



# 39<sup>TH</sup> ENGINEER BATTALION ALUMNI NEWS



April, 2015

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Sgt. at Arms.....	Mike Male	Reunion Chair.....	Gale Helser

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Some call our retirement years the “The Golden Years”; myself I call them the “Speedy Years” because just yesterday I was celebrating New Years.

There are several things happening that affect the Association this year, mostly that our 39th is being reactivated and will now be part of the 2nd Brigade 101st Airborne Division Air Assault stationed at Fort Campbell, KY. When the 39th ENG BN (CBT) Alumni Association first formed back in 2001, the membership was all Vietnam veterans and we have pretty much continued that way other than a couple of years ago when we made the few remaining WWII veterans whom had served with the 39th HONORARY MEMBERS. Along the way, we have had a few members from the 50’s and the Fort Devens era join our ranks which is when we dropped Vietnam from our name. We continue to grow and look forward to our new Brothers joining our ranks. I am proud to say that all have received the proper welcome and, as an Association, we should feel proud of our contribution to the legacy of the 39th no matter when or where we served. The reactivation of the 39th will take place April 16, 2015 at Fort Campbell; I have sent out by e-mail with the hotel and other information with hopes some of you may be able to attend.

Another thing that we are involved in is the “50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE VIETNAM WAR WELCOME HOME CEREMONY”; as approved by the DOD, this celebration will run from 2015 thru 2025. The Association to be a member of this is required to have at least 2 functions each year which our annual reunions cover half. I have found myself

on the planning committee for the ceremonies to be held May 9, 2015 at the Naval Air Station Fort Worth Joint Reserve Base representing the 39th to complete the requirement. It is my hope that members who live close to the Fort Worth/Dallas area may be able to attend; a flyer is included in the newsletter.

Of course, the 2015 reunion is coming up this October 1st thru 5th in Norfolk, VA. And, as always, we are hoping for a great turnout; Gale will give more information in this newsletter. One thing that will be happening during the reunion is nomination and election of officers as the standing officers 2 year term will expire.

Because we served with the 39th, we are automatically members of the Association. However, it still costs us to operate such as mailing, printing etc. The monies in the general fund are used to curtail the cost of certain events during our reunions which help all our pocket books. It would be of great help if annual dues were paid or even become a LIFETIME Member.

There has been some conversation about the Association having a Challenge Coin and one of our members from the 90’s has sent me a picture of the coin he received at Fort Devens. This is an interesting idea and one that we are researching with our members in hopes of possibly finding someone who could produce them; this would be a great handout at one of our future reunions if the cost is not prohibitive. As with any purchase using the Association’s money, it has to be cleared through the Executive Board which is the association officers before any action is taken. We will keep you posted as we find out more information.

It is with great sadness that I pass along the loss of two of our Brothers and loyal lifetime members:

**Al Bornmann, A & B Co, also HHC, 68-69.**

Passed Feb. 17, 2015.

**Frank Vosenilek, HHC, 71, former Chaplin for the Association. Passed Feb. 17, 2015.**

Please keep our Brothers' families in your prayers; they will be missed more than we ever let them know.

**BROTHERS THEN, BROTHERS NOW,  
BROTHERS FOREVER**

Bill Ray, President  
3<sup>rd</sup> Plt. C Co. 67-68  
Bill39th@sbcglobal.net  
(817) 239-0787 (cell)

## **VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Hello my Brothers and Sisters of the 39th Combat Engineer Battalion Alumni Association. It seems that time is flying by. Wow, only 7 months plus a few days before our Reunion comes around again - this time in Norfolk, VA. I guess time is going by so fast for me for 2 reasons. One, because I am always ready to see all you Blue Bulls again and two, being the old factor. Seems like the older you get, the faster the time goes by.

I'm going to tell on myself and say, "Wow, I had my 69th Birthday the 16th of Jan, 2015." It's been 48 years since I left the 39th in 1967. Where did it all go? I'm just so very glad that I can spend some of what time God gives me on this earth with a bunch of the best Combat Veterans anyone could have the pleasure to know and to have served with.

Shirley and I are at present in Orlando, Florida. We are taking a break from Arkansas cold weather and also trying to kick back a little. On Saturday, the 7th of Feb., we are going to check out of our hotel and plunge deeper into central Florida. We are going to a place called Okeechobee, Florida. Now for the benefit of those of you that don't know, Okeechobee, Florida is where Donald Boney and his wife Donna live; also, Gwen and our main man "Tuff". Wow, sure am looking forward to seeing those guys.

