



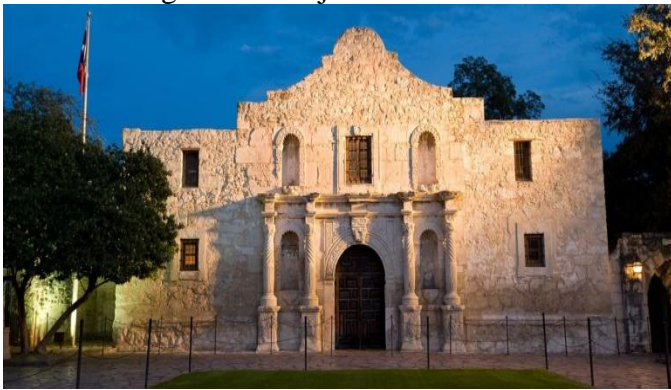
December
2018

281ST ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

No. 70

50th Anniversary Reunion Save the Dates

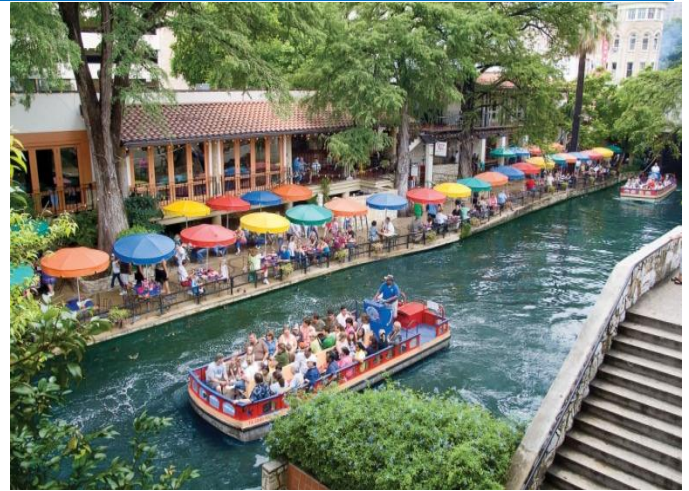
Gettysburg is behind us and the countdown for the 2019 reunion has begun! This once in a lifetime event will be held in San Antonio, Texas at the historic Menger Hotel adjacent to the Alamo.



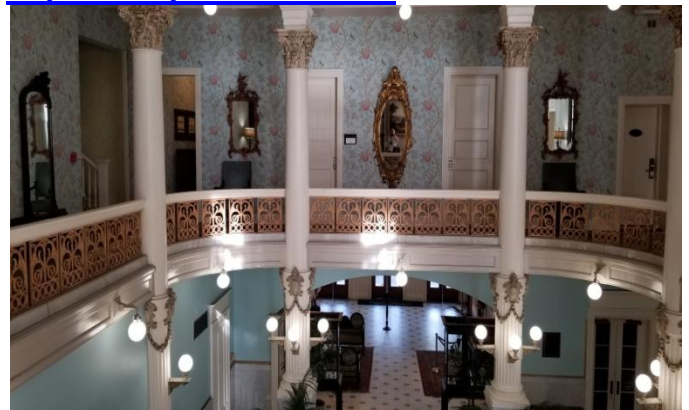
This hotel is home to the bar where Teddy Roosevelt recruited his rough riders and is open for business on a daily basis! You will spend a day just looking at all the artifacts in the hotel.



The hotel location, in the heart of all the downtown activities, including the river walk, has given us a phenomenal room rate of \$125.00 per night with extra rooms made available Tuesday thru Sunday. <https://reservations.mengerhotel.com/75799?groupID=2140889> or call [1-800-345-9285](tel:1-800-345-9285) for reservations (ask for 281st AHC Reunion). Valet parking is available for \$20.00 per day for those of you who are driving. Website <http://www.mengerhotel.com>



Friday night's event will be a Mexican style dinner with live music and music slide show. Additional entertainment is pending. Saturday night will be western theme with music slide show and a world class magician for entertainment. Look him up at <http://www.pauldriscoll.com>



The memorial service has been planned and promises to be one you will never forget! Priceless raffle items will be available along with souvenirs and memorabilia from this once in a lifetime event. Stay tuned for further information.

So mark it on your calendar October 4-5, 2019 are the dates to renew our camaraderie and visit a historic city with many exciting venues, great restaurants and things to do. Regards, your reunion guys , Brian Paine and Wes Schuster.

From Your Prez - Lou Lerda

Yes, the San Antonio Reunion is just around the corner. However there are some interesting things you all should know about the Gettysburg Reunion. Even though all appeared to go smoothly, it was a Gettysburg community effort that provided the ideas, backing and support to make it a success. I had help from each and every vendor who kept me updated and infused with fresh ideas that surprised me. The National Park Service was more than accommodating; they actually found us a bugler to play taps when the first bugler got sick on Thursday afternoon. The tour bus we were assigned for our Battlefield Tour broke down late Friday and we were given a larger bus at no extra cost Saturday that allowed more folks to take the tour. We have received compliments from all the vendors who provided support to us and have been asking me if we intend to return for another Reunion. It speaks highly of our people and the way we conducted ourselves.



