



**281<sup>ST</sup> ASSAULT HELICOPTER**  
**COMPANY ASSOCIATION**  
**NEWSLETTER**

**December**  
**2020**

**No. 76**

**President's Message by Wes Schuster**

**Savannah, the Jewel of the South (2021 Reunion)**

Looking to the future, it's best to be positive. Yes, we are having some rough times now, but we have our camaraderie intact and our next gathering to look forward to. I visited our next reunion venue recently and was struck by the beauty of Savannah and its rich history. Our hotel, The DeSoto, is in the very center of the historic district of the city. This section is 2.2 square miles in area with Spanish moss draping from oak trees and rich architectural homes never touched by the civil war. Sherman made his headquarters here and let it stand for future generations. The historic district has 22 small parks (squares) that hold nuggets of historical interest. Close by is the beautiful Forsyth Park and its iconic fountain. In the other direction is the riverside walk where restaurants and watering holes abound. You might even want to take a riverboat cruise.

Our program will be impressive with a visit to the 160<sup>th</sup> Night Stalkers at Hunter Army Airfield. I think many of you will be interested enough to stay a little longer in Savannah just to experience all that it holds. It is an easy city to get around.

I recommend using the Old Savannah Tours which allows you to hop on/off at any point to discover the city. Also, include at least one horse drawn carriage tour. Come early or stay a couple of days longer. Enjoy a mini vacation that is truly unique.

**Additional Information**

Those of you who want to noodle around the internet will find plenty to see and read about Savannah. You will find there are walking tours, architectural tours, food tours and restaurants too numerous to list. Whatever you do, at a minimum, plan on being at the 2021 reunion from Monday thru Wednesday, November 1 - 3, 2021.

**From the Reunion Chairman Bain Black**  
**2020 Reunion**

Worth mentioning is that the Krewe of Boo Halloween Parade was also cancelled.

**2021 Reunion**

We are still on track for next year's reunion to be held in Savannah, GA. Our President, Wes Schuster, is the point man. The historic and beautiful Desoto Hotel will provide lodging. Many of us took flight training at Hunter Army Airfield, located in Savannah. Currently the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 160<sup>th</sup> SOAR is located at Hunter and Wes has arranged for a tour of their unit. If this is anything like our visit to the 160<sup>th</sup> SOAR a couple of years ago, it will be very enjoyable, educational, and memorable. The 160<sup>th</sup> conducts worldwide special ops missions and they consider the 281<sup>st</sup> AHC their legacy unit.

There are many interesting things to do and places to dine in Savannah, one of the true examples of old southern architecture and charm. The 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force Museum is also located in Savannah. Of course the Mighty 8<sup>th</sup> is known for its B-17's and the air war over Europe. So, mark Sunday Oct 31-Nov 3 2021 on your calendars.



**2022 Reunion**

Since we have done most of the planning, we will have our 2022 reunion in Oct at the National WWII Museum. This is the number one rated WWII Museum in the world. Stay tuned for more information.

**Intruder of the Year 2020 by Wes Schuster, Pres**

For over 20 years we have had one of the best web sites as a repository of our history, our stories of “in country”, newsletters, and remembrances of our departed buddies. It is our link to our past with shared personal photos, and history of our aircraft. It serves our organizational structure with our constitution and by-laws for all to see and perform our duties for our association. It also looks to the future by supporting our youth through our scholarship program. All of these issues are covered extensively on our 281st.com web site.

Not only do we have a top-rated website but, we also have a chat room. We use the chat room just to stay in touch and to talk about any subject of interest with our buddies.

How does this happen? Who does all the work on a daily, weekly, monthly and yearly basis? Well, it has been one person who has worked tirelessly to keep us informed, to help us operate, and keep us the cohesive organization that we are. Brent Gourley is our Internet Network Administrator and he has been an important part of our viability and sustainability for many years. He puts in incalculable hours of work to support our communication whether it be our web site, chat room, headquarters group site or executive board site. If you drill down even further Brent has it set up for us to link into many sites of other aviation units, as well as, Project Delta B-52.

We are fortunate to have such a dedicated and professional Network Administrator. Brent Gourley is an outstanding Intruder and is a most deserving Intruder of The Year for 2020.

