



# The Straphanger Gazette



Volume 12 No. 1

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July—August, 2019

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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

# D MINUS TWO MONTHS TO SAN DIEGO AND A GREAT REUNION! ARE YOU ON BOARD?



*President's Corner*

**Input not available by publication time**

## HERE IS THE LAST WORD ON THE 2019 REUNION



The Handlery Hotel,

As I write to you, we are only about two months from our San Diego Reunion. It is important to note that the Handlery Hotel has a cut-off date of Sunday, August 11<sup>th</sup>. A reservation after this date will not be discounted and based on an “as available” basis. If you are a golfer, the hotel is adjacent to the Riverwalk Golf Club. It offers a full 18 hole resort style

full length par 72 hole course. For more information, visit

<https://riverwalkgc.com/index.htm> or call (619) 296 – 4653.



Casa Guadalajara

We need to fill out the Reunion Registration Form with a check and send it to our Finance Officer, Herbert Hirst. We are usually slow getting these forms sent, but it is really helpful for planning dinners and the events.

I look forward to seeing everyone and with our special guests and some things our President, Clovis Jones, has arranged for it should be a very memorable event.

Your hosts,

Dave and Pat Borgeson

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### Thoughts of the famous as we get ready for the reunion

**"Sometimes, when I reflect on all the beer I drink, I feel ashamed. Then I look into the glass and think about the workers in the brewery and all of their hopes and dreams. If I did not drink this beer, they might be out of work and their dreams would be shattered. I think, it is better to drink this beer & let dreams come true, than be selfish & worry about my liver." *Babe Ruth***

**"When I read about the evils of drinking, I gave up reading." *Paul Hornin***



**"24 hours in a day and 24 beers in a case. Coincidence? I think not!" *H. L. Mencken***

**"When we drink, we get drunk When we get drunk, we fall asleep. When we fall asleep, we commit no sin. When we commit no sin, we go to heaven. So, let's all get drunk and go to heaven." *George Bernard Shaw***

**"Beer is proof that God loves us and wants us to be happy." *Benjamin Franklin***

**"Without question, the greatest invention in the history of mankind is beer. Oh, I grant you that the wheel was also a fine invention, But the wheel does not go nearly as well with pizza." *Dave Barry***

**"Beer: Helping ugly people have sex since 3000 B.C." *W. C. Fields***

**"Remember ' I ' before ' E ' except in Budweiser" *Prof. Irwin Cory***

**To some it is a six-pack. To me, it is a Support Group. Salvation in a can." *Leo Durocher***

**One night at *Cheers*, a TV Sitcom, *Cliff Clavin* said to his buddy, Norm Peterson: "Well, ya see, Normy, it's like this .. A herd of buffalo can only move as fast as the slowest buffalo. And when the herd is hunted, it is the slowest and weakest ones at the back that are killed first. This natural selection is good for the herd as a whole, because the general speed and health of the whole group keeps improving by the regular killing of the weakest members. In much the same way, the human brain can only operate as fast as the slowest brain cells. Excessive intake of alcohol, as we know, kills brain cells. But, naturally, it attacks the slowest and weakest brain cells first. In this way, regular consumption of beer eliminates the weaker brain cells, making the brain a faster and more efficient machine. That's why you always feel smarter after a few beers!"**

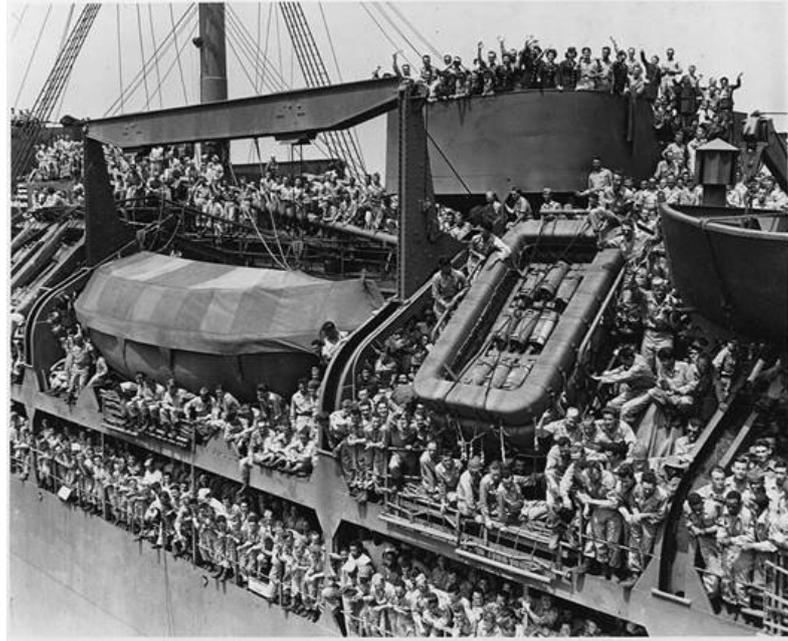


# The Magic Carpet That Brought Everybody Home – WWII



(Courtesy of our Vietnam War combat vet, Mike Collins, this is how my Dad got home in '45.)

