reunions are always a great time and there will be numerous first time attendee's at this year's gathering, as well as folks returning after long absences. I'm looking forward to seeing old faces and welcoming FNG's.

See you in St Louis!

Fred Mentzer
Wolf Pack 36

"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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