**CONGRATULATIONS, BRENT!**

**ROAD RUNNER PUCKER FACTOR By Alvin Cartwright, Wolf Pack 36 (Dec 66 to May 67)**

Pucker factor is a term used by Army Aviators to describe the tightness of your sphincter following a close call or unexpected event. It is usually measured on a Sphincter Scale of one to ten. The higher the count, the more the discomfort and the longer it takes to remove from your butt that what you were sitting on. Oh yeah! The crew chief and gunner sat on deluxe canvas material and the pilots on cushions that felt like sandbags full of sand, especially after flying all day. If you will look back decades with me and my cataract eyes and a brain that has been infected by a virus called AGE, I

would like to relate an event that happened back in March 1967.

Project Delta and its elements was involved in an operation in conjunction with the 1st Air Cavalry Division in the Bong Son and An Lao Valley area. During the period of 03/04/67 to 04/03/67 on Operation 4-67, Project Delta and the 281st AHC infiltrated 32 separate teams into the Area of Operations (AO). Several of them were Roadrunner Teams from the B-52 Detachment (Project Delta) that were inserted into enemy territory to gather intelligence during Delta operations. They had more freedom of movement than Special Forces (SF) Recon Teams because they were equipped with enemy uniforms, accouterments and even carried AK-47's. NOTE: Organizational Charts for the B-52 Detachment shows a CIDG Company, trained by SF, with up to 123 troops organized into 12 Roadrunner Teams. Seems like the most I ever saw was four or five teams.

The Roadrunner Teams were inserted by 281st Assault Helicopter Company Slicks (Bandits), and cover, of course, was provided by Wolf Pack gunships. The techniques and procedures were about the same as Delta Ops. The RR teams were careful not to walk around the base camp with their disguises displayed. I'm told that they wore ponchos to cover their NVA or VC uniforms until they got on the slicks.

Although well trained and well disguised, their recons sometimes were discovered by the NVA or VC, which meant an emergency extraction of the team by the Intruders. Apparently, on one such extraction, the pick-up slick was shot at by the team on the ground, when on short final. Communication with the RR Teams at times like this was tenuous at best, but it was critical to know what was going on with the team. Were they in contact? Where was the enemy located? Are they really our team? I read an article recently in one of the Special Forces web sites that cites some creative ways of visual communications that were used by RR Teams. Some teams displayed yellow (or specified pre-arranged color) kerchiefs on one or more team members to identify that they were friendlies, ready for pick-up. The story goes on to mention that teams might have a unique code; for example: Strips of colored cloths arranged in a diagonal pattern, left to right, might mean they were in contact, and the enemy was in two o'clock

direction. Another pattern might mean not in contact. It is even mentioned that there was another pattern that meant, "We are impostors, shoot us." Which meant the team had been captured and replaced by real NVA or VC waiting in ambush. Let's not forget, the great USAF Forward Air Controllers (FACS), who were there and would help decode the pattern signals and tell us what the situation was on the ground.



So, What's The Plan?

This incident of the 281st Recovery Slick being shot at by what was thought to be our RR team, precipitated a meeting of the minds to determine how to remedy this kind of situation. Those I remember being involved were, Major Chuck ("Bruiser") Allen, Commander B-52 (Delta); Major Eldon Smith, Bandits (Slicks) Leader; Myself, a Major at the time, Wolf Pack Leader (gunships); an officer from the Road Runner Company and a USAF FAC.

We needed a plan that would preclude this kind of incident for at least the balance of this operation. Improvements of communication and procedures could be implemented for future RR insertions. The meeting concluded with the agreement that the next extraction would be executed in the following manner:

The US Special Forces NCO, who trained the RR team that was being extracted, would ride with the lead gunship. He would place himself between the pilot and co-pilot, behind the center console. We were to go low enough and slow enough that the SF NCO could verify the identification coded cloth the team displayed PLUS!!, get a visual of the team members to verify they were the ones that the SF NCO trained.