U.S. military experienced an unimaginable increase during World War II. In 1939, there were 334,000 servicemen, not counting the Coast Guard. In 1945, there were over 12 million, including the Coast Guard. At the end of the war, over 8 million of these men and women were scattered overseas in Europe, the Pacific and Asia. Shipping them out wasn't a particular problem but getting them home was a massive logistical headache. The problem didn't come as a surprise, as Army Chief of Staff General George C. Marshall had already established committees to address the issue in 1943.



Soldiers returning home on the *USS General Harry Taylor* in August 1945

When Germany fell in May 1945, the U.S. Navy was still busy fighting in the Pacific and couldn't assist. The job of transporting 3 million men home fell to the Army and the Merchant Marine. 300 Victory and Liberty cargo ships were converted to troop transports for the task. During the war, 148,000 troops crossed the Atlantic west to east each month; the rush home ramped this up to 435,000 a month over 14 months



Hammocks crammed into available spaces aboard the *USS Intrepid*

In October 1945, with the war in Asia also over, the Navy started chipping in, converting all available vessels to transport duty. On smaller ships like destroyers, capable of carrying perhaps 300 men, soldiers were told to hang their hammocks in whatever nook and cranny they could find. Carriers were particularly useful, as their large open hangar decks could house 3,000 or more troops in relative comfort, with bunks, sometimes in stacks of five welded or bolted in place.



Bunks aboard the Army transports *SS Pennant*

The Navy wasn't picky, though: cruisers, battleships, hospital ships, even LSTs (Landing Ship, Tank) were packed full of men yearning for home. Two British ocean liners under American control, the *RMS Queen Mary* and *Queen Elizabeth*, had already served as troop transports before and continued to do so during the operation, each capable of carrying up to 15,000 people at a time, though their normal, peacetime capacity was less than 2,200. Twenty-nine ships were dedicated to transporting war brides: women married to American soldiers during the war.

The Japanese surrender in August 1945 came none too soon, but it put an extra burden on *Operation Magic Carpet*. The war in Asia had been expected to go well into 1946 and the Navy and the War Shipping Administration were hard-pressed to bring home all the soldiers who now had to get home earlier than anticipated. The transports carrying them also had to collect numerous POWs from recently liberated Japanese camps, many of whom suffered from malnutrition and illness.



Troops performing a lifeboat drill onboard the *Queen Mary* in December 1944, before *Operation Magic Carpet*



U.S. soldiers recently liberated from Japanese POW camps

The time to get home depended a lot on the circumstances. *USS Lake Champlain*, a brand new *Essex*-class carrier that arrived too late for the war, could cross the Atlantic and take 3,300 troops home a little under 4 days and 8 hours. Meanwhile, troops going home from Australia or India would sometimes spend months on slower vessels

There was enormous pressure on the operation to bring home as many men as possible by Christmas 1945. Therefore, a sub-operation, *Operation Santa Claus*, was dedicated to the purpose. Due to storms at sea and an overabundance of soldiers eligible for return home, however, Santa Claus could only return a fraction in time and still not quite home but at least to American soil. The nation's transportation network was overloaded: trains heading west from the East Coast were on average 6 hours behind schedule and trains heading east from the West Coast were twice that late.



Hangar of the *USS Wasp* during the operation

Many freshly discharged men found themselves stuck in separation centers but faced an outpouring of love and friendliness from the locals. Many townsfolk took in freshly arrived troops and invited them to Christmas dinner in their homes. Others gave their train tickets to soldiers and still others organized quick parties at local train stations for men on layover. A Los Angeles taxi driver took six soldiers all the way to Chicago; another took another carload of men to Manhattan, the Bronx, Pittsburgh, Long Island, Buffalo and New Hampshire. Neither of the drivers accepted a fare beyond the cost of gas.



The crowded flight deck of the *USS Saratoga*. The ship transported home a total of 29,204 servicemen during *Operation Magic Carpet*, more than any other ship.