Our new Prez. Lou Lerda standing where Lincoln stood

OK, who is this new president and how does he fit into the organization? I found the Association courtesy of Fred Phillips, John Hyatt, and other early unit members about 25 years ago and have been a bystander until 2014 when Will McCollum and Jack Mayhew got me involved writing what I remembered about how the 281st originated. Within eighteen months, I was a member of the EB and

suddenly it's time to honcho the show. If you've read the book, I'm basically a maintenance oriented individual, served in the aircraft maintenance and safety areas for the bulk of my career both active and reserve, and as a civilian. I've probably known JM longer than anyone because I served with him at Fort Hood as his exec beginning in the fall of 1963. I'm proud to have had a part in the origin of the 281st back in 1966 and I continue to promote our unit legacy through community and collegiate talks over the years. The 281st was the finest unit I served with in the 30 years I spent in the Army and I'm proud to represent you as your new President.

So what's on my agenda? I will do my best to continue the traditions we have established and keep an open mind to new ideas that will better the Association. Key individuals who have served the organization will continue to be relied upon.

What can you do to assist? Be realistic in your assessment of problems and situations keeping in mind that none of us has figured out how to reverse the aging process. Many simply cannot do the things they could just a few years ago. I am asking for your open and honest opinion regarding large scale reunions in the future. Please e-mail me at marlinlou@comcast.net with your comments and ideas. We need to actively support Brian and Wes in their efforts for our 50th in San Antonio. We need volunteers to place 113 into tip top shape to display at the reunion. I am also asking you to sign up early for the hotel and events; it's easier to cancel than obtain last minute reservations. It also makes event planning a lot easier and I'm speaking from experience. Thank you all in advance for your support and keep Aaron Rich, his wife Georgia and their family in your prayers.

From the Past Prez: Bain Black

Wow, when we reach the downhill side of life, a year passes in the blink of an eye. There are sooo many unchecked items on my bucket list that I need to pick up the pace before I run out of time! Really!! Let me begin by saying that it has been an honor to serve as your President during the past year. To have served our great country in the 281st AHC, and then to have represented all Intruders as your Association President, have been some of the highlights in what has been a wonderful life. Thank you! During my year following Will McCollum as

president, there have been many momentous activities:

- The DC Reunion was memorable with our memorial service at Arlington National Cemetery, guest speakers Joe Galloway and BG Frank Tate, a group trip to the Viet Nam Memorial, and interviews conducted by the Viet Nam Congressional Commemorative Committee (to be a part of the official record in the Library of Congress).
- A March 2018 reunion with 5th Special Forces Group commander and staff, as well as;
- A visit with the 160 Special Operations Aviation Regiment, complete with headquarters reception and daylong tour of their training. These new and renewed relationships with the 160th and 5th should last into the future.
- In April I represented the 281st Association at the dedication of the long-awaited Pilot and Crewmember Memorial at Arlington National Cemetery.
- Also in April I represented Intruders at the internment of CWO Bill Abbott at the Michigan VA Cemetery north of Detroit.
- And finally, it was with honor that I turned over the gavel to new President Lou Lerda at our first mini-reunion in Gettysburg, PA.

So, as my year as president passes further into the rearview mirror, I have to say thanks to the early officers of the Association who worked so hard to make it what it is today. The 281st AHC made history 50+ years ago and our association has ensured the accomplishments and sacrifices will not be forgotten. I look forward to seeing you in San Antonio for the 2019 reunion. Brian Paine and Wes Schuster are working tirelessly to make this 50 year celebration one to remember. Bain Black

From the Editor & Will McCollum

This is a request to all members of the 281st family, which consists of all recipients of this newsletter. We would like to receive stories, remembrances, and pertinent notifications from all of you for inclusion into the newsletters. This newsletter is not just for those authors who are Executive Board members, although it may seem like it since they write the majority of the articles. Please send whatever you think appropriate (and that includes

poems and jokes, as can be seen at the end of this newsletter). It may be edited for length, depending on the space available, but the content and meaning will not be changed. We are all getting to the point that if we don't record things, they will be lost forever. Make your contribution now while you still can. If you don't want to write your story, our resident author Will McCollum has graciously offered his services to write your story if you wish. Simply contact him at [319-239-5529](tel:319-239-5529) or wilddanmac@yahoo.com but do it now. It's been 50+ years, and things aren't getting any fresher!



Looks just like the old days. Except for the ladies at the table and not near enough empty bottles, but Ken seems to be working hard towards that objective!

November 11, 2018 - Veterans Week from the Vice Prez, Wes Schuster

That's right, Veterans Week. Living on Dataw Island in South Carolina has many benefits. One of them is living in a community that has a strong military and patriotic culture. On the south side of town we have Parris Island, the famous Marine training facility, and on the north side the Marine Corps Air Station with the F35's. In Beaufort we have a national cemetery that has both Confederate and Union graves as well more recent military internments.

Veterans are recognized and strongly supported here. The Dataw Island community typifies those qualities with our Veterans week events. The week starts with a golf marathon in support of disabled veterans. Our young assistant golf pro, Chris Fern, plays as many holes of golf possible. He asks

members to pledge money based on the number of holes played or birdies made. Chris played about 150 holes the first time he did his marathon. This year Chris kicked it into high gear. He started at 3:30AM and finished at 5:00PM. He played 227 holes and raised over \$34,000.

We invite wounded warriors to spend a couple of days playing golf. I have had the honor to play golf with men and women with severe disabilities, one arm, double leg amputees, and men in paramobiles. They are amazing! One young man spent 4 years in Walter Reed. You meet these people and you will never complain about your aches and pains. We organize a tournament with these warriors and many of the residents. We fill two golf courses and pay for the right to play with them.

This year the combination of these two events, the marathon and tournament raised \$65,585. All proceeds go to Tee It Up For The Troops.

TIUFTT in turn supports a number of smaller veterans groups.