The idea was that if they were not friendlies, they would be hesitant to open fire on gunships, because of our firepower. In the meantime, if the plan

worked, they could be identified by the SF NCO, and the slick could be called in, or if they were bad guys, we could implement "Death on Call." So, on the first Roadrunner extraction that came along, I took a light section of two flex-mini UHIC's into the mission. (For the life of me, forgive me, I can't remember the names of the crews that flew with me). We got some vectors from the Delta C&C and located the pick-up spot. We started descent, with the SF NCO RR Team Trainer scooting forward as far as he could get. I almost felt like he was sitting on top of the center console with his head and eyes even with my head and eyes. So, there was six eyes on the landing zone (no, make that ten eyes, the crew chief and gunner were eyeballing it too).

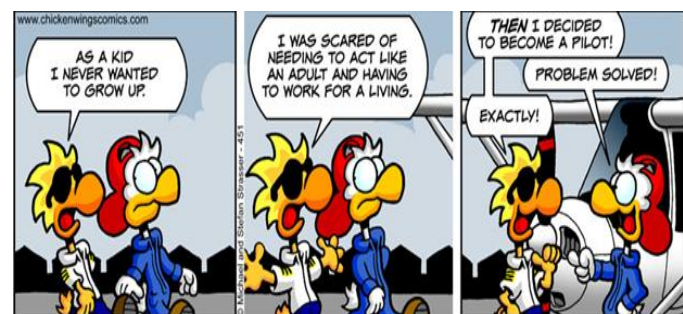
We started the descent. Lower and lower we went. Slowing down and scanning the area to the front and the flanks of the pickup area. Still too high for the NCO to identify the team members. "We need to get lower and slower", the NCO said on intercom. It was getting pretty quiet, except for the chorus of sphincters starting to grab cloth. Lower, lower... slower, slower. Intense is not the word. More like agonizing concentration, as we strained to complete the plan.

At that moment, I felt like we were all at "Sphincter Five," there was the loudest "ka-boom" I had ever heard. My first thought was, "S\_\_t, we've been hit ("oh shucks" just doesn't fully describe the moment). It was loud enough that I thought it was an RPG. But, if it was that, where's the explosion? I betcha, we were definitely all registering PF 10's. I made a quick glance at the NCO, who was looking straight at me, with a contorted sheepish grin on his face. He pointed at his weapon, specifically at the magazine receptacle release. There was no magazine of rounds there. Apparently, his sphincter index had reached the point that he inadvertently depressed the magazine release button, and the magazine dropped to the cabin floor. It is surprising how loud that resounded through the rotor noise, engine whining, and our flight helmets.

At that moment, if we had all been able to look at our seat cushions and remove our butts from what we were sitting on (probably with loud pops in synchrony), we would have seen five perfectly formed miniature mountains. I must admit mine would be capped with white snow, just like Mt. Fuji in Japan.

“It’s our team, the NCO yelled.” I’m not even sure he was using the intercom, we broke off, started climbing, the following gunship giving us cover. We called in the slick, and the extraction went without incident.

Another day, another mission in the life of the best Helicopter Company in the U.S. Army, who flew “Above The Best.”



**VETERANS DAY 2020 by Wes Schuster**

Each year we honor veterans here on Dataw Island with fund raising tournaments, 1,300 American flags lining our streets, a golf marathon starting at 03:30 hours and finishing at 17:00 (our golf pro played 253 holes) and my wife makes a Quilt of Valor for a

deserving veteran each year. This year our ceremony was quieter because of Covid-19 but we still honored our veterans as best we could. This year’s recipient was JR Brown of Operation Patriots FOB. P.S. Our guidon is put to good use each year



**THE SOUND THAT BINDS by Keith Nightingale**  
**From our book “ABOVE THE BEST” page 210.**

Unique to all that served in Vietnam is the UH-1H helicopter. It was both devil and angel and it served as both extremely well. Whether a LRRP, US or RVN soldier or civilian, whether, NVA, VC, Allied or civilian, it provided a sound and sense that lives with us all today. It is the one sound that