Overjoyed troops returning home on the battleship *USS Texas*

All in all, though, the Christmas deadline proved untenable. The last 29 troop transports carrying some 200,000 men from the China-India-Burma theatre, arrived to America in April, 1946, bringing *Operation Magic Carpet* to an end, although an additional 127,000 soldiers took until September to return home and finally lay down the burden of war.

*Contributed by Jesse Hobby*

INTERVIEWER : SO, TELL  
ME ABOUT YOURSELF.

ME : I'D RATHER NOT..I  
KINDA WANT THIS JOB.

©REBEL CIRCUS

If you're sitting in  
public and a stranger  
takes the seat next  
to you, just stare  
straight ahead and  
say, "Did you bring  
the money?"

WHEN SOMEONE ASKS  
WHAT I DID OVER THE  
WEEKEND, I SQUINT AND  
ASK, "WHY, WHAT DID YOU  
HEAR??"

# Think about the attitude of America

Love him or loathe him, he nailed this one right on the head...

Rush Limbaugh: I think the vast differences in compensation between victims of the September 11 casualty and those who die serving our country in Uniform are profound.... No one is really talking about it either, because you just don't criticize anything having to do with September 11.

Well, I can't let the numbers pass by because it says something really disturbing about the entitlement mentality of this country.

If you lost a family member in the September 11 attack, you're going to get an average of **\$1,185,000.00**.... The range is a minimum guarantee of **\$250,000.00**, all the way up to **\$4.7 million**...

If you are a surviving family member of an American soldier killed in action, the first check you get is a **\$6,000.00** direct death benefit, half of which is taxable... Next, you get **\$1,750.00** for burial costs.....

If you are the surviving spouse, you get **\$833.00** a month until you remarry or die.... And there's a payment of **\$211.00** per month for each child **under 18**....When the child hits 18, those payments come to a screeching halt.

Keep in mind that some of the people who are getting an average of **\$1.185 million** up to **\$4.7 million** are complaining that it's not enough.... Their deaths were tragic, but for most, they were simply in the wrong place at the wrong time...

Soldiers put themselves in harm's way **FOR ALL OF US**, and they and their families know the dangers....(Actually, soldiers are put in harm's way by politicians and commanding officers.)

We also learned over the weekend that some of the victims from the Oklahoma City bombing have started an organization asking for the same deal that the September 11 families are getting....

In addition to that, some of the families of those bombed in the embassies are now asking for compensation as well.....

You see where this is going, don't you...? Folks, this is part and parcel of over 50 years of entitlement politics in this country... It's just really sad.... Every time a pay raise comes up for the military, they usually receive next to nothing of a raise.... Now the green machine is in combat in the Middle East while their families have to survive on food stamps and live in low-rent housing....Make sense..?

However, our own U.S. Congress voted themselves a raise. Many of you don't know that they only have to be in Congress one time to receive a pension that is more than **\$15,000.00** per month....

If some of the military people stay in for 20 years and get out as an E-7, they may receive a pension of **\$1,000 per month**, and the very people who placed them in harm's way receives a pension of **\$15,000.00** per month....

**I would like to see our elected officials pick up a weapon and join ranks before they start cutting out benefits and lowering pay for our sons and daughters who are now fighting...**

"When do we finally do something about this..?"

Contributed by Larry Mobley



## *Wait! There is yet hope.*

Trista Pence, a 15 yr. old student from Broadway, VA was the June speaker at Chapter 1061 of the Vietnam Veterans of America, and presented her advocacy program on Child abduction. Trista is a member of the Family, Career and Community Leaders of America. Two years ago she presented her advocacy program on Veterans health issues to the Chapter. This extremely well-informed and poised young woman has won silver and gold medals in National competition. She is currently, advocating for a minimum jail term of 2 years and a maximum fine of \$100,000 for child abductors. On June 28 she presented her project at the National FCCL competition in California and the Chapter took up a collection to assist her with \$370. Trista gives us all hope for the future as she uses her time and talent to benefit others and advocate for the needy.

**Remember, if you lose a sock in the dryer, it comes back as a Tupperware lid that doesn't fit any of your containers.**

## *And still more hope....*

This article was written by a college student by the name of Alyssa Ahlgren, who's in grad school for her MBA. It's a short article but definitely worth a read.

"College Student"

My Generation Is Blind to the Prosperity Around Us. I'm sitting in a small coffee shop near Nokomis trying to think of what to write about. I scroll through my news feed on my phone looking at the latest headlines of Democratic candidates calling for policies to "fix" the so-called injustices of capitalism.