This, my Brothers, is something that would not have happened if it were not for the 39th Reunions.

Now for a big "Blue Bull Welcome" to our New Members and Lifetime Members; it is with great pleasure we welcome you to the Association.

**NEW MEMBERS:**

Louis Agostino Kevin Gerke Thomas Hutcheson  
67-68 91-92 C Co. 65-66

**LIEFTIME MEMBERS:**

Lonnie Jones Stephen Rideout Rick Stradal  
C Co., HHC 67-68 D Co. 69-70 C Co. 69-70

Brothers and Sisters, come out to our next reunion in Norfolk, Virginia. You never know what blessings may be in store for you.

**BROTHERS THEN, BROTHERS NOW**

David Romans, Vice President  
A Co. 66-67  
usrome@live.com  
479-883-3777 (cell)

## **REUNION CHAIR REPORT**

Here we are, closing in on the 2015 reunion in Norfolk, VA and we expect this to be an interesting and enjoyable gathering once again. I am looking forward to renewing friendships and meeting some first time attendees.

If you have not made your plans yet, now would be a good time to do so. We have a block of 60 rooms and are about half filled to date. If you are even thinking about attending, make your hotel reservations as they are cancelable right up to 6:00pm the day prior to arrival. Our deadline for reservations is August 31, 2015. After that date, any rooms not reserved will be turned back to the hotel for resale. Rooms may still be available after that date but the \$99 rate will not be available so **BOOK NOW**. Make your reservations by calling the toll free reservation number 800-325-3535. We are being offered the same rate for 3 days prior and 3 days after our event based on availability, so if you are planning to spend some extra time in the Norfolk area, be sure to reserve early. If you have any difficulty getting rooms for extra days, make your

reservations and then please contact me and I will attempt to get your room at the quoted rate for your additional days.

A little info about our hotel:



The Sheraton Norfolk Waterside Hotel is located in the center of the downtown within walking distance of all of our activities and the historic section of the downtown. You will find many restaurants and shops to keep you busy for an entire day, if your money holds out, that is. Every room will be a harbor view overlooking some of the attractions that we will be visiting as well as the naval armada. Parking is a premium in the downtown area and can cost upwards of \$25 per day but with your reservation comes FREE valet parking with in and out privileges at no cost for those who plan to do some independent sightseeing. Our hospitality room will be located just off the lobby with easy access to the hotel restaurant and city light rail is just out the front door. Every room has free wifi and the hotel is pet friendly.

**Banquet Menu:** Your choice of 1 of these three:

**Free-Range Breast of Chicken** (marinated with fresh thyme and rosemary)

**Roast Sliced Sirloin of Beef** (in a burgundy wine sauce)

**Seared Filet of Salmon** (finished with a lemon beurre blanc sauce)

with Chef's Selection of fresh seasonal vegetables, fresh rolls with sweet butter, Starbucks regular and decaf coffee, hot herbal teas and iced tea, deluxe dessert and our Traditional 39th Sheet Cake. Cost: \$45.00 per person

We will have a Cash Bar available for Social Hour.



On Friday, we're taking the Victory Rover Cruise of the beautiful Elizabeth River and Hampton Roads Harbor. It's a 2-hour tour of the ships and points of interest with a narrative by the Captain.

Some of the highlights of the Tour include:

- Downtown Norfolk and Portsmouth Skylines
- Town Point Park
- Battleship Wisconsin
- BAE and Norshipco Shipyards
- Portsmouth Naval Hospital
- Old Fort Norfolk
- NOAA Headquarters
- Portsmouth Marine Terminal
- Lamberts Point Cargo Docks
- Norfolk Southern Coal Piers
- Maersk/Sea Land Terminal
- Old Dominion University Sailing Center
- Craney Island Fuel Depot
- Norfolk International Terminals

While cruising the smooth waters of the Elizabeth River, you will tour one of the world's busiest sea ports, including the world's largest naval base, home of the Atlantic Fleet:



Destroyers,



Guided Missile Cruisers,



Submarines,



Aircraft Carriers and more.



On Saturday, we will heading out to the Military Aviation Museum in Virginia Beach. We will be attending the 5th Annual "Biplanes and Triplanes" Air

Show. Among the stars of the weekend will be a rare airworthy example of a genuine 1918 Curtiss JN-4D Jenny.