immediately clears the clouds of time and freshens the forgotten images within our mind. It will be the sound track of our last moments on earth. It was a simple machine (a single engine, a single blade and four-man crew) yet like the Model T, it transformed us all and performed tasks the engineers and designers never imagined. For soldiers, it was the worst and best of friends but it was the one binding material in a tapestry of a war of many pieces. The smell was always hot, filled with diesel fumes, sharp drafts accentuated by gritty sand, laterite and anxious vibrations. It always held the spell of the unknown and the anxiety of learning what was next and what might be. It was an unavoidable magnet for the heavily laden soldier who donkey-trotted to its squat shaking shape through the haze and blast of dirt, stepped on the OD skid, turned and dropped his ruck on the cool aluminum deck. Reaching inside with his rifle or machine gun, a soldier would grasp a floor ring with a finger as an extra precaution of physics for those moments when the now airborne bird would break into a sharp turn revealing all ground or all sky to the helpless riders all very mindful of the impending weight on their backs. The relentless weight of the ruck combined with the stress of varying motion caused fingers and floor rings to bind almost as one. Constant was the vibration, smell of hydraulic fluid, flashes of visionary images and the occasional burst of a ground-fed odor-rotting fish, dank swampy heat, cordite or simply the continuous sinuous currents of Vietnam’s weather-cold and driven mist in the Northern monsoon or the wall of heated humidity in the southern dry season. Blotting it out and shading the effect was the constant sound of the single rotating blade as it ate a piece of the air, struggling to overcome the momentary physics of the weather.



To divert anxiety, a soldier/piece of freight, might reflect on his home away from home. The door

gunners were usually calm which was emotionally helpful. Each gun had a C ration fruit can at the ammo box clip entrance to the feed mechanism of the machine gun. The gun had a large circular aiming sight unlike the ground pounder version. That had the advantage of being able to fix on targets from the air considerably further than normal ground acquisition. Pears, Apricots, Apple Sauce or Fruit Cocktail, it all worked. Fruit cans had just the right width to smoothly feed the belt into the gun which was always a good thing. Some gunners carried a large oil can much like old locomotive engineers to squeeze on the barrel to keep it cool. Usually this was accompanied by a large OD towel or a khaki wound pack bandage to allow a rubdown without a burned hand. Under the gunners seat was usually a small dairy-box filled with extra ammo boxes, smoke grenades, water, flare pistol, C rats and a couple of well-worn paperbacks. The gun itself might be attached to the roof of the helicopter with a bungi cord and harness. This allowed the adventurous gunners to unattach the gun from the pintle and fire it manually while standing on the skid with only the thinnest of connectivity to the bird. These were people you wanted near you-particularly on extractions. The pilots were more mysterious. You only saw parts of them as they labored behind the armored seats. An arm, a helmeted head and the occasional fingered hand as it moved across the dials and switches on the ceiling above. The armored side panels covered their outside legs-an advantage the passenger did not enjoy. Sometimes, a face, shielded behind helmeted sunshades, would turn around to impart a question with a glance or display a sense of anxiety with large white-circled eyes-this was not a welcoming look as the sounds of external issues fought to override the sounds of mechanics in flight. Yet, as a whole, the pilots got you there, took you back and kept you maintained. You never remembered names, if at all you knew them, but you always remembered the ride and the sound. Behind each pilot seat usually ran a stretch of wire or silk attaching belt. It would have arrayed a variety of handy items for immediate use. Smoke grenades were the bulk of the attachment inventory-most colors and a couple of white phosphorous if a dramatic marking was needed. Sometimes, trip flares or hand grenades would be included depending on the location and mission. Hand

grenades were a rare exception as even pilots knew they exploded-not always where intended. It was just a short arm motion for a door gunner to pluck an inventory item off the string, pull the pin and pitch it which was the point of the arrangement. You didn't want to be in a helicopter when such an act occurred as that usually meant there was an issue. Soldiers don't like issues that involve them. It usually means a long day or a very short one-neither of which is a good thing.

The bird lifts off in a slow, struggling and shaking manner. Dust clouds obscure any view a soldier may have. Quickly, with a few subtle swings, the bird is above the dust and a cool encompassing wind blows through. Sweat is quickly dried, eyes clear and a thousand feet of altitude shows the world below. Colors are muted but objects clear. The rows of wooden hootches, the airfield, local villages, an old B52 strike, the mottled trail left by a Ranchhand spray mission and the open reflective water of a river or lake are crisp in sight. The initial anxieties of the flight or mission recede as the constantly moving and soothing motion picture and soundtrack unfolds. In time, one is aware of the mass of UH-1H's coalescing in a line in front of and behind you. Other strings of birds may be left or right of you-all surging toward some small speck in the front lost to your view. Each is a mirror image of the other-two to three laden soldiers sitting on the edge looking at you and your accompanying passengers all going to the same place with the same sense of anxiety and uncertainty but borne on a similar steed and sound.