I put my phone down and continue to look around. I see people talking freely, working on their MacBooks, ordering food they get in an instant, seeing that we live in the most privileged time in the most prosperous nation and we've become completely blind to it.

Vehicles, food, technology, freedom to associate with whom we choose. These things are so ingrained in our American way of life we don't give them a second thought. We are so well off here in the United States that our poverty line begins 31 times above the global average. Thirty. One. Times. Virtually no one in the United States is considered poor by global standards.

Yet, in a time where we can order a product off Amazon with one click and have it at our doorstep the next day, we are unappreciative, unsatisfied, and ungrateful. Our un-appreciation is evident as the popularity of socialist policies among my generation continues to grow. Democratic Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez recently said to Newsweek talking about the millennial generation, "An entire generation, which is now becoming one of the largest electorates in America, came of age and never saw American prosperity."

Never saw American prosperity! Let that sink in.

When I first read that statement, I thought to myself, that was quite literally the most entitled and factually illiterate thing I've ever heard in my 26 years on this earth. Many young people agree with her, which is entirely misguided. My generation is being indoctrinated by a mainstream narrative to actually believe we have never seen prosperity.

I know this first hand, I went to college, let's just say I didn't have the popular opinion, but I digress. Why then, with all of the overwhelming evidence around us, evidence that I can even see sitting at a coffee shop, do we not view this as prosperity? We have people who are dying to get into our country. People around the world destitute and truly impoverished.

Yet, we have a young generation convinced they've never seen prosperity, and as a result, elect politicians dead set on taking steps towards abolishing capitalism. Why? The answer is this, my generation has only seen prosperity. We have no contrast. We didn't live in the great depression, or live through two world wars, the Korean War, The Vietnam War or see the rise and fall of socialism and communism.

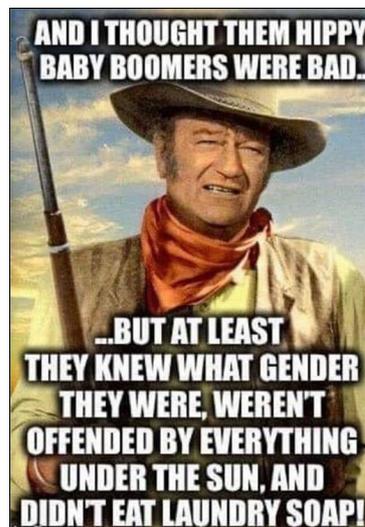
We don't know what it's like to live without the internet, without cars, without smartphones. We don't have a lack of prosperity problem.

**We have an entitlement problem, an ungratefulness problem, and it's spreading like a plague."**

**"The main vice of capitalism is the uneven distribution of prosperity".**

**" The main vice of socialism is the even distribution of misery".**

**Winston Churchill**



## OPPORTUNITIES TO HELP THE FAMILIES OF OUR FRIENDS.

### Forwarded by Bert Toepel:

Recently, I received an email from a Victoria (Stueber) Chester. Her aunt had sent her a box of letters that Victoria's father, former Army SGT Arnold J. Stueber, Jr., had sent to his parents when he was in Vietnam with 2/20 ARA. Victoria was (and still is) searching for people that her father mentioned in his letters. Apparently, my name was among them and Victoria found me via a circuitous route thru Habitat for Humanity. I responded, much to her relief, and we have communicated a few times. SGT Stueber worked in the battalion TOC in communications and I didn't spend a lot of time there and didn't get to know him. Victoria advised that he had flown with several of the officers that worked there, including me. Although I don't remember SGT Stueber specifically, I would like to help his daughter. SGT Arnold, her father, didn't talk about Vietnam, and she is searching for information about him at the time he was there. Arnold died at age 47—a young age—of cardiac arrest, and his five children ranged in age from 10 to 20 at the time. I sent her some photos of the battalion area of 1971 and some narrative of what it was like there.

Question for the newsletter editor: Would it be appropriate for the ARA newsletter to ask anyone that knew or worked with SGT Stueber to contact me for the purpose of contacting his daughter? It would be good to find someone that she could talk with or write to. They can call my home phone number (541) 242-5850 or use my email: [mbtoepel@msn.com](mailto:mbtoepel@msn.com).

While we're at it, I have one more personal item. On 2/13/1971 I was involved in a serious CS gas incident that resulted in burns of both hands of the crew chief, Sp-4 Morgan. I would like to get his current address and confirm that he is the one who was given an impact purple heart and had it retrieved the next day because the burns were not caused by an armed enemy; however, we were making a dispersal run against an armed enemy when it happened. I recently read the criteria, and I'm convinced he now qualifies and I would like to make it happen. Unfortunately, I have no idea where or how to contact Sp-4 Morgan. Can you help me on this one also?

