



July
2021

281ST ASSAULT HELICOPTER
COMPANY ASSOCIATION
NEWSLETTER

No. 78

PRESIDENT'S REPORT by Wes Schuster
REUNION NEWS

The Savannah reunion is coming together. Thanks to so many of you who registered by April 17th. Not knowing your level of interest in attending the reunion this year we asked you to register early so we didn't run into contractual liabilities. Well, you spoke loud and clear. There is a high level of interest in getting the 281st AHC Association back together again. So far, we have 110 registrations and 10 people declaring they will register soon. Another indicator of your interest is the large group of early arrivals this year. So far, we have 38 rooms booked a day early on Sunday October 31st. Savannah has so many attractions that many of you have decided to see and experience as many of them as possible.

BOOK YOUR HOTEL ROOM ASAP

This year we will hold 281st registration open until October 4th. **However, I strongly suggest you book your hotel room now. Don't wait.** If we fill our block of rooms and the hotel books other guests, there may not be space available by October. **Room rates are not guaranteed after October 4th or once the group block is full.** Remember there is pent-up demand for traveling and hotels are getting busy.

OUR VENUE

In April, Bain Black and I visited the 160th Night Stalkers and we were heartily received. We're looking forward to a great visit there. The management at the DeSoto hotel has been working hard throughout the pandemic. They have adhered closely to federal protocols. They have struggled through the labor shortage, but assured us that by September staffing will improve. We are also lined up for an optional venue at the 8th Air Force

Museum. Over half of our group is signed up already for our visit there.

BUS TO THE HUNTER AAF

We will travel by bus to Hunter AAF on Tuesday morning, November 2nd. Security and our schedule are tight, so we have arranged coaches to get the group there on time and together. Please be in the Pulaski Room in The DeSoto Hotel no later than 8:15 Tuesday morning.

ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

Our By-Laws call for nominations for Executive Board Officers at least 90 days before our General Membership Meeting. There are at least two openings this year as I will be stepping aside as president. In my place, I strongly endorse my good friend (and former hooch mate) Jeff Murray as your new president. Jeff has been one of our most active and consistent supporters of the 281st association over the years. His knowledge of the association, your old war stories and you personally is beyond compare. This is my nomination. If there are any others, please submit them to our current VP who is handling the nominations. Since Jeff is our current VP, this will leave an opening for a new VP. Please give this your attention too. If you or anyone you think would be a candidate for helping us run our association, please submit your/his name. Before you submit a name, be sure to discuss it with the nominee to have his approval.

TO THE FUTURE

The 281st is on the move. See you in Savannah soon.

REUNION COMMITTEE REPORT by Bain Black, Chairman

Hello Again Intruders, it is great to see COVID-19 in the rearview mirror and life getting back to somewhat normal and it is really great to see the

number of Intruders and friends enrolled in our 2021 Reunion in Savannah, GA. Reunions take an effort by so many people....our 281st president, hotel staff and so many Intruders who help every step of the way. This year is no exception. Wes Schuster has been the person we can all thank for what will be a wonderful get-together. There have been significant issues along the way, many caused by COVID. Wes in his usual style has paid attention to all the details and driven the reunion to reality. His comments in this newsletter leave little for me to add, so I will bring you up to date on our 2022 plans.

Originally, we wanted to visit New Orleans (NOLA) in 2020, then COVID got in the way. We had already committed to Savannah this year, which moved NOLA to the 2022 schedule. I recently contacted the WWII Museum, and they could accommodate us the week of the Krewe Of Boo Halloween Parade. Having attended two of those parades, I know how much fun they are. However, when I contacted the Higgins Hotel which is directly across the street from the Museum, they informed me that 20,000 anesthesiologists would be in town and our room rate would be \$289/night!! Well, that would be a deal breaker. The Higgins is a GREAT hotel that partners with the WWII Museum. The hotel is rated one of the 10 best in NOLA and demand is always high for their rooms, especially in October.

