

The Straphanger Gazette



Volume 17 No. 1

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July-September, 2024

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"Aerial Rocket Artillery"

when called on by those who were in danger, our units were there laying it on the line. We were proud of our Aerial Rocket Artillery Team then and still proud of it now.

The Straphanger Gazette is a quarterly publication of the Aerial Rocket Artillery Association. Issues will be published on or about the 1st of January, April, July and October. Members who have e-mail will receive a copy as an pdf attachment

STILL ROOM TO JOIN THE FUN! DON'T MISS THE BOAT



Jule Szabo

ARA Six

LAST CALL FOR BOARDING OF THE GOOD SHIP REUNION 2024

The deadline has passed to get a cabin at the group discount rate, but there is still room on board for all the fun and frolicking at the ARA 2024 Reunion. As of this publication we are sixty-nine days away from sailing out of Galveston, Texas for five days of fellowship, sunshine, and sea breezes.

At this point we have a total of ten cabins and 19 adventures aboard (medical issues caused one cancellation). We have requested communal seating for meals and a meeting room for continuous fellowship. There are many available shore excursions at our two ports of call, although the availability may dwindle with time. It behooves anyone who wishes to go on one to get their reservation in to the cruise line ASAP.

Since Galveston does not have a airport those who choose to fly to Texas can utilize one of the two in Houston. Due to time constraints, this may require a RON in Houston the day before sailing. So far, it appears, in typical ARA fashion, people are "doing their own thing" ranging from the RON a day earlier, to driving either to Galveston and parking near the pier or RON in a motel in Galveston and going to the pier. In the tradition of 'herding cats' the hosts cannot determine who is doing what but is ready to assist if needed. This writer has made arrangements to stay at the Houston airport motel on September 6 where it is a short ride on the hotel shuttle back to the airport on September 7 to catch arranged transportation to the pier for boarding (about a one hour ride from Houston to Galveston). More explicit information will become available when we are within three weeks of sailing.

The Association has never tried this venue before, but cost and convenience appear to be about the same and isn't life about new adventures? It would be wonderful to see as many old friends as possible at the reunion. If you have not already, get a cabin and join us. Our AAA travel consultant is still Hashmita Babulal at (407) 444 4270 or hbabulal@acg.aaa.com and she can be very helpful.







Unless otherwise noted, all artwork is a gift from Larry Mobley

WARNING FOR ALL MALES FROM ME

when buying a security device for a loved one.

Last weekend I saw something at The Gun Show that sparked my interest. I was looking for a little something different for my wife Dana. What I came across was a 100,000-volt, pocket/purse-sized Taser.

The effects of the Taser were supposed to be short lived, with no long term adverse effect on your assailant, allowing her adequate time to retreat to safety...??

WAY TOO COOL! Long story short, I bought the device and brought it home. I loaded two AAA batteries in the darn thing and pushed the button. Nothing! I was disappointed . I learned, however, that if I pushed the button and pressed it against a metal surface at the same time, I'd get the blue arc of electricity darting back and forth between the prongs.

AWESOME!!! Unfortunately, I have yet to explain to Dana what that burn spot is on the face of her microwave.

Okay, so I was home alone with this new toy, thinking to myself that it couldn't be all that bad with only two AAA batteries, right?

There I sat in my recliner, my cat Leo looking on intently (trusting little soul) while I was reading the directions and thinking that I really needed to try this thing out on a flesh & blood moving target.

I must admit I thought about zapping Leo (for a fraction of a second) and then thought better of it. He is such a sweet cat. But, if I was going to give this thing to my wife to protect herself against a mugger, I did want some assurance that it would work as advertised.

Am I wrong?

So, there I sat in a pair of shorts and a singlet with my reading glasses perched delicately on the bridge of my nose, directions in one hand, and Taser in another.

The directions said that:

a one-second burst would shock and disorient your assailant;

a two-second burst was supposed to cause muscle spasms and a major loss of bodily control;

and a three-second burst would purportedly make your assailant flop on the ground like a fish out of water.

Any burst longer than three seconds would be wasting the batteries.

All the while I'm looking at this little device measuring about 5" long, less than 3/4 inch in circumference (loaded with two itsy, bitsy AAA batteries); pretty cute really, and thinking to myself, 'no possible way!'

What happened next is almost beyond description, but I'll do my best.

I'm sitting there alone, the cat looking on with his head cocked to one side so as to say, 'Don't do it, stupid,' reasoning that a one second burst from such a tiny "lil ole thing" couldn't hurt all that bad.. I decided to give myself a one second burst just for heck of it.