Springtime is finally happening in the great Pacific Northwest. We had a week of it several weeks ago interspersed with cooler weather. Warm sunshine after temperatures in the 60's is a real treat. Mildred and I have been living in a retirement home in Eugene for a bit over three years. We enjoy good health and would like to think, as our dermatologist put it, we're aging gracefully. As you well know, a visual examination doesn't tell all!

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### Forwarded by Dave Borgeson

Dear Sirs,

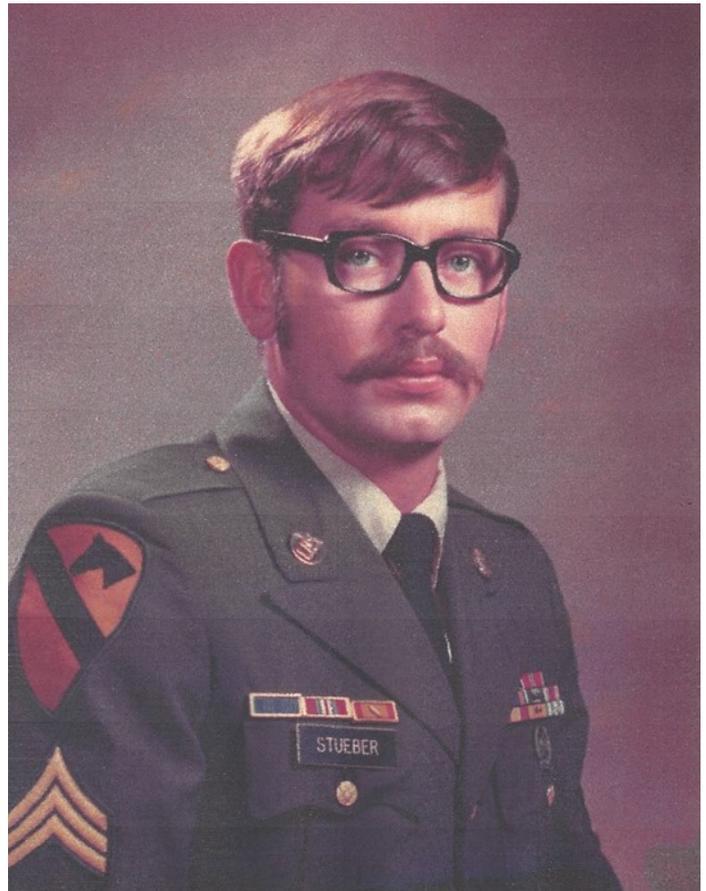
I found you on the internet with a little help from a fellow soldier of my brother's who is helping me with my project; the project is a tribute to my brother who served in the A/2/20th as a Crew Chief and Door Gunner, and I see a couple of pictures of him on your website which surprised and delighted me!

I'm aware of your upcoming reunion and just thought I'd reach out. I know your keynote has been set, I'm very familiar with Joe Galloway as he lives in my hometown of Concord, NC! I wondered if you have a need for another, smaller time slot speaker for your event. I do not charge for the speaking, just minimal travel expenses would be needed.

Allow me to share a little about my project, to see if you think it's a good fit for your event. I've shared my project with other veteran groups recently and the response has been very positive.

My brother was on active duty in Vietnam in 1967-1969 and I have 99 letters he wrote home that I am publishing; it will be the largest collection of private letters from a single soldier, and straight from the open helicopter door in the 1st Air Cavalry. His is the voice of every teenage soldier, and he shares the raw truth and naivety of a young boy's war. Sharing this collection is prompting Veterans to SPEAK of Vietnam, both the fun and the fear, the common emotions that aligned with most everyone in uniform at the front lines of this war.

Let me know if you'd like to consider having me speak at your event. The purpose of my speaking is to share my brother's story, but the larger message is resilience. "Faith in Valor" is typically my speech title, and I speak of having faith in your brave service history, helping to find and speak your own voice, embracing your own memories and sharing them for posterity and legacy, and in the process healing continues to happen. I've seen it every time I share my brother's words.



This is more importantly, an opportunity for me to thank every veteran I can possibly meet, and welcome them home. My big brother would have wanted me to speak for him, as the war stole his voice and ultimately took his life.

Thank you for your consideration.