Later in the week we have a breakfast with a formal program recognizing each branch of the services. Patriotic songs are sung, a local ROTC color guard presents colors and speeches are made. One of the more memorable speeches was by a Vietnam POW who had never spoken about his captivity before. You could have heard a pin drop on the carpet. Dawn and I are lucky to live in such a community where national values run high. I am proud to be a veteran and I know you are too.



Wounded veteran starting the tournament with the honorary drive using his paramobile.

A request to the membership from a son

I'm inquiring about my father SSGT. Earl C. Powell. He served in Vietnam in 1968 with the 281st Assault Helicopters in Nha Trang. I have his wings, uniform with patches from the 1968 era, and recall some stories of that tour he shared with me, at the time I was about ten years old. My father has passed, and I would like to learn more about his tour of duty with the 281st AHC. I know it was the majority of 1968 just not sure of exact dates. I would like to know if any of you can help me with research on his tour in 1968. Thanks for your service to our country and dedication to the memory of those who served our country. Respectfully, Gary Powell garvp@genimpinc.com

From Tom Ross author of Privileges of War

To all of my friends at the 281st. I invite all of you to share the following with your families and friends. I don't believe any of you fully understand what you faced or what you accomplished 50 years ago . . . this week.

My very best to all of you. Tom

Hard to believe . . . it's been 50 years!

On August 3, 1968, in the Republic of South Vietnam, three abused, but determined, mountain villagers escaped their Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army captors and ran in search of help for their families and village. After running and walking for almost two days, the three worn men found the remote My Loc Outpost belonging to American Special Forces (Green Berets) Detachment A-502. There, the men told stories of slavery, torture, and worse. Mang Quang, leader of the three, begged for help and told the Americans his family would be killed if he were not back in the village the next day.

An urgent radio call was placed to 1st Lieutenant, Tom Ross, A-502's Operations and Intelligence Officer. Upon arriving at the outpost and after an in-depth debriefing of the three men, Lt. Ross determined that a rescue attempt by allied forces was warranted. However, if, as he had been told by Mang Quang, the family would be killed the next day and if it had taken the men two days to



reach the outpost on foot . . . there was only one unit to which Lt. Ross could turn for help. The rescue team would have to be flown to the village and that would require the assistance of the 281st Assault Helicopter Company.

Lt. Ross immediately radioed the 281st with his rescue mission support request. In describing the mission, he didn't hide any of the many dangers the men of the 281st would face if they accepted the mission. He explained that the rescue team would be flying far out into mountainous enemy territory into an undetermined landing zone where they would face an enemy unit of unknown size and strength. Among other things, he also explained that the only immediate support the team would have would be . . . whatever they could take with them.

After learning that the lives of innocent tribal Montagnard families were at risk, did any of the dangers described to the 281st scare them . . . not a chance! These were all men with deeply held family values. The response given to Lt. Ross's request for assistance was immediate and clear . . . "Tell us where and at what time you need us. We'll be there." And, at sunrise on the morning of August 4, 1968 . . . they were there! Then, because the rescue mission became complicated with more families emerging from the thick jungle, they were there again on August 5th and yet again on August 10th. On August 13, 1968, Walter Cronkite reported on the rescue in "The Valley of the Tigers" during his CBS Evening News program. When the mission was complete, the 281st had rescued 165 mountain villagers (men, woman, and children) from pain and suffering. What members of the 281st may not know even today is that the Montagnard village served as an important relay station for the North Vietnamese Army's infamous 18B Regiment. Only weeks after the rescue was complete, intelligence reports indicated that a company size element (125 – 150 men) arrived in the area of the village as the last few remaining members of the rescue team were being extracted after becoming stranded due to weather.

So, unknown to any of us at the time, it is extremely likely that the two Green Beret advisors along with 10 other South Vietnamese soldiers and the CBS TV crew would have been overrun and wiped out by the enemy unit had the 281st not flown through a storm to reach and rescue the stranded team.

Question: What can you say about men like these who so boldly disregard their own safety to save the lives of others?

Answer: I have been trying, quite literally, for 50 years to answer that question adequately. I was the rescue team commander, one of the two advisors left stranded in enemy territory, and the last one off the landing zone that day . . . thankful to be alive. Over the half century since "The Rescue" . . . I have had the great privilege to speak to and about the men of the 281st Assault Helicopter Company. One of the many, many things I enjoy saying about them, each and every one, is that I am extremely proud to have seen them in action because they represent the very best our country has to offer when a call for help is received.

Tomorrow, August 10th, will be exactly 50 years since the men of the 281st risked their lives for a third time to rescue a village of primitive mountain tribesmen. Who they were didn't matter. What mattered was that they were being hurt. The 281st ended that hurt. On the 50th anniversary of the rescue, these men deserve recognition for who and what they are . . . fearless American heroes. I feel quite certain that, because of their selfless courage, I owe them my life. With great sincerity, Thomas A. (Tom) Ross, Major, US Army Special Forces

An Intruder in need of encouragement

Alpha Halsted was a gunner 1966 -1967 and is fighting a good fight against cancer. If you served with him or have a few spare moments, please drop him a note or call him at 870-496-2216 or 3482 End Line Road, Marshall, AR 72650

Alpha@halstedhome.com.