I touched the prongs to my naked thigh, pushed the button, and...

HOLY MOTHER OF GOD. WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION. WHAT THE... !!! I AM CERTAIN I JUST MET JESUS!!!

I'm pretty sure Hulk Hogan ran in through the side door, picked me up in the recliner, then body slammed us both on the carpet, over and over again. I vaguely recall waking up on my side in the fetal position, with tears in my eyes, body soaking wet, both nipples on fire, testicles nowhere to be found, with my left arm tucked under my body in the oddest position, and tingling in my legs! The cat was making meowing sounds I had never heard before, clinging to a picture frame hanging above the fireplace, obviously in an attempt to avoid getting slammed by my body flopping all over the living room.

Note: If you ever feel compelled to 'mug' yourself with a Taser, one note of caution: There is NO such thing as a one second burst when you zap yourself! You will not let go of that thing until it is dislodged from your hand by a violent thrashing about on the floor!

A minute or so later (I can't be sure, as time was a relative thing at that point), I collected my wits (what little I had left), sat up and surveyed the landscape.

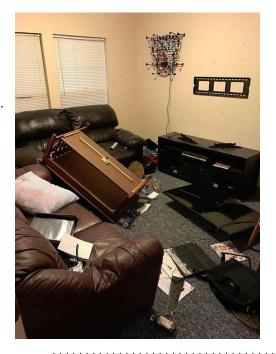
- My bent reading glasses were on the top of the TV.
- The recliner was upside down and about 8 feet or so from where it originally was.

- My triceps, right thigh and both nipples were still twitching.
- My face felt like it had been shot up with Novocain, and my bottom lip weighed 88 lbs.
- I had no control over the drooling.
- Apparently I had crapped in my shorts, but was too numb to know for sure, and my sense of smell was gone.
- I saw a faint smoke cloud above my head, which I believe came from my hair.

I'm still looking for my testicles and I'm offering a significant reward for their safe return!

PS: My wife can't stop laughing about my experience, loved the gift and now regularly threatens me with it!

Credited to Jesse Hobby (Who would never do such a thing).





Rodger McAlister reports from the Huey Museum

This is where our \$\$\$ went to help build this hanger in Peru, IN.

Victory Cocktails

How Military Cocktails Won Over the World

If you've ever attended a military ball, you may have, well, mixed feelings about alcohol and the armed forces.

With their concoctions of dubious additives, punch bowl ceremonies can honor those with the courage to serve and be served. If you look beyond questionable cauldrons, however, there's a rich heritage of battle and libations. Here's a brief distillation of the part militaries have played in conceiving and popularizing some world-famous drinks, starting with elixir that have intoxicated fighting forces for centuries.

GIN – As Homer Simpson once famously said about beer, gin would be "the cause of, and solution to, all of life's problems" for the British. Many trace the introduction of gin into England to the Thirty Years War of the 17th century. English troops fought alongside the Dutch, who introduced them to a juniper berry- infused liquor called "genever", which seemed to calm and increase bravery before battle. England imported this "Dutch courage," eventually anglicized to "gen," then "gin" when folks were too drunk to pronounce its full name, and King William III (originally of Orange, and a Dutchman) promoted it.

A "gin craze" began in the 18th century with a tax break on spirits production and France restricting the flow of wine and brandy during the trade war. Folks were guzzling straight gin-sometime gallons of it per year. Gin famously became half of a quintessential cocktail borne out of the needs of field officers (more on this later).

RUM – While the British were actively involved across the English Channel, their ships also made their way to the Indian subcontinent, Southeast Asia, and the Caribbean Sea. Trips to the New World during the British sugar rush of the mid-17th century brought back rum: a cheap, plentiful tipple that quickly became a staple of the British navy. Wayne Curtis, in his book And a Bottle of Rum: A History of the New World in Ten Cocktails, explains the conditions that led to this popularity: "Drinking water was exceedingly difficult to store on long ocean voyages, especially in the tropics: It would become algae-ridden and musty in its casks. Beer was a reasonable alternative: The modest alcohol content kept it from fouling, but the taste tended to go off, and sailors commonly groused." The British sailors had long had a daily beer ration for morale, but rum became the common salve at sea because it was less perishable, more potent, and took up less valuable space.

Tod Thrasher, owner of Tiki TNT and Thrasher's Rum on the Wharf in Washington, D.C., distills his own take on continental rum that he puts in clarified grog with lemon verbena tea and soda water. He said rum may have its own health benefit for sailors (and contemporary fans). "Rum not only evolves in the barrel, making it an ongoing experience, but there are probiotics that happen in molasses and the fermentation that kicks them up. It's the healthiest spirit you can drink, as long as you don't add a lot to it."