In time, one senses the birds coalescing as they approach the objective. Perhaps a furtive glance or sweeping arc of flight reveals the landing zone.

Smoke erupts in columns-initially visible as blue grey against the sky. The location is clearly discernible as a trembling spot surrounded by a vast green carpet of flat jungle or a sharp point of a jutting ridge. As the bird gets closer, a soldier can now see the small FAC aircraft working well-below, the sudden sweeping curve of the bombing runs and the small puffs as artillery impacts. A sense of immense loneliness can begin to obscure one's mind as the world's greatest theatre raises its curtain. Even closer now, with anxious eyes and short breath, a soldier can make out his destination. The smoke is now the dirty grey black of munitions with only the slightest hint of orange upon ignition. No Hollywood effect is at work. Here, the physics of explosions are clearly evident as pressure and mass over light.

The pilot turns around to give a thumbs up or simply ignores his load as he struggles to maintain position with multiple birds dropping power through smoke swirls, uplifting newly created debris, sparks and flaming ash. The soldiers instinctively grasp their weapons tighter, look furtively between the upcoming ground and the pilot and mentally strain to find some anchor point for the next few seconds of life. If this is the first lift in, the door gunners will be firing rapidly in sweeping motions of the gun but this will be largely unknown and unfelt to the soldiers. They will now be focused on the quickly approaching ground and the point where they might safely exit. Getting out is now very important. Suddenly, the gunners may rapidly point to the ground and shout "GO" or there may just be the jolt of the skids hitting the ground and the soldiers instinctively lurch out of the bird, slam into the ground and focus on the very small part of the world they now can see. The empty birds, under full power, squeeze massive amounts of air and debris down on the exited soldiers blinding them to the smallest view. Very quickly, there is a sudden shroud of silence as the birds retreat into the distance and the soldiers begin their recovery into a cohesive organization losing that sound.

On various occasions and weather dependent, the birds return. Some to provide necessary logistics, some command visits and some medevacs. On the rarest and best of occasions, they arrive to take you home. Always they have the same sweet sound which resonates with every soldier who ever heard

it. It is the sound of life, hope for life and what may be. It is a sound that never will be forgotten. It is your and our sound.



Logistics is always a trial. Pilots don't like it, field soldiers need it and weather is indiscriminate. Log flights also mean mail and a connection to home and where real people live and live real lives. Here is an aberrant aspect of life that only that sound can relieve. Often there is no landing zone or the area is so hot that a pilot's sense of purpose may become blurred. Ground commander's beg and plead on the radio for support that is met with equivocations or insoluble issues. Rations are stretched from four to six days, cigarettes become serious barter items and soldiers begin to turn inward. In some cases, perhaps only minutes after landing, fire fights break out. The machine guns begin their carnivorous song. Rifle ammunition and grenades are expended with gargantuan appetites. The air is filled with an all-encompassing sound that shuts each soldier into his own small world-shooting, loading, shooting, loading, shooting, loading until he has to quickly reach into the depth of his ruck, past the extra rations, past the extra rain poncho, past the spare paperback, to the eight M16 magazines forming the bottom of the load-never thought he would need them. A resupply is desperately needed. In some time, a sound is heard over the din of battle. A steady whomp whomp whomp that says; The World is here. Help is on the way. Hang in there. The soldier turns back to the business at hand with a renewed confidence. Wind parts the canopy and things begin to crash through the tree tops. Some cases have smoke grenades attached-these are the really important stuff-medical supplies, codes and maybe mail. The sound drifts off in the distance and things are better for the moment. The sound brings both a psychological and a material relief.