All five hangars will be open for guided tours. There will be WWI planes, food vendors, musical entertainment from 10 am, and you can shop for memorabilia all day long. There will also be over 150 re-enactors on site, representing all theatres of WWI-era operations. Interact with friendly Allied troops at their encampments.

On Sunday, we'll be touring the Nauticus and the Battleship Wisconsin.



The Nauticus is an exciting interactive science and technology center that explores the naval, economic, and nautical power of the sea.



Home of the Battleship *Wisconsin*, Nauticus features Battleship *Wisconsin*-related exhibits, hands-on exhibits, national-caliber traveling exhibits, HD films on a giant screen, sharks, the Hampton Roads Naval Museum, and more!

Brothers then, Brothers now, Brothers forever,  
Gale Helser, Reunion Chair

32423 FM 2925, Rio Hondo, TX 78583  
(galehelser@peoplepc.com)  
(956) 367-0999



**39<sup>th</sup> ENG BN Reunion 2015 – Norfolk, VA Oct.1 – 5, 2015**

**LZ WATERFRONT**

**SHERATON DOWNTOWN NORFOLK, VA**

**[www.SheratonNorfolkwaterfront.com](http://www.SheratonNorfolkwaterfront.com)**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ for name badge \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse/Guest name \_\_\_\_\_ for name badge \_\_\_\_\_

Unit & Years in VN \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell phone \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency contact & Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Registration fee \_\_\_\_\_ \$45 members/ \_\_\_\_\_ \$40 guests Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(Registration includes annual remembrance gift, hospitality supplies, pizza party and beverages & snacks)

Friday Victory Rover Cruise: \$20/person \_\_\_\_\_ number attendees Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(Beverage service is available on the boat) [www.navalbasecruises.com](http://www.navalbasecruises.com)

Saturday Biplanes & Triplanes Air Show: \$ to be determined by number of interested parties.  
Please indicate number in party interested \_\_\_\_\_ Total \$ TBD  
[www.militaryaviationmuseum.org](http://www.militaryaviationmuseum.org)>Air Shows>WWI October 3-4, 2015

Sunday Nauticus and Battleship Wisconsin tour \$18/person \_\_\_\_\_ number attendees Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
[www.nauticus.org](http://www.nauticus.org) or [www.usswisconsin.org](http://www.usswisconsin.org)

Sunday Banquet \$45/person \_\_\_\_\_ number attending Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please select for each person \_\_\_Beef \_\_\_Chicken \_\_\_Salmon)

Total enclosed (min. deposit required to hold all selected events \$100/or pay in full.) Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(fully refundable if canceled prior to Sept. 20, 2015)

Describe any special needs (i.e., room amenities, mobility issues, dietary considerations, etc.)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Arriving via (check one) \_\_\_flying \_\_\_driving  
Shuttles are available from the Airport to the Sheraton for a nominal fee

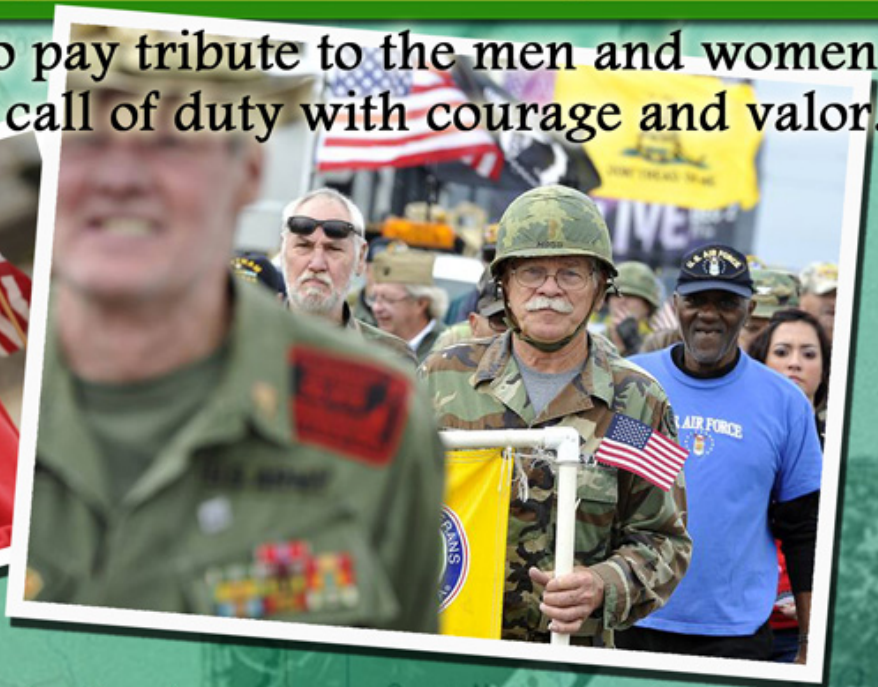
**Mail Reservation Form and payment to:** Gale Helser  
32423 FM 2925  
Rio Hondo, TX 78583