Alpha Halsted 1966 -1967

Your Remembrance Committee by Jack Mayhew

Will McCollum's latest book, "More Than A Name On The Wall", has generated interest in locating family members of our MIA / KIA's, whom we have never been able to contact. In response, we have added two additional members to the committee. Will McCollum will now serve as the co-chairman and Jay Hays will join Frank Becker and I, to make up the committee. As of this date we have located and made contact with three of the families and our goal is to locate all of them. To do this we need your help! This is detective level work as most of the widows remarried and have assumed new last names. Any information about the family members that you may have will be helpful. Please take a new look at the Intruder "More Than A Name" book and see if any of the information contained in it jogs your memory. If you do not have the book contact Jay Hays at jhays@haysenterprises.com and he will sell you one from the PX. Every Intruder should have several for family members, especially for grandchildren, as the book is an awesome reminder of what it means to give your all, containing significant stories about the bravery of our men. Please contact either of us if you can help in this ongoing project. Our goal is to remember and record everything we can about our brothers and to share it with their family members and the members of our association. We hope to have as many of the family members as possible attend our Texas Reunion in October of 2019. Thanks for your help. Jack Mayhew, intruder06@me.com, 410-721-1675

Emails between Jay Hays and Clyde Sincere

From Clyde: Jay, Good Afternoon and Thank You, I received your latest 281st Book, "More Than a Name on The Wall". I went directly to Sgt Henry Thomas Lenard on Page 126, and read what LTC Al Cartwright had to say about him, and the circumstances that led to his being KIA. FYI, any, and all correspondence I send to the SOA members, prospective members, guests, you name it - I always include a copy of the SOA Brochure Order Form for "Above the Best". Hopefully some respond to you, and I'll be pleased to do it with this book also. Are you going to have someone at SOAR XLII to sell the 281st books? I will provide a Comp'd Table

in the SOA Vendor Area for them. Just let me know. Stay in touch. Warmest regards, Clyde
P.S. I lost a good friend recently - Don "Zorro" Jutz. See attached Photo. In it, Don is preparing to fly me to Saigon. I was going home on that tour, but I came back later. C.J. Sincere, Jr.

From Jay: You are welcome. You are a special friend to me and the 281st AHC Assn. I was rushed to get the book out, later realizing I didn't mark the page as I had done previously but thought you would find it on the contents pages. We appreciate all the help and support you and the SOA give our Association. I hope to attend SOAR myself this year. I appreciate the offer to sell our books and use of a table. If you still do the Auction / Drawing I will donate at least 1 book for the cause. Yes we all lost a great friend and comrade Zorro. He was a great warrior and supporter of SOA and the 281st AHC Assn. Kind Regards, Jay Hays



Don Jutz and Clyde Sincere

Don's final picture was a salute to each Intruder. Please see his remembrance page on the DAT section of the WEB @ 281st.com. Where Brent Gurley has again worked his magic.



Another Email response to Jay's book mailings.

Dear Jay, I want to thank you for your kindness in sending us the beautiful memorial book, More Than a Name on The Wall. It is truly wonderful that all of you from the 281st are such a cohesive group, and that you keep the memory alive of those lost in Vietnam. I found it very difficult to read the references to my brother, Steve Bovio. I have had a difficult time living with his being lost in the futile conflict that was Vietnam. My husband had two tours in the Infantry in Vietnam before my brother was deployed. He came home without injuries, so I guess I expected my brother would be just as fortunate. I never dreamed I could lose someone so dear, so full of life, so young. I'm happy so many of you came back and that you remember those who did not. God bless you all, Jeneane Champagne

And another nice response.

I can't express the appreciation for the copy of the book sent to me here in Australia. Danny Joe Taulbee was my brother. I was his baby sister. He always seemed more mature than his age. We lost our father early in our lives and Danny stepped up although a young teenager himself. So many times over the years I have wondered what happened. Was he killed instantly? Were others around? Was there someone who touched him maybe held his hand as he passed from this life? The account of that day in the book was helpful. I am sure Danny was one of the two others that were dead in that tent. We as a family found it so hard over the years. We felt we had to get on with our lives. But each time we made it to DC we visited the Wall and cried as we looked upon his name. We miss him and often wonder what kind of a selfless man he would have become? Thank you again.

Here on this side of the world I have come in contact with the Australian helicopter unit from Vietnam. So on their wall of remembrance I have had Danny's name placed.

Jackie Hanson, Sister of Danny Joe Taulbee

Insurance by Jeff Murray

Our youngest daughter lives in an apartment, we told her she needs insurance but she's renting, it's not that important, right? Wrong. Her stove caught fire all by itself the other night, she hadn't used it all day and was in the bathroom when it started. It quickly got the kitchen engulfed and smoke was

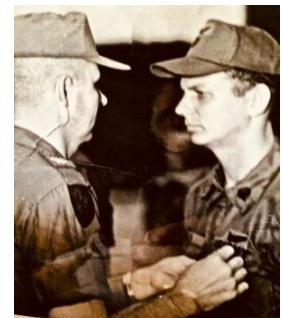
everywhere. The fire department got there in under 4 minutes and put it out, but her place smelled like a BBQ joint. Guess what, she actually had a USAA renters policy that was paid up to date. The FD could not determine cause but USAA was right there with a team to take care of everything. A damage team is moving everything to a facility where it will either be cleaned or salvaged and then it will be moved to her new apartment. She gets a new couch and chair and mattress set. Her limit was \$12,000 for personal property and moving, \$100,000 for the damage to the apartment. USAA and the complex get to fight over the cause. With no insurance she could have been sued for the dwelling damage and forced to hire someone to move her smoky furniture and sleep on a smoky mattress. Remember this story if you or your kids live in an apartment or when you decide to move into an assisted living facility.