<https://www.higginshotelnola.com/>

I asked Management at the Higgins what they could do for us if we moved our dates from 10/18 check-in to other October dates. Unfortunately, all dates in October were very expensive, so I asked about September. We negotiated a rate of \$149/night +tax, with early-bird check-in on Sunday 9/18/22.

Our program at the Museum is unchanged. A private showing of the movie "Beyond all Boundaries" (narrated by Tom Hanks) admission to the world-renowned WWII Museum, and lunch at the Museum's Stage Door Canteen where we will also have our memorial service. The Museum offered us a second day for nominal cost per person. This is acclaimed as the best WWII museum in the world!!

<https://www.nationalww2museum.org/>

So, please mark your calendars for NOLA, September 18-22, 2022. There will be much more information in the months to come. Karen and I look forward to seeing you in Savannah!

JUST ANOTHER DAY IN THE WAR ZONE by Bain Black, Wolf Pack 36, 68-69

On a normal day back in Nha Trang, during our down time from the real war for the 281st AHC, flying for 5th SF Project Delta, we received orders from 10th Battalion giving our missions for the following day. During the night, operations determined aircraft assignments (with the invaluable help of maintenance) and crew assignments with the help of platoon leaders and platoon sergeants. Most Intruders did not realize what was going on in the late hours to determine who, where and what was to take place the next day. This old soldier's memory ain't what it used to be, so dates may be a bit off; however, the rest of the story is dead-on. I guess it was late '68 or early '69 and I was probably the 3 (Army talk for Operations Officer). I was given the operations job after being Wolf Pack platoon leader (just another old WP36). I still flew most days with Wolf Pack because once the days assignments were made, there was little to do in operations. Oh, there was nothing in life better than flying fireteam lead in a gaggle of Charlie Model Gunships, except maybe sex, maybe.

About the mission....

There was a big combat assault (CA) the next day inland from Phan Rang, south of Dalat, which was south of Nha Trang. It was a big deal, with slicks coming from all over. The operation needed gun support, so Wolf Pack was given the mission and I took it. It was a gun platoon equivalent to an "ash and trash" mission. But there was an unforeseen enemy....the weather. We departed early, about sunup and headed to an in descript area west and inland from Phan Rang. I do remember that much. Orders were to land and go to operations for a mission briefing regarding the CA. Simple enough.



When we arrived, with about 30-40 minutes of fuel remaining, there was dense ground fog and about 80-100 Hueys flying around in a grand circle. Our landing area was an open field with FM homing as our only nav aid. The ground fog began to dissipate, and patches of mother earth could be seen below. Fuel was running low and there was no airfield with instrument approach within range....and most of us only had minimal instrument training.

So, one at a time with 20-minute fuel warning light glaring, slicks started an approach to the FM signal and with little ground reference through the fog. Most made it. Two did not and crashed. One slick's blades made contact with a telephone pole. Another lost ground reference and rolled over on the right side of the aircraft. No one was seriously injured.

So, what about the guns??? Charlie Models carried about 20 gallons more fuel than D/H models....242 gallons as I recall. Slicks carried about 220...if memory is correct. So, guns were still circling with 20-minute fuel light coming on. There were a couple of other fire teams from other units, all sweating bullets...because a loaded gunship was not known for its ability to hover in the fog!! Ha, ha, ha!

It was now our turn. I went first. We were 10-12 minutes into the 20-minute warning light, which are incredibly accurate. Teamwork was the name of this game...seeing a patch of ground and slowing speed to 40, 20, 10 knots and the FM station dead ahead....wings level. Crew chief saves the day again..."sir, come back, you are right over another aircraft. Come left.... down, down, down. Whew...safely on the ground.

My wingman executed the same successful landing in the fog. I wish I could remember names of all my Wolf Pack crews...but I do not have a clue. I do recall that a loaded C Model with no fuel will hover out of ground effect just beautifully. And I do remember blowing everybody's stuff away. Those beautiful wide blades on a C Model create so much wind that tents and everything not secured is blown away.