**Make checks payable to:** 39th Eng Bn

*Be sure to visit each website for more information*

# WELCOME HOME

It's never too late to pay tribute to the men and women who answered the call of duty with courage and valor.



All Veterans and their guests are invited to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War at NAS Fort Worth JRB, Texas on MAY 9 (Saturday) gates open at 8:00 a.m.

**WELCOME HOME CEREMONY, GUEST SPEAKERS, POW/MIA WALL TRIBUTE, CLASSIC CAR SHOW, VIETNAM WAR AIRCRAFT / VEHICLES, & MORE**

Vietnam Veterans are a generation of proud Americans who saw our country through one of the most challenging eras we have ever faced. All veterans are invited to the base where a grateful nation will thank and honor all U.S. Veterans of the Vietnam War, including personnel who were held as POWs or who remain Missing in Action or unaccounted for, for their service and sacrifice on behalf of the U.S. and to thank and honor their families.



**For More Information call (817) 782-7815  
Email: [FTWO\\_Information@navy.mil](mailto:FTWO_Information@navy.mil)**



## IN MEMORIAM



**John Albert Bornmann, Jr. ("Al")** passed away peacefully at his home in the Mount Vernon area of Fairfax County, Virginia, on February 17, 2015. The son of John Albert Bornmann, Sr. and Lucille Bolger Briggs Bornmann, Al was born on November 12, 1945. He grew up in New Smyrna Beach, Florida and completed high school there in 1963. In 1967 he was graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point and was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the Army Corps of Engineers. He later

received an MSEE Degree (Electrical Engineering) from the Georgia Institute of Technology, an MBA from Southern Illinois University, and qualified as a Professional Engineer in Virginia and Florida. His first assignment was with the 43rd Engineer Brigade (Construction) at Fort Benning, Georgia. He then served in Vietnam with the 39th Engineer Battalion from July 1968 through June 1969. Other major permanent duty assignments included: Instructor, Professional Engineer Courses, at the U.S. Army Engineer School (Fort Belvoir, VA); Research and Development Coordinator, U.S. Army Mobility Equipment Research and Development Command (Fort Belvoir, VA); Operations Officer, 563rd Engineer Battalion (Stuttgart, Germany); Operations Officer, 7th Engineer Brigade (Stuttgart, Germany); Student, Air Command and Staff College (Montgomery, Alabama); Executive Officer, Plans and Programs Division, Office of the Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Plans for Command, Control, Communications and Computers (Washington, DC). His final assignment was in support of the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Interagency managing critical communications programs. He was awarded the Bronze Star Medal, the Bronze Star Medal with V Device, the Purple Heart, the Meritorious Service Medal (with one oak leaf cluster), the Air Medal, the Army Commendation Medal, several unit citations, and the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Bronze Star. After his retirement from active duty, Al worked for SRA International, Inc. for nearly 23 years, on projects which often supported sensitive missions with which he had prior experience as an Army officer. In 2000, he served as President of the Fort Belvoir Chapter of the Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association (AFCEA). In 2010, he received SRA's Chairman's Award for Honesty and Service.

Al was an enthusiastic and life-long Boy Scout. In high school he earned the rank of Eagle Scout and the God and Country Award, worked as a Boy Scout camp counselor and was a member of the Order of the Arrow. As an adult he served as a leader for Cub Scout Packs, Webelos Dens, and Boy Scout Troops, as a District Commissioner, and received the Silver Beaver award. Later he served as District Chairman, on Woodbadge Staffs, as the institutional representative for Cub Scout and Boy Scout Troops 1509, and as a member of the scuba staff at three National Boy Scout Jamborees. Al served his community in many capacities: as President of the Stratford on the Potomac, Section Four Neighborhood Association; as a Co-Chair of the Mount Vernon Community Citizens Association; as Senior Warden of St. Aidan's Episcopal Church; and on the Steering Committee of the Mount Vernon Neighborhood Friends. Al was a life member of the America Numismatic Association, the National Eagle Scout Association, and

Mensa. He particularly enjoyed singing with and felt privileged to be a part of the West Point Alumni Glee Club.