281st Assault Helicopter Company
2018 Reunion Gettysburg

A hardened gang of cutthroats or just plain scallywags?**Larry Chester Elam 2-21-44 to 11-15-18**

Larry served with the 281st as a Crew Chief with the Wolf Pack Gun Platoon during 1968/69. Larry was a highly respected Intruder and a friend to all. He served with distinction and was decorated for his actions in the Thanksgiving Day rescue of a downed Wolf Pack crew in 1969. His service reflected great courage and devotion to his duty, and was highly representative of the members of his unit.





The Executive Board planning for the future.

An appropriate poem, for the times, and perhaps all time. Thanks to the sender.

He was getting old and paunchy,
 And his hair was falling fast,
 And he sat around the Legion,
 Telling stories of the past.
 Of a war that he once fought in,
 And the deeds that he had done,
 In his exploits with his buddies;
 They were heroes, every one.
 And 'tho sometimes to his neighbors,
 His tales became a joke,
 All his buddies listened quietly,
 For they knew where of he spoke.
 But we'll hear his tales no longer,
 For ol' Joe has passed away,
 And the world's a little poorer,
 For a Veteran died today.
 He won't be mourned by many,
 Just his children and his wife.
 For he lived a very ordinary,
 Quiet normal sort of life.
 He held a job and raised a family,
 Going quietly on his way,
 And the world won't note his passing,
 'Tho a Veteran died today.
 When politicians leave this earth,
 Their bodies lie in state,
 While thousands note their passing,
 And proclaim that they were great.
 Papers tell of their life stories,
 From the time that they were young,
 But the passing of a Veteran,
 Goes unnoticed and unsung.

Is the greatest contribution,
 To the welfare of our land,
 Some jerk who breaks his promise
 And cons his fellow man?

Or the ordinary fellow,
 Who in times of war and strife,
 Goes off to serve his country,
 And offers up his life?

The politician's stipend,
 And the style in which he lives,
 Are often disproportionate,
 To the service that he gives.

While the ordinary Veteran,
 Who offered up his all,
 Is paid off with a medal,
 And perhaps a pension, small.

It is not the politicians,
 With their compromise and ploys,
 Who won for us the freedom,
 That our country now enjoys.

Should you find yourself in danger,
 With your enemies at hand,
 Would you really want some cop-out,
 With his ever-waffling stand?

Or would you want a Veteran,
 His home, his country, his kin,
 Just an ordinary Veteran,
 Who would fight until the end.

He was just a common Veteran,
 And his ranks are growing thin,
 But his presence should remind us,
 We may need his likes again.

For when countries are in conflict,
 We find the Veteran's part,
 Is to clean up all the troubles,
 That the politicians start.

If we cannot do him honor,
 While he's here to hear the praise,
 Then at least let's give him homage,
 At the ending of his days.

Perhaps a simple headline,
 In the paper just might say:
 "OUR COUNTRY IS IN MOURNING,
 FOR A VETERAN DIED TODAY."

An important notice to the membership

If you're retired and enrolled in the Tricare Retiree Dental Program it ends on 31 December 2018.

From Jay Hays - The PX Grunt

Wishing all a Merry Christmas and a Safe and prosperous New Year. A PX Web site update proposal has been sent to our Web Master and possibly will be completed soon. Looking into a Toboggan cap for us northerners, it was in the PX about 15 years ago. It would have the same script as our Ball caps. Jay also has the CBS TV news story from 1968 about the Valley of the Tigers rescue on CD for sale in the PX. For the month of December,



The old hat and the new cap.

all PX items ordered will be shipped free freight, thanks to Santa and the Elves. Our 2019 reunion boots on the ground planning have been busy and submitted ideas for a very interesting Reunion T-Shirt. A new location (San Antonio), with many new ideas, and things we haven't done before. You can't miss this reunion. Many of the 53 "More Than a Name On The Wall" donated books have been shipped to next of kin. Still looking for a few Family or Friends. Reflecting on this past year I have so many things to be Thankful for: All the prayers, cards, calls, visits from many out of state Intruders and the support my family and I have received is overwhelming. Thank You!! The support from our Treasurer, the PX committee, the EB, and yes you, the membership, is greatly appreciated.

Aaron Rich could use cards and letters

Aaron was a Rat Pack AC who was shot through both legs by a .51 cal. in the Aha Shau Valley in March of 68 while on a Delta and evact'd out. He is on hospice care, oxygen (due to some bad drug interactions from his meds), and sleeps a lot. Wife is Georgia @ 19308 NE 11th St, Camas, WA 98607

Best helicopter door gunner of all time goes to heaven

The "Best helicopter door gunner of all time" died and went to heaven. St. Peter greeted him there and said "Welcome to heaven! Your terminal assignment orders indicate you were the best door gunner in human history and did wonderful things for your fellow crew members, your unit, and your country your entire life. For that reason I am authorized to let you choose in which part of heaven you would like to spend eternity." "Well", the gunner said, "I'd love to bunk somewhere where I will never see another helicopter pilot – they are loud, contemptible, and generally a pain in the ass, and I don't want to see, hear, or have to deal with one ever again!" "No problem, Specialist!" St. Peter replied. "We don't get too many helicopter pilots up here anyway, but just to be sure, I have the perfect place for you – a deserted tropical island where you will never be bothered by them". The gunner floated off to his island paradise, a happy lad. But about a week later he was back at the pearly gates, demanding to see St. Peter. "What's wrong?" St. Peter asked. "Well" said the gunner, "You said I would never have to deal with a helicopter pilot again. But, as I was walking along the beach this morning, I looked up and there, swaggering towards me, was this obnoxious looking fellow wearing a flight suit, sporting a sidearm and a 16-function wrist watch, with a girl on each arm, and telling war stories that all started with "There I was...." St. Peter appeared puzzled and said "Let me check something" then queried his computer to determine the recent whereabouts of the only two helicopter pilots in Heaven. He wasn't coming up with any answers when finally it dawned on him.... "Oh, that wasn't a helicopter pilot you saw this morning... that was God! – Sometimes he likes to dress up and pretend he's a helicopter pilot."