Wounds are hard to manage. The body is all soft flesh, integrated parts and an emotional burden for those that have to watch its deterioration. If the body is an engine, blood is the gasoline.-when it runs out, so does life. It's important the parts get quickly fixed and the blood is restored to a useful level. If not, the soldier becomes another piece of battlefield detritus. A field medic has the ability to stop external blood flow-less internal. He can replace blood with fluid but it's not blood. He can treat for shock but he can't always stop it. He is at the mercy of his ability and the nature of the wound. Bright red is surface bleeding he can manage but dark red, almost tar-colored, is deep, visceral and beyond his ability to manage. Dark is the essence of the casualty's interior. He needs the help that only that sound can bring. If an LZ exists, it's wonderful and easy. If not, difficult options remain. The bird weaves back and forth above the canopy as the pilot struggles to find the location of the casualty. He begins a steady hover as he lowers the litter on a cable. The gunner or chopper medic looks down at the small figures below and tries to wiggle the litter and cable through the tall canopy to the small up-reaching figures below. In time, the litter is filled and the cable retreats -the chopper crew still carefully managing the cable as it wends skyward. The cable hits its anchor, the litter is pulled in and the pilot pulls pitch and quickly disappears-but the retreating sound is heard by all and the silent universal thought-There but for the Grace of God go I-and it will be to that sound.



Cutting a landing zone is a standard soldier task. Often, to hear the helicopter's song, the impossible becomes a requirement and miracles abound. Sweat-filled eyes, blood blistered hands, energy-expended and with a breath of desperation and

desire, soldiers attack a small space to carve out sufficient open air for the helicopter to land. Land to bring in what's needed, take out what's not, and to remind them that someone out there cares. Perhaps some explosives are used-usually for the bigger trees but most often its soldiers and machetes or the side of an e-tool. Done under the pressure of an encroaching enemy, it's a combination of high adrenalin rush and simple dumb luck-small bullet, big space. In time, an opening is made and the sky revealed. A sound encroaches before a vision. Eyes turn toward the newly created void and the bird appears. The blade tips seem so much larger than the newly-columned sky. Volumes of dirt, grass, leaves and twigs sweep upward and are then driven fiercely downward through the blades as the pilot struggles to do a completely vertical descent through the narrow column he has been provided. Below, the soldiers both cower and revel in the free-flowing air. The trash is blinding but the moving air feels so great. Somehow, the pilot lands in a space that seems smaller than his blade radius. In reverse, the sound builds and then recedes into the distance-always that sound. Bringing and taking away.



Extraction is an emotional highlight of any soldier's journey. Regardless of the austerity and issues of the home base, for that moment, it is a highly desired location and the focus of thought. It will be provided by that familiar vehicle of sound. The Pickup Zone in the bush is relatively open or if on an established firebase or hilltop position, a marked fixed location. The soldiers awaiting extraction, close to the location undertake their assigned duties-security, formation alignment or LZ marking. Each is focused on the task at hand and tends to blot out other issues. As each soldier senses his moment of

removal is about to arrive, his auditory sense becomes keen and his visceral instinct searches for that single sweet song that only one instrument can play. When registered, his eyes look up and he sees what his mind has imaged. He focuses on the sound and the sight and both become larger as they fill his body. He quickly steps onto the skid and up into the aluminum cocoon. Turning outward now, he grasps his weapon with one hand and with the other holds the cargo ring on the floor-as he did when he first arrived at this location. Reversing the flow of travel, he approaches what he temporarily calls home. Landing again in a swirl of dust, diesel and grinding sand, he offloads and trudges toward his assembly point. The sounds retreat in his ears but he knows he will hear them again. He always will.

**About the Author:** COL Nightingale is a retired Army Colonel who served two tours in Vietnam with Airborne and Ranger (American and Vietnamese) units. He commanded airborne battalions in both the 509th Parachute Infantry Regiment and the 82nd Airborne Division. He later commanded both the 1/75th Rangers and the 1st Ranger Training Brigade.

## **CALLING ALL WOLF PACKERS**

Your Remembrance Committee is developing a remembrance book that covers the life of the Wolf Pack from birth to deactivation and we need your help. We are looking for stories and pictures that will tell the story of the US Army's top special operations aerial weapons platoon. We have a lot of information on the early years but are short from mid-68 to the end of the war.