GROG – Take, for instance, grog – no, not the dangerous fruity Navy Grog full on fruit wedges and mint sprigs you find in a tiki bar, though even this has a military connection. It was invented by Don Beach, a.k.a. Ernest Raymond Beaumont Gantt, who was a lieutenant colonel in the Army Air Forces during World War II and appropriated the name grog to make the sweet but stiff cocktail sound hearty and more appealing for men to drink. The kind of grog found at Don the Beachcomber or Trader Vic's can be one of the most inebriating drinks on the menu, which is the opposite of the original's intention.

Original grog came about when Adm. Edward Vernon of the British Royal Navy – nicknamed Old Grog for the Grogram fabric of his weathered jacket – saw his men falling prey (and sometimes falling down) to the seduction of punch houses and potent Jamaican rum. He couldn't take away the "daily tot" for fear of mutiny, so in 1740 he called for the rum to be diluted with water in a 1:3 or 1:4 ratio. He also instructed sailors to add lime juice and sugar (plentiful to those traversing the tropics) to make it more palatable.

As in many drinks of the time, limes did more than add a refreshing sharpness. The vitamin C in citrus helped combat scurvy, hence the insistence of freshly squeezed juice (and the subsequent nickname "limeys" for British sailors.

WHISKEY – The British may have controlled many trade routes until the 18th century, but they never established the monopoly on mixology. Across the Atlantic, colonial tavern keepers were mixing various things into rum, whether West Indies or the more cheaply made New England product. When scarcity of molasses, among other factors, meant they couldn't get rum they had

whiskey, which may have saved this country. "It was mostly whiskey that got Americans to Valley Forge," said David Wondrich, cocktail historian and James Beard Award-winning author of Imbibe! and Punch: The Delights (and dangers) of the Flowing Bowl. "There was always a spirit ration in the American army early on...to maintain health and energy. Again, it was a motivator...a winter warmer."

And it could simultaneously clean a wound and act as anesthesia.

This article was taken from the July 2021 issue of Military Officer and is rather long. The Mixed Drink portion will be published in the Oct/Nov/Dec issue of the Straphanger.

Submitted by:

Jesse L. Hobby

Armed Falcon 29 Fox 1







EDITOR'S NOTE: They say it is a small world, but it is big enough for many to pass like ships in the night. Although we were in the same place at the same time, neither of us can recall meeting in Vietnam. However, our most recent addition to the Association, has tales to tell that may bring back our own memories. I will start with Jerry's bio and go on to share some of his accounts of life in "The Great Green Jungle", written for his children to know "what Daddy did in the war".



COL Gerald P. Bijold

Colonel Bijold's initial assignment was as Executive Officer and later the Commander of B Battery, 2nd Battalion, 30th Field Artillery (Honest John) at Fort Sill. After helicopter flight school he served as an Aerial Rocket Artillery Platoon Leader with 1st Cavalry Division Artillery, Vietnam. He returned to the States as an Instructor Pilot and later Commander of H Battery, 18th Field Artillery (105mm towed), Fort Rucker, Alabama. During a second tour in Vietnam Colonel Bijold served as an Air Cavalry Troop Platoon Commander with the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment.

His subsequent Field Artillery assignments included Executive Officer of 1st Battalion, 19th Field Artillery (155mm SP) and S-4 DIVARTY, 4th Infantry Division. Colonel Bijold also served as Personnel Officer, DPCA at Fort Sill; Area Commander US Army Recruiting Command, Los Angeles; S-2, S-3 and S-4 of 4th Aviation Battalion, 4th Infantry Division and Plans Officer, C3, Combined Field Army Korea. Later at Fort Carson, Colorado he served as AFSCOORD, 4th Infantry Division and Executive Officer, 4th DISCOM.

His career culminated as the Director of Supply, Ammunition and Transportation, Depot System Command, Letterkenny Depot, Pennsylvania.

Colonel Bijold's decorations include the Legion of Merit, the Distinguished Flying Cross (with Oak Leaf Cluster), Purple Heart, Meritorious Service Medal (four Oak Leaf Clusters), Air Medal (twenty-nine awards), Air Medal with "V" device (three awards), Army Commendation Medal with "V" device, and the Army Commendation medal (two Oak Leaf Clusters).

Two 1st Cavalry Division Chaplains wanted an Air Medal

Some true stories are so unusual they defy being duplicated. This is one of them.