The rest of the mission was nothing compared to the start. We shot up tree lines left and right of the landing zone for the Combat Assault. Nothing much more to report. One thing that I recall again and again during my career...ground fog lifts very quickly. Ten minutes after the last aircraft landed there was nothing but blue sky. This was just another day in the war zone.



How I became a helicopter crewman in the 281st Assault Helicopter Company, written by an old guy for his grandchildren a few years ago.

As you are all about to go out in the world, I thought I'd send this to let you know that things can be accomplished in spite of obstacles. Not always exactly as you'd hoped, but pretty close if you are willing to work at it, take some chances, and keep a single purpose in mind.

I had always wanted to fly, as far back as I can remember. I read every book on aviation I could get my hands on starting in grade school, watched all the WWII aviation movies that were shown (and there were a lot of them in the 40's and 50's), and built lots of model airplanes (plastic first, then later balsa wood and tissue paper that would actually fly). In high school, I applied to the Air Force Academy through a congressman and was accepted to go through the selection process. I took the written exam and apparently did well enough to go down to Beale AFB for a physical. That's where I found out about depth perception, as I failed the depth perception test but passed everything else. As I waited for all the test results while at Beale, I was told by an Air Force officer that I could still go to the Academy, but would not be able to be a pilot. He said the Air Force had lots of other jobs besides being a pilot, yada, yada, yada, and I remember thinking to myself while he was talking, "why would anyone want to be in the Air Force if he couldn't fly?" Needless to say, that was the end of my pursuing a career in the Air Force. I went off to college after high school to study engineering, not really because I wanted to, but that just seemed like the next thing to do. I wasn't really mentally ready for college, my heart just wasn't in it. After all, I had been in school a long time by then (almost my whole 18 year old life!) and thought there must be something else better to spend my time with. One day in the spring of my second semester, some of the guys in the dorm were going downtown to talk to the Army recruiter just to see what options were available, so I tagged along. I sat quietly while they talked to the recruiter and listened to all the various

job classifications. At some point the recruiter asked me if I was interested in the Army, and I told him the only thing I had heard so far that I would be interested in was a helicopter pilot. Then I also told him I didn't have the required vision without using glasses. In those days, you still had to have 20-20 uncorrected vision to get into flight school or even helicopter repairman school, which was required in order to be a crew chief. At that point he dropped the bomb. He said if I wanted to fly bad enough, he knew how I could do it although it would be as a crewman, not a pilot. He continued, "if you go to Vietnam and serve a one year tour in a combat arm and then extend to be a helicopter door gunner, they will take you even though you don't have perfect vision, because you will be a combat veteran by then." That got my attention so I asked what were considered combat arms. He said infantry, armor and such. Then he asked what I was studying in college and I said engineering. He said the army had a specialty called Combat Engineers that was a combat arm but it wasn't exactly like what I was studying. He said something about it being a lot of hard work, training with typical infantry weapons and tactics, and that when in the field you operated with the infantry, pulled perimeter duty like them and were essentially in the same place and conditions as them. Well, hard work didn't bother me, I grew up in a construction family and had worked for my dad and uncles (who were all General Contractors) after school, weekends, and holidays since I was 9 years old. Then he mentioned the clincher by telling me that besides building things (including different types of bridges) Combat Engineers also swept for mines, and blew things up using explosives. That did it, I was now hooked, I would enlist for Combat Engineers, go to Vietnam for a year, and then extend to be a helicopter door gunner.