To do this project right, we need your favorite war story and pictures. It is your book. Please help us make it one that you will be proud to give to your grandchildren. If you can help, please contact: Jack Mayhew, [intruder06@me.com](mailto:intruder06@me.com), 410-721-1675 or Will McCollum, [WillDanMac@yahoo.com](mailto:WillDanMac@yahoo.com), 319-239-5529

## **SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE by Jim Baker**

The scholarship Committee met via Zoom on September 17. This year, due to covid-19, we did not receive the donation we have annually received from a regular corporate contributor. However, the Fund is still in such a financial position that we voted to continue funding the three students

currently in the program, and award scholarships to four new students beginning in the fall of 2020.

Those new students are:

**Katherine Stroman**, Attending University of Mary-Hardin Baylor, starting in Fall 2020 semester-the great niece of Jeff Murray

**Laura Keller**, Attending University of Central Florida, starting in Fall, 2020 semester-the granddaughter of Neil Sprague

**Griffin Heintz**, attending Ohio State University, starting in Fall, 2020 semester-the great nephew of Ned Heintz (KIA)

**Malcolm Olson**, attending Cornell University, starting in Fall, 2020 semester-the grandson of Doyle Creed

The three current students continue to do well in college, and the four new ones present excellent academic credentials. All are excellent students. The "Scholarships" link on the website has recently been revised and updated. This link provides information about the Program and how to apply, and is where the application and other related forms are located. If you have a relative who is applying now, you may suggest to them that they revisit the website to ensure they have the most current application packet.

One of the requirements in the application package is that the students include their SAT/ACT test scores. However, because of restrictions due to covid-19, many high schools are not currently offering those tests, and many colleges are not requiring them. For scholarship consideration, we will accept those test scores if they are available, but we will not reject a student if the tests were not available or not required by their college. Funding scholarships for now seven students is quite a commitment, and we anticipate new requests each year. The restrictions placed on students, teachers, and schools due to the pandemic makes completing a student's education more difficult. Financial aid from a 281st Scholarship helps to relieve that burden a little. We are able to provide help through the financial contributions we receive from you and other interested people. Many contributions come with the reunion registration, which was restricted this year, and who knows about next year. Please don't forget those donations and what it means to those students. Remember also that your donation can be tax deductible. We receive beautiful thank you notes from the students;

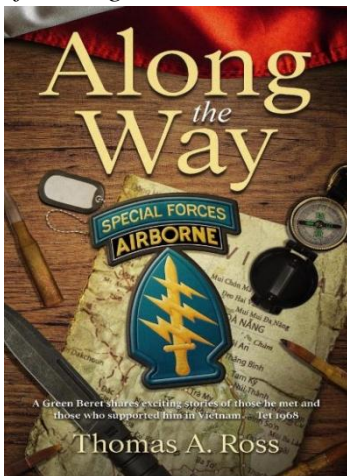
They know who we are, and really appreciate our commitment to them. Please send your donation to:  
**281st AHC Memorial Scholarship Fund,**  
**c/o Walter J. Pikul, MBA, CPA, CFP®, PO Box**  
**41035, Fayetteville, NC 28309**

**DEAR 281st by Laura Keller**

I greatly appreciate being awarded the 281st AHC Memorial Scholarship. This scholarship and the history behind it mean so much to my family and I. I read through the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall of Faces remembrances left for Warrant Officer Daniel Sulander and realized that my grandpa could have easily been in a similar situation. Many of the brave people who fought were not able to return home and were not able to have their stories completed. I am forever indebted to those who serve to protect this country and hope that attending college with this scholarship will help to honor those who have passed. My grandpa, who served in the 281st, and the long line of veterans in my family along with myself, would all like to thank you for your generosity.

**TWO NEW BOOKS by Tom Ross**

The two new books represent the second-edition of *Privileges of War*. When finished, the second edition had such a large page count that it had to become two books. The first book is titled *Along the Way*, which was the title of Part I of the original book. The second book is titled *Rescue in the Valley of the Tigers* and, as most know, the title of Part II



of the original book was *The Rescue*. Both books include much more "true" storytelling and more pictures of the 281st supporting A-502. The second book mentions more 281st players involved in the rescue by name and includes their pictures. It also includes a tribute

page to the 281st and one for aircraft 113, which was personally very important to me. All in all, I have made sure that the Intruders are well represented in both books. The books should be available by the end of December or mid January. The books will be available in the 281st PX store.