I was a 1st Lieutenant Platoon Leader in Battery B, 2/20 th Artillery (Aerial Rocket Artillery) in South Vietnam from July 1967 until getting wounded in April 1968 and medevac'd to the US. We flew UH-1B "Huey" helicopters with pods of 24 rockets on each side and a crew chief/door gunner with an M60 machine gun. Our missions were to support other aircraft inserting and extricating combat troops and give fire support to ground troops in contact with the enemy. We also provided cover for other ground combat operations including mortar patrol for fire support when the enemy conducted night attacks. One evening two Chaplains approached me who wished to earn an air medal. To qualify they would need 25 flight hours of combat missions as aerial observers. I said they were welcome to fly with us to obtain the air medal on the normally quiet mission of mortar patrol. I warned them that we could take enemy fire while patrolling which had included us taking a hit in the rotor blade a few nights earlier with random enemy AK-47 fire we often took. We might also be called to provide counter fire for enemy mortar attacks or provide fire support if ground troops came under direct attack. They understood and still wished to get an air medal.

The Bong Son plain is a coastal area about 30 miles north to south with the South China Sea to the east, a river to the south and three sides of mountains. We began the mortar patrol around midnight with beautiful calm weather and clear visibility. About 15 minutes into our patrol a friendly unit came under intense enemy attack at the base of the mountains south of the river. Frequent tracer rounds lit up the clear sky along with parachute flares.

Turning towards the action I called to scramble my wing ship (sleep to airborne would take 3-4 minutes). I then contacted the ground unit under attack that had already called a "fire mission" for our support. I briefed the two observer Chaplains that we would be making steep rocket dives followed by hard left turns so our door gunner could provide machine gun suppression since the enemy would be firing at us.

By the second rocket run my wing ship was on station and we alternated attacking the enemy positions. I looked back after the next rocket run to see how the Chaplains were doing. One was squeezing a rosary so tight I thought it would break. The other had a death grip on a small camouflage bible.

After expending our rockets we returned to base camp and rearmed and refueled. We were then on stand by for future fire missions. I then had time to tell the Chaplains I would write up their 1 hour observer flight time towards the 25 hours they needed for an air medal.

The Chaplains decided not to pursue the air medal, gave us a blessing and walked away into the night.

Jerry Bijold

Jan 2022

MORE OF THE WIT AND WISDOM OF LARRY MOBLEY

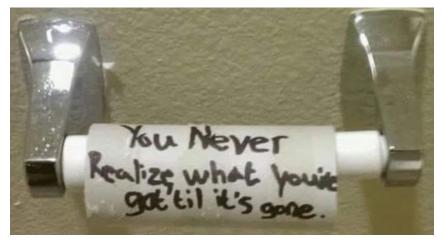


NO MATTER HOWBIG AND BAD YOU ARE, WHEN A TWO YEAR OLD HANDS YOU A TOY PHONE, YOU ANSWER IT









THE YEARS AFTER THE FALL OF ROME WERE CALLED THE DARK AGES BECAUSE THERE WERE TOO MANY KNIGHTS.

Don't blame Larry for this one.



"Be Not Conformed....."

In 1994, the incomparable Kingston Trio released the "The Merry Minuet" which told us "the whole world is festering with unhappy souls". Not much has changed sine then; actually since the Fall of Man some 6,000 years ago. Our beloved republic is in a political crisis over the options between the apparent candidates for the White House, an unending list of recriminations against one another and everybody in general, war and oppression across the globe, a series of meteorological upheavals of questionable origin, the ever-present plethora of the poor and starving, and the never-ending struggle of one group trying to convert another group to their worldview. The Trio offered, as a final solution (unlikely due to detente, but still possible) the inadvertent triggering of a "mushroom -shaped cloud" yet there are other scenarios available.

As we stand at the corner of Discouragement Ally and Expectation Avenue, we have the choice (through the same *Free Will* which got us into trouble in the first place) to follow the directions clearly posted on the path to a better life and place, or take the more glittery and seductive road to a lesser destination. One of the first important lessons we are taught in flight school is that we must fly the plane, not hang on to the tail and let it carry us wherever. A second is that that aircraft will kill you if you don't listen to the first lesson. Our destiny is not controlled by some mystic *Karma*, but rather is carefully laid out in the *User's Manual* (The Bible—Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth.

From the time Adam and Eve <u>chose</u> to disobey their Creator's instructions (called sinning) until now, what was perfect has been distorted into an ever -evolving struggle for existence; punctuated by the love, sacrifice and intervention of that same Creator who never gives up on mankind. In the Book of Judges we read how "at that time each man did that which was right in his own eyes" until disaster struck and God had to intervene with leaders to get His children back on track. One of the created (Satan) is determined to do as much mischief as he can (goes about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour), knowing full swell that he will lose in the end but wanting to take as many as he can with him to damnation. He is the Father of Lies, the truth is net in him, and he never sleeps when there is yet time to attempt to thwart God's plan.