So off to the Army I went, first to Ft. Lewis, WA for Basic Training, and then to Ft. Leonard Wood, MO for Combat Engineer AIT. I arrived in Vietnam April 2, 1967 and was assigned to the 168th Combat Engineer Battalion. When I first arrived, I was assigned to Battalion Headquarters section while all the other guys I came in with went out to regular line companies. I really didn't know a lot about the Army at that point, so didn't think much of it. I was told to come back the next morning to see a particular Sergeant, and the next day when I reported to him, he asked if I could type. I was getting wary at this point,

but said "yes, anyone can type". So he handed me an open book and told me to type a certain paragraph. At this point a light bulb went off in my head and I realized they were going to make a clerk/typist out of me. Two things immediately came into my mind: one was that I had joined the Army to get away from this kind of stuff for awhile, and two was that I'd never be accepted to be a helicopter gunner if I spent my tour as a clerk/typist (which wasn't true, but I didn't know it at the time). So I performed an Academy Award level acting job of doing the slowest, with most mistakes, incompetent typing job in history, this in spite of the fact that due to classes and typing in college I could easily type at 60 wpm. When I was done (which took forever), the Sergeant said, OK, come back after lunch. When I returned, I was sent to the Sergeant Major who told me to follow him. As we walked across the compound, he said that they couldn't use me as a clerk/typist (which was my intent) but there was a plain clerk position open in the supply yard. Now, at this point, I was completely panicked, thinking that I will be stuck in a clerk position, in a supply yard, and at a main base my whole tour. So I said to him as we were walking, "Sergeant Major, you know I enlisted to be a Combat Engineer?" At which point he stopped, looked at me and said, "do you want to go to a line company", with a fair amount of surprise in his voice (actually it sounded more like "are you really that stupid"). At the time I had no idea what a line company was, but knew it wasn't where they were trying to put me, so I said yes.



That's how I was finally assigned to the 1st Squad, 1st Platoon, A Company (a true line company) stationed in Di An base camp, which was about 10 miles north northeast of Saigon across the Saigon River Valley. We operated in the jungle, north and northwest of there, mostly in and along the Iron Triangle and as far north as one mile from Cambodia near Loc Ninh, which was where I was when Tet 68 happened, the safest place in all Vietnam as all the enemy had gone to the cities.

I extended once while in the engineers for three months, so that I could go home in June instead of April, as the girls would be out of school for the summer by then and be more available for chasing (and catching).

I was in the engineers for a total of 15 months, and when I came back from leave, I was transferred to the 281st AHC as a door gunner. I was a Sp.5 by then (in the 168th I had been a squad leader for several months, normally an E6 Staff Sergeant position, since we were very short of NCO's and also because they wanted experienced people in charge where possible) and luckily at the time, they were still taking E5's as door gunners, which was only a Sp.4 position. So, essentially I got to the 281st by purely random chance and was assigned to the 1st Flight Platoon (Rat Pack). I flew as a gunner for 5 months and then became a crew chief and took over the helicopter from my departing crew chief. Things were not always a bed of roses as I crashed on (and totaled) two helicopters and was crewing my third aircraft by the end. I remained a crew chief for the rest of my tour (except for a short time at the end when I became an acting Platoon Sergeant while we were waiting for a permanent Sergeant) which was a total of 11 months in the 281st since I had extended another 5 months on top of the original 6 month extension that got me to the 281st. That gave me just over 31 months total service in the Army (26 months of which were in Vietnam) which qualified me for a 5 month early out from my 36 month enlistment upon returning to the USA.

BTW, I never told anyone at the time about my plans of how I was going to be able to fly, including my parents and certainly no one in the Army as I figured somewhere along the line they would lock me up as being completely crazy. As stated before, getting to the 281st was random chance, getting to fly as a crewman took a lot of effort.



An interesting thing happened while I was in the first part of my Army experience. Being away from books and constant studying, my eyesight improved so that by the time I got to the 281st I could pass an eye exam with 20-20 and from what I could see, I knew my depth perception was much better too. Something else happened as a result of being in the Army. I was now ready to go to college and study. I first obtained a B.S. in Civil Engineering (using the GI Bill) and after working for over 20 years as a General Contractor, obtained a M.S. in Structural Engineering, after going back to grad school at the age of 50. So now I'm a Structural Engineer and sit mostly behind a desk or in front of a computer, both of which I thought I'd never do (and at the time didn't want to do) when I left high school. I work almost exclusively on designing bridges and occasionally get to the job sites, which brings me back closer to the time when I built bridges in the Combat Engineers. Now here I am, an old guy, going to reunions with a bunch of old guys, who I worked and flew with when we were all young. Life can sometimes be a circular journey.