**THE PX STORE by the PX Grunt Jay Hays**

I hope everyone had a good Thanksgiving, and I wish everyone a Merry Christmas and safe, healthy new year. Without a reunion, PX sales have been slow. The PX is stocked with wonderful items for Christmas presents. During the month of December there is **free** shipping, paid by a donor (one of Santa's Elves). Also, Tom Ross, honorary member and author of *Privileges of War*, is coming out with 2 new books available from our PX. See Tom's article. You may preorder any amount. The first 50 orders will get **free** postage on the first book. Recently we have received several requests for coffee mugs. I can order more if there is enough demand, so please contact me if you have interest. Contact Jay Hays [Jhays@haysenterprises.com](mailto:Jhays@haysenterprises.com)

**OBITUARIES**

**Henry Jay Salzman**

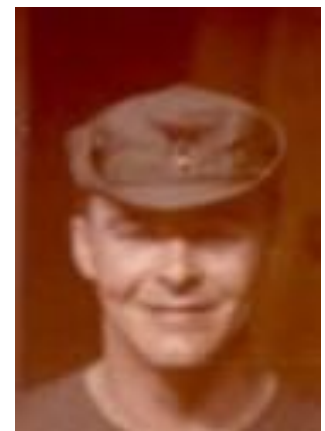
Served in 1st and 3rd Platoons as a Door Gunner.  
**4/68 to 7/69**



2/6/50-3/5/17

**Elmo John Capo Jr**

Served in 2nd Platoon (Bandits) as a Pilot.  
**11/68 to 5/69**



3/17/40-8/22/16

**William (Bill) O'Hare**

Served in 3rd Platoon (Wolf Pack) as a Door Gunner.  
**67 to 68**



7/23/47-9/29/20

**Ronald Palascak**

Served in 3rd Platoon (Wolf Pack) as a Pilot.  
**11/65 to 11/66**



12/18/42-4/8/18

**David Dean**

Served in 2nd Platoon (Bandits) as a Pilot.  
**2/69 to 11/70**



8/9/48-8/29/20

**Carson Suber**

Served in 1st Platoon (Rat Pack) as a Pilot and Commander.  
**67 to 68**



4/27/38-2/1/20

**Dennis Habben**

Served in the Orderly Room.  
**3/67 to 3/68**



8/5/47-7/2/20

**James Wolfe**

Served in Maintenance and in 1st Platoon (Rat Pack) as a Door Gunner.  
**10/68 to 12/68**



12/21/47-7/18/20

**281st AHC Association Contact Information****THE EXECUTIVE BOARD (Elected)**

Wes Schuster, President [weschuster@gmail.com](mailto:weschuster@gmail.com)

Jeff Murray, VP [Tamu73@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Tamu73@sbcglobal.net)

Dave Mitchell, Secretary [dmitchell62@kc.surewest.net](mailto:dmitchell62@kc.surewest.net)

Fred Beck, Treasurer [Fred281st@outlook.com](mailto:Fred281st@outlook.com)

Bain Black, Reunion Chair [BainB@roadrunner.com](mailto:BainB@roadrunner.com)

**APPOINTED OFFICERS (Abbreviated list)**

Fred Beck, Membership Committee Chairman

[fred281st@outlook.com](mailto:fred281st@outlook.com)

Brent Gourley, Internet Groups Administrator

[bgrlyy@gmail.com](mailto:bgrlyy@gmail.com)

Will McCollum, Assoc. Resident Author

[wilddanmac@yahoo.com](mailto:wilddanmac@yahoo.com)

Jim Baker, Scholarship Committee Chairman

[Bakerjw@icloud.com](mailto:Bakerjw@icloud.com)

Jay Hays, Store (PXG) [Jhays@haysenterprises.com](mailto:Jhays@haysenterprises.com)

Jack Mayhew, Remembrance Committee Chairman

[intruder06@me.com](mailto:intruder06@me.com)

Dean Roesner, Newsletter [deanroesner@aol.com](mailto:deanroesner@aol.com)