Scholarship News by Dr. Karen Heintz Forcht

We currently have two active students receiving scholarships:

1. J. R. Watson, Grandson of Rose and Joe Boarman. He is currently a senior at Fairmont University in West Virginia.
2. Abigail Blessing, sophomore at University of Texas, San Antonio. She is the granddaughter of Marshall Hawkins/

Both have held a GPA well above the 3.0 minimum. We are all to be very proud of these outstanding students and their dedication to their academics and patriotism to our country.

At the Reunion in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, two new scholarship recipients were awarded:

1. Jenna Hartz, grandniece of Ed and Ellen Haas. She began her freshman year at Bowling Green State University in Ohio.
2. Andrea Rutledge, granddaughter of John Korsbeck (deceased). She began her freshman year at Montana State University.

We can certainly expect outstanding work from these two young ladies.

From Jim Baker, Chair

Please be reminded that a student that was not accepted for a scholarship on their initial application can reapply at any time. The packet will have to be updated with current references and transcripts. July 1 is the deadline for completed applications to be submitted to:

Dr. Karen Heintz Forcht, Secretary, 1715 Dunleith Way, Greensboro, NC 27455 kforcht@elon.edu

We have had several students this past year that cycled off the scholarship list and are doing very well in their graduate work or new careers. Eight semesters is the maximum that students can remain on scholarship according to the guidelines.

From Walt Pikul, Treasurer

During the month of October, The Scholarship Fund received the following donations:

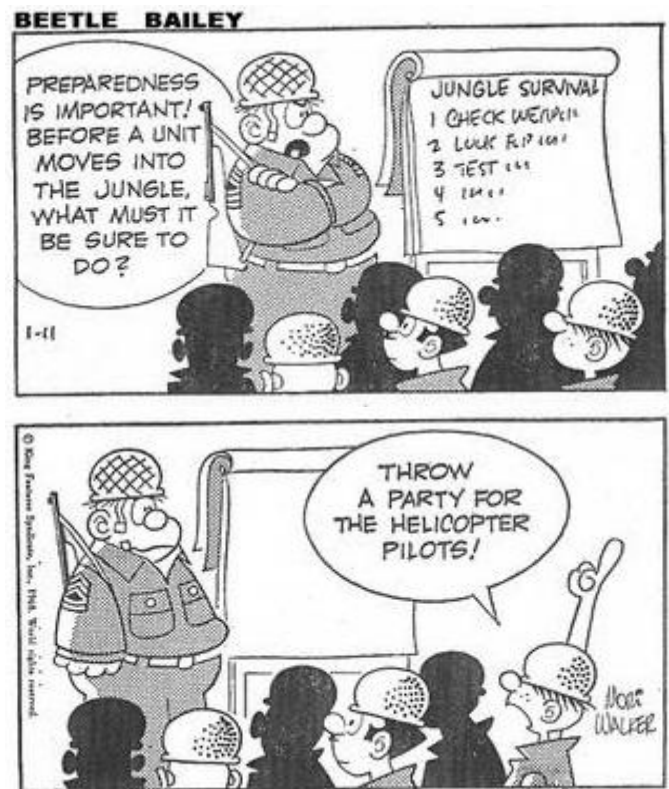
1. \$20,000 from an anonymous donor
2. \$5,000 from Jack Mayhew's company, Human Resources
3. \$727.00 from donors at the Reunion

Please remember that donors can earmark their donation in the name of one of the KIA's and Walt Pikul will acknowledge the KIA in his acceptance letter to the student.

All donations should be sent to:

Walt Pikul, Treasurer, 1000 Hope Mills Road, Fayetteville, NC 28304

A sincere thanks to Jim Torbert for his many years as serving as Chair of the Scholarship Committee. Jim Baker has stepped into that role and will serve the committee well. And a sincere thanks to Jack Mayhew for continuing to serve as an advisor to the Committee. Thank you to the 281st AHC members for their donations to this most vital scholarship program. We are helping these special students reach their life goals with our assistance.

**Scholarship Committee by Jim Baker**

As Karen Forcht has noted, I was recently asked to become Chairman of the Scholarship Committee, and I want to supplement Karen's report here with a few thoughts. My first meeting was at our recent mini-reunion in September at Gettysburg. The first order of business was to welcome another new committee member, Dr. Veronica (Ronnie) Mondrinos, the widow of Vernon Mondrinos, a Wolfpack door gunner in 66/67. Ronnie volunteered to join, and comes in with excellent credentials; she has a PhD in Science Education, and was a high school science teacher for 25 years.

She will be a valuable addition to the committee. At the general Membership Meeting in Gettysburg, I announced that after reviewing the applicants, the committee had voted to award only one scholarship. However, several members who had not attended the reunion were not present, and a technical rules concern arose during the meeting that could not be resolved. Subsequently, upon returning home I was able to clear up the point in question, and via email with the participating members at the meeting, a vote was held to award a second scholarship. Thus, two students, Jenna Hartz and Andrea Rutledge, were awarded scholarships this year.