All of the ills of this world are remediable through the love of God and acceptance of His love, instructions, and commandments. An honest look at history, the complexity of the world around us, and an acceptance of the reality that we are the created, not the Creator will clarify the truth and our worldview. Whatever is beyond our correcting will be taken care of by the one who made it all in the first place.

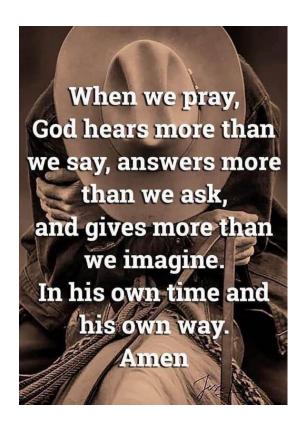
Asa (Doc) Talbot Chaplain and Editor

Poster found in a Church in France... (translated):

"When you enter this church it may be possible that you hear "the call of God".

However, it is unlikely that He will call you on your mobile.

Thank you for turning off your phones. If you want to talk to God, enter, choose a quiet place and talk to Him. If you want to see Him, send Him a text while driving."



Ladies of the Association

Our local newspaper regularly carries a column by Len Robbins and having followed his input for a number of years I am convinced that he is writing about actual life experiences because you just can't keep making this stuff up.

In the April/May/June 2022 issue of the "Straphanger" I published an article entitled "WAYS TO GET RID OF UNWANTED MEN" in response to a request from one of my nieces for ways to warding off pesky men using old pick-up lines. It was written by Len Robbins.

For this issue of the "Straphanger" I found an older article he had published from 2015. I think you will find it amusing.

Pick – up lines for guys who can't dance

No wonder "Dancing With The Stars" was so popular.

This from a study by Rutgers University and University of Washington. "Chicks dig dudes that can dance."

According to the study, men who can twirl, twist, and tango attract more women and more desirable women, than their lead-footed counterparts. Now we know why Tommy Tunes is such a ladies' man. But most men aren't blessed with such twinkle toes. They have to attract women the old-fashioned way – their mastery of the language of love; or loads of cash.

For those men who are still looking and who are mired with two left feet, or in poverty, I have compiled some of the best pick-up lines ever uttered for your romantic quest. And by "best," I also mean "worst." Just in the nick of time they are:

"Excuse me, I'm from the FBI – Fine Body Investigators. You're under arrest."

"Excuse me, but I think I just dropped something - My Jaw."

"If your parents hadn't met, I'd be crying right now."

"Your daddy must be a drug dealer – cause you're dope,"

"Baby, your feet must be tired, cause you've been running through my mind."

"Good evening, may a thorn sit down among the roses."

"Can I borrow a quarter? I want to call my mother and tell her I just met the girl of my dreams." (This is only effective on women over fifty)

"If you were a hamburger at McDonald's, you would be McGorgeous."

"Are you from Tennessee? Because you're the only ten I see."

"I'd marry your cat just to get in your family."

"Pardon me, but have you seen my Nobel Prize lying around here somewhere."

"Are you accepting applications for your fan club? I'd like to be President."

"My name isn't Elmo, but you can tickle me anytime."

"You look a lot like my future wife."

"Hello. My name is Doug. That's God spelled backwards with a little bit of YOU wrapped up in it."

"Do you believe in love at first sight? Or should I walk by again?"

(After checking her shirt tag) "Yep, just as I thought. Made in heaven."

"The Hershey factory makes a million kisses a day. I just want one from you right now."

You're so good looking I want to kiss your daddy.'

"Do you know why the sky is so gray? All the blue is in your eyes."

"Somebody call the fire department, cause you are smoking hot."

"Did it hurt when you fell from heaven?"

"Pardon me miss. I seem to have lost my phone number. Can I borrow yours?"

"You're so fine I want to throw you on a plate and sop you up with a biscuit."

"Can I take your picture? I want to show Santa what I want for Christmas."

"I was so enchanted by your beauty that I ran into a wall. Can I have your name and phone number for insurance purposes?"

"Would you like to dance? No? Oh, I'm sorry you must've misheard me. I said, "You look fat in those pants."

Man, am I glad I'm married. Must have been my dancing.

Gloria Hobby Falconess 6X









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AERIAL ROCKET ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION

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Check Date ____