*Tracy Himes*

*Hockey Mom - Columnist - Author - Public Speaker*

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If there's any way to identify the other men in the photos with my brother, it would be quite helpful. I've never seen colorful, front line photos of my brother at war and never knew they existed. I'm not sure if you can tell me who submitted them or anything more about them, but as I go to "Memories" tab, the first 2 photos include him.

I've attached them for clarity. His name was Larry Ray Smith, SP/5, A Battery, 2/20th Artillery 1st Cavalry Div. He is the short, tan boy on the far right in the image with 4 men leaning on the rocket pod, and the boy on the far left in front with 5 men total, with what I think is a machine gun directly in front of him at the tents.

I need to obtain permission to use these images, if possible? Any help you can provide will be greatly appreciated. Thank you for these priceless photographs!

In Gratitude for your service,

Tracy Himes



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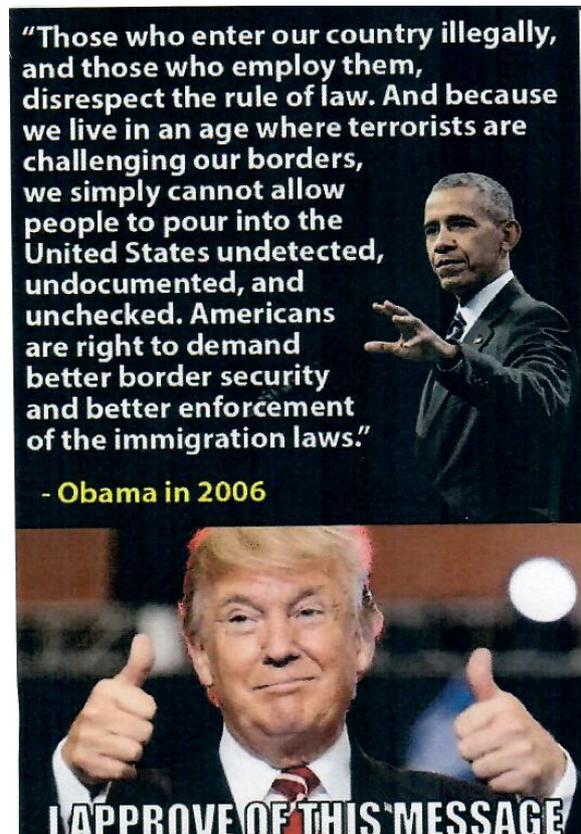
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## ATTENTION ALL ARA MEN:

**DO NOT DELETE THIS PUBLICATION UNTIL ALL SPOUSES, SIGNIFICANT OTHERS AND COMPANIONS HAVE READ IT. THE INFORMATION IS FOR ALL IN THE FAMILY.**





## Chaplain's Corner

### *Loving people "as is."*

In most stores, you can find great deals on lots of merchandise, but there is a tip off about those articles when you read the tag and see the words, "as is." It's a euphemistic way of saying these are damaged goods. They have a flaw and are consequently slightly irregular. You must look for it. Don't expect perfection. If you want the item, you must take it "as is."

What if there were truths in advertising law for people? What if people were required to wear a tag that said they were slightly flawed?" Would anyone even be accepted?

Consider the person you are closest to. That person is slightly irregular. He or she might as well wear an "as is" tag. Don't expect perfection. Don't be shocked. We are all flawed people. So, how are we to respond to the flawed people around us? Is there a way to accept them; to love them?

The original language of the Bible's New Testament was Greek. It is interesting to note that the Greeks used four separate terms to define various types of love. The first and most shallow term for love was the word EROS. This is passionate love or romantic love. EROS love is the weakest form of love. STORGE love is love within the family or familial love. PHILIA refers to friendship or brotherly love. The deepest level of love is expressed through the Greek term AGAPE. The word literally is translated, "I love you regardless of your faults. I love you in spite of your deficiencies. I love you unconditionally!"

AGAPE love is best demonstrated in a true story coming out of Brooklyn, N.Y. A school for children with learning disabilities was holding a fundraising banquet. During the program, a father stood to speak. He first extolled the school and staff for their outstanding work. Then he posed a question. "Where is the perfection in my son? Everything God does is done with perfection, but my son can't understand as others. He cannot remember facts and figures. Where is God's perfection?"

The audience was shocked by his question and pained by his agony. Then the father provided an answer for the question. "I believe when God brings a child like this into the world, the perfection he seeks is in the way other people react to this child." He went on to tell a story about himself and his son, Shiah, taking a walk through the park. Shiah noticed a group of boys he knew playing baseball.