Army Helicopter Pilots are steely eyed, weapons systems managers who kill bad people and break things. However, they can also be very charming and personable. The average helicopter pilot, despite sometimes having a swaggering exterior, is very much capable of such feelings as love, affection, intimacy and caring. (However, these feelings don't involve anyone else.)

281st FEATURED INTRUDER

In each future newsletter we would like to learn more about the men who contributed to the success of the 281st. We are not looking for war stories so much, but rather the job you had and your experiences in Vietnam and after Vietnam. Please answer as many questions as possible and we would like your permission to make a story of this information in one of our newsletters.

1. Where was your hometown before Vietnam?
2. Where do you live now?
3. How old were you when you went into the Army?
4. Where did you have your basic training, specialty training?
5. Drafted or enlisted, when?
6. Length of service
7. Other postings before or after Vietnam
8. Where did you go on R&R? What did you do there? (remember this is for published information)
9. What are some memorable experiences you can share about Vietnam (does not have to be a story)
10. What type of work did you do after the Army?
11. State any hobbies or interests you have
12. Tell us about your family
13. Please mention anything else about yourself

If you can supply a photo of yourself, please attach. Note, we would prefer an email response to the President, weschuster@gmail.com or mail to: Wes Schuster

206 Locust Fence Road
St Helena Island, SC 29920

We would like to learn more about our members and our "Featured Intruder" is one way to accomplish this by discovering the background and experiences of a fellow Intruder. In this issue, Jay Hendrix was kind enough to highlight his part in the 281st. BTW, Jay attended his first reunion two years ago in San Antonio, so look for Jay and his wife, Christy, this year in Savannah and get to know them better.

FEATURED INTRUDER FLOYD HENDRIX, JR. (JAY HENDRIX, JAYBIRD) 67-68

I grew-up and graduated from Simla High School, in Simla, Colorado in 1965 at 18 years of age. Shortly thereafter I went to Colorado Barber College in Denver, Colorado. After graduation I received my draft notice and the Army Recruiter said I would be going into the Army within 4-6 months. Rather than wait to be recruited, I made the decision to volunteer

for the Army for two years.

I went into the Army October 6, 1966, age 19, with basic training taking place at Fort Bliss, TX. I took additional military training as well as testing out for my MSO/Clerk typist at Fort Huachuca, AZ. Upon completion of the additional training there, I received orders to go to Vietnam. After spending some quality time back home on the ranch with my family I jetted to Bien Hoa, Vietnam in early 1967.

After several weeks of going to various parts of the jungle I found myself permanently stationed in Nha Trang, Vietnam, assigned to the 281st Assault Helicopter Company. I started out working in the Hooch Operations Shack typing up flight missions and awards for the company.



Among other attachment duties, I flew with Captain Hopper and Major Shelley on missions and performed gunner/crew chief duties on the UH-1D's (Huey's). There were three flight platoons that were part of the 281st, named Wolf Pack, Rat Pack, and Bandits. We flew missions for a Special Forces unit called Project Delta (B-52). The purpose of the 281st AHC was to support the 5th Special Forces (Green Berets), which our unit did from 1965 to 1970, transporting them and picking them up at all times of the day & night.

One of my most memorable experiences was the TET offensive in January of 68. I had guard duty on the flight line that night and was scared to death watching the sky light up. What a show of toughness by all the ranks of the 281st! I left Nha Trang in March 1968 and headed to ENT Air Force Base in

Colorado Springs, CO, and served with the Headquarters Battery, Army Air Defense Command for my remaining six months in the Army. After the Army, I attended Colorado University Colorado Springs campus. I worked in the Mortgage Banking Business for 35 years, and retired five years ago. I now enjoy Golfing, Bicycling, Traveling and Gardening. I am one of eleven children and have two children, two stepchildren, and two grand daughters. My wife, Christy and I live in Tempe, AZ.