Finally, I want to talk about a huge and very exciting development for the Association and our scholarship program. Recently a very large gift has been made to our Scholarship Fund in the form of a \$20,000 donation. The donor is a member of the Association, and has asked to remain anonymous. This gift is huge and will go a long way toward helping to establish financial stability for the Fund. A donation like this is a direct reflection on the type of men who proudly served in the 281st almost 50 or more years ago and the bond those men felt with each other by saluting those who made the ultimate sacrifice and those still missing. I want to take this opportunity, on behalf of the Association, to thank and offer a large hand salute to our brother for his consideration. Additionally, I know that not everyone can or will be able to do so, but I would encourage those who can to think about what donations to the Scholarship Fund mean and consider making a similar donation now or when planning your legacy.

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays, and I'll see you in San Antonio.

Obituaries by Jeff Murray

Some of us here are members of either the Vietnam Helicopter Pilot's Association or Vietnam Helicopter Crewmember Association. I venture to say most of us are not. Membership is, of course, voluntary. I submit to you that it is probably to your advantage to join one of these organizations, if only for your obituary. We're all going to have one someday, probably written by a relative.. Your relatives will probably mess it up. Your kids and grandkids will hold onto something of yours after you're gone, it may be nice to have something that

is accurate.. The magazines published by the above organizations will print your obituary and your picture, free, but only if you are a member. If you're not a member you get your name on a back page without a picture. Membership is no more than \$40/year, believe me that is way cheaper than what a newspaper charges to print your accomplishments. So my tip for today is join one of the above and write your own obituary.



Edward Pickett and Frank Little

Edward and Frank were guest speakers at the Leeds Middle School Veterans Day Program. Frank is a 281st AHC veteran and Edward is an Americal Division veteran who lost both legs in VN in 1970. Frank says they have become brothers after only one day of association.

Memory Test - where was this taken?



Jeff Murray- Bandit Pilot and Wolf Pack 33
by Will McCollum

With a very high IQ he still did not do well in college; so now what? His father, a Lieutenant Colonel in the USAF and a WW II bombardier flying in a B-24 bomber, had a solution to his poor grades. "Get your butt down to the Army Recruiting Station."

After taking all the preliminary tests with a GT score of 134 and in excellent physical condition he was well qualified for just about anything the army had to offer. For all of his young life, he had been associated with flying and all types of aircraft. The army needed helicopter pilots, so the Warrant Officer Flight Program was just what the doctor ordered. He went to Fort Polk, Louisiana for eight weeks of basic training. There were hundreds of new recruits from all over the country, wearing brand new fatigues sporting a GI haircut, and of course loud Drill Sergeants. There he met a kid with the name on his shirt which read "Crowe." Yep, Denny Crowe. Of course, basic training was a challenge, but most made it through. From there to Fort Wolters, Texas. One of the first guys he met there was a senior cadet named Moreson, he and Paul would cross paths later. After getting the hovering part down, the rest was pretty easy, he said.

He left Fort Wolters to go farther down into the deep south to Fort Rucker, Alabama. He learned basic instruments in the TH-13, and later flying the Cadillac of helicopters, the "Huey." Now with silver wings on his chest and 200 plus hours flight time, he was ready to go where ever the Army needed him, and for sure it would be South Vietnam.



He arrived in Vietnam at Dong Ba Thin, headquarters for the 10th CAB, and liked the idea of being able to choose what unit he would serve with. The 155th, he liked the numbers and the way it sounded. The one-five-five Aviation Company was where he wanted to go. But... First Lieutenant Dave Mitchell was right behind him, he slapped him on the head (like Jethro does on NCIS) and told him that he was going with him to the 281st, so that is where he went, and from that day forward he has been close friends with Lieutenant Mitchell. He was assigned to the second platoon (Bandits). A number of his stories are in the book "Above the Best," in fact, half the book could have been written with his stories. The one I like the best is the one Bain Black tells. Mr. Murray was flying a combat support mission for the Recondo School. The Recondo team was in trouble and needed to be extracted immediately, as they were about to be surrounded by a large enemy force. Captain Black, Wolfpack 36, was one of the pilots flying support. Mr. Murray was the co-pilot for the pick-up ship and was on the way down. He was receiving heavy fire but still going down to get the team, so he called for more support from Captain Black, he wanted him to bring it in close, real close he said. Captain Black adjusted the guns to where Mr. Murray requested; then Mr. Murray said over the radio; "Whoa, Whoa, a piece of your shrapnel just went through my pant leg." Captain Black radioed back and said, "was that close enough?" The Recondo School was at that time one of, if not the most dangerous school in the world. In March of 1969, he, against his wishes left the bandit platoon and was assigned to the third platoon, the gun platoon "Wolf Pack." Little did he know, that was where he was supposed to be, what a great assignment. Mr. Murray was with the 281st from October 1968, through October 1969. Twelve months of flying combat missions in both slicks and guns, he like all of us was ready for some stateside duty. Back to Fort Wolters as an IP, he was in good company. Norm Kaufman was there, and up the road a ways he met and later married a very pretty lady (Jane) from Weatherford, Texas. Present at their wedding was Dennis Crowe, Dave Dolstein, Dave Mitchell and Mom Tobert. Dave Mitchell does not remember being in the wedding, a groomsman....(I am wondering how can that be?)

Twelve months of teaching new WOC's how to fly was enough. In 1971 he elected to get out of the Army and go back to college, of course, it had to be at Texas A&M. Now it seemed that college was easier, enrolled in the ROTC program, he was a standout student, with the age, maturity and more so the combat experience, he was one of the best. Upon graduation he received a regular commission as a Second Lieutenant in combat arms, (Armor Branch.)