He was predeceased by his parents, by his infant brother Robert Eugene Bornmann, by his brother-in-law, John Cleveland Allen, Jr., and by his niece, Kimberly Gautier Kitchen. Survivors include his wife of 47 years, Priscilla Gautier Bornmann, his daughter, Kirsten Bornmann Fontenrose; his son, John Albert Bornmann ("Trey"), III; two grandsons, Joiah Avayo Tyler Baril ("Joey") and John Albert Bornmann, IV ("Beau"); his sister, Deborah Bornmann Allen; his brothers, Chris Edward Bornmann and Mark Howard Bornmann; his sister-in-law, Patricia Gautier Kitchen (Edward Charles "Deeno" Kitchen); his nephews John Cleveland Allen, III, Randolph Charles Bornmann, William Gautier Kitchen, and Deeb Paul Kitchen, II (Shannon Alicia Hill Kitchen); and his nieces, Jessica Bornmann Melakian, Christina Lea Bornmann, and Anne-Elizabeth Kitchen Williams (James Albert Williams, II). The extended Bornmann family will always be grateful to Al's friends and neighbors, St. Aidan's Episcopal Church, Thrive at Home and Capital Caring for their many kindnesses, tender care and prayers during the period of his illness and welcomed all to a service celebrating his life on Saturday, February 28, 2015. A graveside service with full military honors will be held on a later date at Arlington National Cemetery. The family suggests that in lieu of flowers, donations in honor of Al's life and memory be made to CAUSE (Comfort for America's Uniformed Services), 4114 Legato Road, Fairfax, VA 22033; the National Capital Area Council, Boy Scouts of America, Marriot Scout Service Center, 9190 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, MD 20814; St. Aidan's Episcopal Church, 8531 Riverside Rd, Alexandria, VA 22308; or the West Point Alumni Glee Club, 4455 Brookfield Corporate Dr, Ste 107, Chantilly, VA 20151.



**Frank Charles Vozenilek (Frank)** passed away on Tuesday, February 17, 2015 at his home. Frank was born on June 19, 1952 to Frank and Frances (Lockhart) Vozenilek in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. He served in the United States Army during the Vietnam Era, retiring after 20 years of service. He was a nurse and a minister. Frank was also an outpost leader for Point Man

International Ministries, helping others with PTSD. Frank enjoyed playing guitar, making jewelry, drawing and writing books. He married Jamie Dolezalek in Mesquite, Texas on August 29, 2001. Funeral services for Frank Charles Vozenilek, 62, were held at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, February 21, 2015 at Meador Funeral Home Chapel in Whitesboro, with Rev. Jody Dyer officiating. Interment was at Dixie Cemetery in Whitesboro. He is survived by his wife, Jamie Vozenilek of Southmayd; two daughters, Michelle Smith and husband Charlie of Kentucky and Kathrine Colleen Petroff of Cedar Rapids, Iowa; two sons, Frank Charles Vozenilek, Jr. and wife Fawn of Cedar Rapids, Iowa and Frank Charles (Tre) Vozenilek, III of Southmayd; five grandchildren, Billy Joe Skaggs, Charlie Skaggs, Jordan Vozenilek, Mariah Vozenilek and Gabriel Petroff; one great-granddaughter; two brothers, James Clark and Mike Clark; sister, Colleen Karr and father, Frank Vozenilek.



**39th Engineer Battalion Alumni**  
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## **CALL NOW – 800-325-3535**

Get your reservations in today! We still have plenty of rooms and our rate of \$99 is good until August 31, 2015. Remember, you can cancel without being charged up until 6 pm the day prior to your arrival. This is a national reservations number.

Once you have made your call, text or email me so I can confirm your reservation.

If you have any difficulty, call me right away!  
galehelser@peoplepc.com or 956-367-0999

## **NEWSLETTER DEADLINE**

**June 30th** for the next newsletter issue.

Please send articles to the editor, Diane Helser at [diane\\_helser@yahoo.com](mailto:diane_helser@yahoo.com) or mail it to Diane Helser, 32423 FM 2925, Rio Hondo, TX 78583. Remember, this is your newsletter and your tool to keep in touch and share information with your Blue Bull brothers.