KEN GLAZE by Jeff Murray Pilot 68-69

As a Bandit I flew with Ken Glaze a lot. He was perhaps the most laid back guy ever, there may have been a reason for that but he was fun and let me fly a lot. In April of 1969 we were in the A Shau supporting Delta and I was in Wolf Pack. We were extracting a Delta team and Ken was the hole ship, hovering atop the trees with a McGuire Rig out waiting for some wounded soldiers to get hooked up. The mission commander, our CO, was getting anxious as Ken was hovering a long time and he came on the air asking him to expedite. "Bandit 2? (I forget his callsign) you need to move this along, when are you coming out?" I will never forget the answer as it was delivered in as calm a voice as I have ever heard in this situation. "When my passengers are ready for me to come out." My AC, Rick Galer, chuckled, my Crew Chief, Evangelho, laughed. There was dead silence over the Intruder airways.

IF AT FIRST YOU DON'T SUCCEED by Lee Brewer

My final check ride at Ft Wolters didn't go very well. I aced everything until the hovering autorotation requirement. During my training phase I had a CWO2 instructor that was very stiff on the controls and as you know the hovering autorotation is a feel type maneuver. The CWO2 always said that was a good one even when I faked holding onto the cyclic. The final check went very well and the check pilot was filling out my papers and asked me to give him a couple of hovering autorotations. After landing left skid low and bouncing the aircraft around without crashing but with the check pilot throwing paperwork all over the cockpit "we did 3 hovering autorotations" and I passed with the proverbial 70 as a final grade. After all, they needed pilots in Viet Nam. Fortunately, I had two more hours of solo time to complete before leaving Ft. Wolters. The next day

I found the most remote confined area in Texas and guess what I did during that two hours. I never ever had trouble doing hovering autorotations during the rest of my aviation career.



Mike Price (left) & Ray Ronchetti (right)



Al Cartwright(left) & Dean Roesner (right)



**Buck Yancy (left) & Joe Bilitzke (right)
all receive their Quilts of Honor**

PX REPORT by Jay Hays, the PX Grunt

The PX is stocked, and I thank those who are placing orders.

I asked for suggestions for a reunion t-shirt and received requests for a camouflage shirt and the words "God's Own Lunatics" which we had several years ago. The 281st was given this label by General Westmoreland. While congratulating the Special Forces on their successes, he mentioned the support they got from "God's Own Lunatics" meaning the 281st. The last reunion used a Special forces logo and sold out. This year's t-shirt will be camo with the same logo on front and "God's Own Lunatics" on the back in place of 50th year reunion. V-neck shirts, which were popular, will be available for the women. On another note, I attended the funeral of our comrade John Costello who passed away from cancer. His family was very grateful for representation from the 281st. John's brother, Tom, has been providing information to Jack Mayhew for the Headquarters net. He had a full military funeral with the 21-gun salute. Joe Horwath and I will be happy to deliver the flag case when it is ready.

The new Wolf Pack Book will be in our PX store shortly. It will sell for \$15.00 and that includes shipping. It will also be available on Amazon and at Barnes and Noble for \$19.95, which is the price printed on the back of the book.

SCHOLARSHIP REPORT by Jim Baker

Last year we had a vacancy on the Board of Directors of the Scholarship Committee. Mike Duclos has agreed to join the committee to fill that vacancy.

Mike was a pilot with the Second Platoon, Bandits, in 1970. He and his wife, Wanda, live in Savannah, and are regular reunion attendees.

For the just completed college spring semester, five students received financial support from our scholarship fund, and all have excelled academically. Another student, who took a leave of absence this past spring, is expected to return this fall. Therefore, we expect to have a total of six students continuing for the 2021/2022 academic year.