At Fort Hood, Lieutenant Murray was assigned to a tank platoon and also as a mortar platoon leader and later as a company XO. He flew as a Cat B aviator on the weekends and had his own personal helicopter, an OH-58. A number of captains were waiting to get their own company, now as a first lieutenant, he was selected ahead of them; and as a company commander, he was moving on up. Also, while at Fort Hood he was assigned as Major General George Patton III's escort for a few days, what an experience that was.

In December 1976, Captain Murray was selected to go to the six months Advanced Armored Course at Fort Knox, Kentucky. After Fort Knox, he and Jane headed to Vicenza, Italy. As the flight operations officer for an aviation detachment with six Hueys; he said, with a smile, that it was a tough assignment.



From October 1980 to 1984 back to Fort Rucker as a Huey flight commander and later branch commander of the UH-60 training program. There were 10 Blackhawks and 15 Instructor Pilots, it was a great assignment, working with his IP's flying and teaching pilots how to fly the Blackhawk. There with him was Garry LaCrosse, Brent Gourley, Gil McDougall and Jesse Hunt from the 281st. A

former company commander of the 281st was there also. They crossed paths while he was teaching ground school, Major Andrew J. Miller, Jr now Colonel Miller was still a pain in the rear end. Fort Rucker is always a great assignment and more so flying and teaching pilots how to fly the new workhorse of the Army, the UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter.

September of 1984 his last overseas assignment, he and Jane, with three daughters were off to Kaiserslautern, Germany. Now a Major with a growing family he was back in familiar surroundings. Many years back he as a young kid had gone to school at Wiesbaden. His assignment was as a logistician and commanding a depot of 42 warehouses, 350 M-1 tanks, 400 M-60 tanks, 5000 jeeps, and all kinds of other crap. ***(How can a combat helicopter pilot, a combat arms tank commander, a Blackhawk pilot and instructor become a Logistician?) (Also, how did he keep track of all that stuff?)***

When he was in high school at Wiesbaden, he had a summer job as a grunt in the U. S. Air Force base gym. His boss there was a Staff Sergeant Mutarelli. So many years later while walking through one of the warehouses, he met a lady with the last name of Mutarelli. After talking with her, she said that she was his wife. She also said he was stationed just across the street. He made the trip over just to say "hi." Sergeant Mutrelli was amazed that he was not in jail, and more so that he was a Major in the Army. It was a good three years for him and his family. He told me a couple of times what a wonderful wife Jane was; she made his life and career so much easier than most other officers. She made friends easily, and on one occasion she was good friends with the General's wife. Now we're talking.

After being a logistician, he went back to Army Aviation. His last assignment was at Hunter Army Airfield. He was the Brigade S-3 and Battalion XO. With twenty years wearing the Army uniform he was ready to retire. Now What? He had started as a Private, then a Warrant Officer, back to college and now about to retire as a Major, he said it had been a good ride.

While reading the Army Times, he read that Merrill Lynch was hiring.

In July of 1990, he retired from the Army and went to work for Merrill Lynch, then after two years, he went to work for NationsBank which became Bank of America. Bank of America bought out Merrill Lynch, and he ended back in the office he started from seventeen years before, but this time with more windows and a better view.

Forty-eight years later, after helping people with their investments with Merrill Lynch and Bank of America, he is enjoying the good life with a very pretty wife and three beautiful daughters.

Those who have met Major Jeff Murray will most likely tell you that he is easy to get along with, he sees the lighter side of life, likes to laugh and have fun. He is a very good communicator.

He is one of only a few I know that has flown the TH-55, TH-13, UH-1, both slicks and gunships, OH-58, and the UH-60.

Jack Interstein told me while he was in the hospital that Jeff was one of the many people that had called him and they had a wonderful conversation.

Jeff has been on the Executive Board of the 281st AHC for as long as I can remember as our secretary. I have talked with him a number of times about flying, and for me, it would have been a great thing to have been his co-pilot. My proofreader told me, "he would be a very nice guy to know." He is. Will McCollum, Flight Operations 67-68

Sitting in the Door by Jim "Beetle" Bailey

The preflight's done, I've cleaned my gun.

We're pulling pitch at four,

That's when I'll take up my position,
sitting in the door.

The pilot says clear right, clear left,
and we confirm for sure,

It's just another duty we perform,
while sitting in the door.

The chew chief and the gunner,
we're sitting in the door.

A flying soldier's, how I chose to fight,
should there be war,

In sixty-nine, I'll spend my time,
here on this foreign shore.

Should I survive, to come home alive,
from This God Forsaken Land,

I'll not forget, this little trip,
I made to Vietnam.

Yes there's many a good soldier, over here in
Vietnam.

The high pitch scream of the engine seems,
to say that all is well,

Though I hope not, a well-aimed shot,
could blow us all to hell.

My Pilots' from Atlanta,
the C-P's from L.A.,

And my Gunner Joe is from Kokomo,
in the good old U.S.A.

Yes we're longing for our safe return,
to the good old U.S.A.

Now as I sit here, in my rocking chair,
and think about the war,

They're just a haze, those glory days,
of sitting in the door.

Though I'm safe at home, no more to roam,
my mind still wanders there,

Where my comrades brave, spent their final days,
as soldiers of the air.

Yes I miss my friends, till we meet again, from
those of us who care.



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Some Random Gettysburg Photos