"Do you think they would let me play, Dad?" Shiah asked. The father knew Shiah was neither athletic nor coordinated enough to play baseball. However, he approached one of the boys to ask if his son could play. "We're down by six runs and it's the eighth inning. I guess he could be on our team. Maybe we can even get him up to bat in the ninth inning." The father was ecstatic and Shiah smiled broadly as he put on a glove and ran out to short center field. In the bottom of the eighth inning, Shiah's team scored a few runs but was still behind by three. In the bottom of the ninth, Shiah's team scored again and now with two outs and the bases loaded with the potential winning run on base, Shiah was scheduled to bat. Surprisingly, Shiah was given a bat, even though everyone knew he didn't even know how to hold a bat properly, let alone swing it. As Shiah stepped up to the plate, the pitcher moved a few steps closer to lob the ball in softly so Shiah could at least make contact.

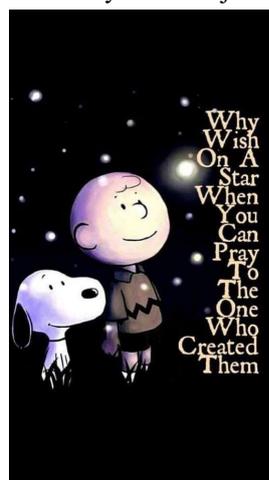
As the first pitch came in, Shiah swung clumsily and missed. One of Shiah's teammates then approached Shiah and together they held the bat waiting for the next pitch. The pitcher moved in closer to softly toss the ball toward Shiah. Together with his teammate, Shiah made contact with the ball and it rolled slowly toward the pitcher, who picked up the ball and could have easily thrown it to the first baseman. Shiah would have been out and the game would have ended. Instead, the pitcher threw the ball on a high arc over the first baseman's head and into right field.

Everyone started yelling, "Shiah, run to first, run to first!" Never in his life had Shiah run to first base. He scampered down the first base line wide eyed and startled. As Shiah stepped on first, they pointed him to second base. The right fielder could have easily thrown the ball to second and Shiah would have been tagged out. Instead, inexplicably, he threw high and over both the second and third basemen's heads and into short left field. Everyone yelled, "Run to third base, Shiah! Run to third!" The opposing team's shortstop then ran to him and turned him in the direction of third base. As Shiah stepped on third base, boys from both teams ran behind him screaming, "Shiah, run to home plate! Run home!" As Shiah stepped on home plate, all 18 boys from both teams lifted him on their shoulders and made him a hero because he had just hit a grand slam home run to win the game.

"That day," said Shiah's father softly with tears now rolling down his face, "for one moment, those 18 boys reached the level of God's perfection."

We live in an imperfect world of needy, grasping, broken, flawed people, every one of them with a little tag on them saying "as is." When you encounter them, remember the story of Shiah. Remember the better way. And for just a moment, you too can reach the level of God's perfection. God's peace to you all!

Bruce Wilder,  
Chaplain



# Final Flight

## Frank Stehno

Frank J. Stehno, age 70, of Stratton, NE passed away Thursday, May 30, 2019 at St. Elizabeth Hospital in Lincoln, NE.

Frank was born October, 25, 1948 in Stratton to Raymond and Adeline (Janousek) Stehno. He was raised on a farm north of Stratton and lived his life as a lifelong farmer.

Frank attended school in Stratton, graduating from Stratton High School with the Class of 1966. He went on to attend McCook Community College, graduating in 1968.

Frank was drafted into the United States Army and proudly served his country in Vietnam from 1969 to 1970 as a much admired Battery Clerk with B Battery F/79th Aerial Rocket Artillery, 1st Cavalry Div.

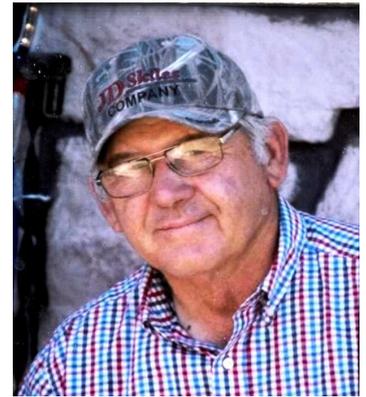
Frank married Patricia (Hartman) Stehno on April 3, 1976 at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Stratton. The couple was blessed with two sons, Brent and Brian.