New applications have been received this spring from three high school seniors, and each application looks very strong. The committee will review each of them this summer, and if they are approved, that will give us a total of nine students for next year.

Supporting nine students would constitute quite a commitment for the 281st. But it is a worthwhile cause, and think about this, nine kids from our own families, that in a small way, considering the costs of attending college today, are being helped by us to continue their education. With hard work on their part, and the support of their families, they are doing their part, and it falls to us to help back them up. Please do your part by continuing your donations to the Scholarship Fund. If you have not done so in the past, information on how to donate can be found on our website, and there is a scholarship donation line on the reunion registrations form, or you can just donate at the reunion.

On behalf of the students and their families, thank you and we'll see you in Savannah.

WOLF PACK PLATOON BOOK UPDATE

Over the past two years, Jack Mayhew and Will McCollum have worked on finding stories for this book. Thanks to you, the writers and storytellers of the Pack, we now have a book that will be in print in a few weeks. The manuscript is approved to be formatted into a book. **The Wolf Pack book will be in our PX before we meet in Savanna.**

We think you will be impressed with the stories told as there are more than a hundred of them, and also very well written by a number of the Wolf Pack team, Crew Chiefs, Door Gunners, and Pilots. The book cover is designed by our very own Joan Baker and is very professionally done. It is a 7X10 book with 202 pages of action-packed stories that can be read by all members of your families and handed down to generations yet to come.

LIFT & SERVICE PLATOONS BOOK UPDATE

Next is the book about Rat Pack, Bandits, Service Platoon, and the Detachments.

WITH THIS PROJECT WE NEED YOUR HELP!!!! The editors are:

Will McCollum, Rat Pack

Jack Mayhew, Bandits

Lou Lerda and Jim (Mom) Tolbert

Service/Maintenance Platoon and attached Detachment Units.

We would like to finish this task by the 2022 Reunion. Please send us your stories and pictures covering your most interesting (scary, funny, unusual, ect.) missions in the 1st, 2nd, & Service

Platoons. We are looking for the; WE DID WHAT? WE / I DID THAT? stories, and believe us there are lots of them out there. Have you ever heard about the recon team who was rescued from an NVA telephone pole sticking up out of the jungle? Are you aware of a mission in a Rat Pack Ship flown by a Bandit pilot that earned him a recommendation for the MOH? You served in one of the greatest units to ever serve. Tell the world about it. Do not worry about format, grammar, spelling or color of the ink. If you like you may handwrite it on paper and send it to Will or Jack. Contact info is at the end of this newsletter. Just send to any of the above mentioned editors and it will be forwarded to the proper person.

This is the end of the association-sponsored books about your unit. Please do not miss your opportunity to tell your story.

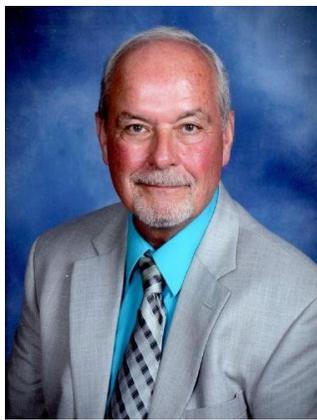
FRONT PAGE HEADER UNIT CRESTS

OK readers, you're probably asking the reason for the Eighth Air Force and 160th SOAR Nightstalkers crests alongside our 281st crest at the top of page one. Well, at this year's reunion in Savannah, we are visiting the 3rd Battalion of the 160th as part of the reunion events. There is also a side trip to the 8th AF National Museum, which is not part of the regular reunion, so make sure to sign up for the bus trip to the 8th AF museum as it is not included in the regular reunion fees. The Savannah area also has a lot of architectural and historical significance, including the Civil War era. So, that being said, come early and stay late, for there are lots of things to see and do!

OBITUARIES

John Castello

Served in 2nd Platoon (Bandits) as a Door Gunner.
7/69 to 4/70



4/28/49 to 7/17/21

Dave Ragans

Served in Maintenance.
12/67 to 11/68



9/23/47 to 5/23/21

Doug Stowe

Served in 1st Platoon (Rat Pack) as a pilot.
10/68 to 9/69



10/11/47 to 4/29/21

Penni Roesner, wife of Dean Roesner, Rat Pack 68-69, died on 6/16/21 after a painful, debilitating, and courageous 29 year battle with cancer. Her will to live and the strength of her fight stood her well as a member of the Roesner and Intruder families.

281st AHC Association Contact Information

THE EXECUTIVE BOARD (Elected)

Wes Schuster, President weschuster@gmail.com

Jeff Murray, VP Tamu73@sbcglobal.net

Dave Mitchell, Secretary djmitch0470@gmail.com

Fred Beck, Treasurer Fred281st@outlook.com

Bain Black, Reunion Chair BainB@roadrunner.com

APPOINTED OFFICERS (Abbreviated list)

Fred Beck, Membership Committee Chairman

fred281st@outlook.com

Brent Gourley, Internet Groups Administrator

bgrlyy@gmail.com

Will McCollum, Assoc. Resident Author

willdanmac@yahoo.com

Jim Baker, Scholarship Committee Chairman

Bakerjw@icloud.com

Jay Hays, Store (PXG) Jhays@haysenterprises.com

Jack Mayhew, Remembrance Committee Chairman

intruder06@me.com

Dean Roesner, Newsletter deanroesner@aol.com



Registration Form – Book by October 4th
281st AHC Association 2021 Reunion
The DeSoto Hotel, Savannah, GA
1-800-239-5118 reservations (Main #912-232-9000)
www.thedesotosavannah.com

November 1-3, 2021, Monday-Wednesday. The hotel will honor our \$159.00 + tax nightly rate for an Oct 31 early arrival as well. Valet Parking will be \$26.00/night.

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|----------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <u>Member#</u> | <u>Last Name:</u> | <u>First Name:</u> |
| <u>Street Address:</u> | <u>City:</u> | <u>State: Zip</u> |
| <u>Phone#</u> | <u>Unit/Plt:</u> | <u>Dates in country:</u> |
| <u>Your email address:</u> | <u>I will arrive on:</u> | |
| <u>Name for Nametag:</u> | <u>Nickname or Callsign:</u> | |

Guest name for Nametag

Guest name for Nametag

REGISTRATION FEES:

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|--|-------------------------------|
| <u>281ST AHC Annual Membership dues</u> | <u>Annual Fee \$25.00=\$</u> |
| <u>Membership Reunion Registration</u> | <u>Member@ \$150.00=\$</u> |
| <u>Guest fee (16 yrs old and up)</u> | <u># guests X \$150.00=\$</u> |
| <u>Children's fee (11-15 yrs old)</u> | <u># guests X \$ 70.00=\$</u> |
| <u>SCHOLARSHIP FUND DONATION</u> | <u>2021 TAX DEDUCTABLE=\$</u> |
| <u>BUS TO 8TH AF MUSEUM</u> | <u>#guests X \$30.00=\$</u> |
| <u>TOTAL CHECK OR MO=\$</u> | |

PAYMENTS: make check or money order payable to: **281ST AHC ASSOCIATION**
Mail payment, registration form, and book hotel no later than October 4, 2021 and send payment and form to:

281st AHC Association
c/o Fred Beck
205 Carey Ct.
Neenah, WI 54956-9208
Tel: 920-558-4127 / email: Fred281st@outlook.com

Please bring your photos, CD's, books, maps and other memorabilia for sharing and/or display.

VOLUNTEER: Registration.....PX.....Hospitality Room.....As Needed.....

Busses can be arranged for Wednesday 1-3:30 PM for the 8th Air Force National Museum.
Minimum of 20 passengers required. See above for transportation costs.