Frank was an active member of St Joseph and a Charter Member of the Benkelman – Stratton Knights of Columbus. He served on several school boards over the course of twelve years; Stratton, Lakeside Central and Dundy County Stratton. Frank also served on the Grandview Senior Center Board and the Stratton Cemetery Board. He was a member of the Stratton American Legion Post, the Stratton Chamber of Commerce, as well as a lifetime member of the VFW. In 2007, Frank and Pat received the Conservation Award from the Middle Republican Natural Resources District.

Frank very faithfully donated blood to the American Red Cross. He had donated around 16 gallons before being diagnosed with ALS in December of 2017. Frank found great comfort in his faith after his diagnosis.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Raymond and Adeline Stehno, uncle Eddie Stehno (who he was very close to), mother and father in law Wilbur Hartman and Velda Hartman, and brother in law Keith Moreland.

Frank is survived by his wife Pat Stehno of Stratton, sons Brent (Darr) Stehno of Culbertson, NE, Brian (Ashley) Stehno of Stratton,



## Bill (Mad Dog) Presley

CW3 (Ret.) William Ronald "Mad Dog" Presley, 76, of Belton passed away peacefully at home on Sunday, July 14, 2019. A graveside service with Full Military Honors will be held on Thursday, July 18, 2019 at 10:00 AM at the Central Texas State Veteran's Cemetery in Killeen.

Bill was born on November 9, 1942 in Zelda, Kentucky to Everett and Cynthia (Nunley) Presley. and grew up near Zelda and graduated from Lawrence County High School. In 1961 after graduation, Bill enlisted in the US Air Force where he served honorably before being discharged in 1968, upon which time he enlisted in the US Army. He began a long and highly decorated military career in the Army where he served as an attack helicopter pilot and pilot instructor, known by his call sign and later nickname "Mad Dog". Bill attained the rank of Chief Warrant Officer 3 before retiring in 1982. During his enlistment, he served in Vietnam where he received the Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star Medal, as well as numerous other awards and commendations. While still in the Army, Mad Dog became a reserve police officer with the Harker Heights Police Department. Upon his retirement in 1982 he became a full time police officer in Harker Heights, first as a patrolman, corporal, detective, and finally as a Patrol Sergeant. Bill married Betty Ann Hardison on June 29, 1965 in Indiana and they were married for 41 years before she passed away in 2006. He later married Dianna Rhoden on March 4, 2017 in Nolanville. He was active in various veteran's groups including the Patriot Guard Riders and the In Country MC.

Bill was preceded in death by his first wife Betty in 2006 as well as brothers Danny Lee Presley and Thomas Franklin Presley, and sister Norma Jean Black. He is survived by his wife Dianna Presley of Belton, son Tim Presley and his wife Lisa of Katy, Texas. A visitation was held on Wednesday evening from 5:30-7:30 PM at Dossman Funeral Home in Belton.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the Sparta Volunteer Fire Department, 7041 Sparta Rd., Belton, Texas 76513.

The following are tributes and stories from brothers in arms who knew and loved him.

"Like everyone else whose time with Blue Max at the time, the memories of "Takin' fire," and "Elvis" live on. One distinct memory that I have was when I was assigned to be "Movement Officer" for the move from Bear Cat to Plantation (I think). I'm not sure whether Bill was on some flight restriction or what, but he was assigned to assist me with the move. We were provided with a number of CONEX containers in which we loaded a lot of otherwise loose items--personal gear, officers' club stuff, etc. It was quite a few CONEXes, though. Someone had contracted a Vietnamese trucking company with a bunch of flatbed trailers onto which we would load the CONEXes. From somewhere we'd gotten one of those monster-sized, articulated front loaders which worked well for picking up and loading CONEXes. I'm not sure how it happened--whether we didn't have anyone licensed or qualified, or what--but Bill assured me that he was an experienced operator of such equipment and he'd be happy to operate the front loader. Things were going pretty well, when for no reason that we could find, the front loader went dead and couldn't be re-started. We were about half done, and we were operating against a tight timeline, so what to do? As it happened, one of the Thai regiments was located next to us at Bear Cat, and they had an identical front-loader. After a longer than anticipated negotiation with a Thai major, I was able to talk him into the reluctant loan of their front loader. Bill mounted the vehicle and drove it to our area. Somehow he drove it around one of the trailers onto a hillside where the engine quit. There was Bill, up on top of this high vehicle with no brakes and no steering heading down the hill. There were rocks and stumps and holes all

over the hill side. I'm not sure why the brakes wouldn't work, but they didn't, so Bill was up there riding this thing down the hill looking like a bull rider at a rodeo desperately hanging on for the seven second target. I guess he made it...something in the way was stout enough to stop the roll, and Bill was able to safely dismount, thankfully none the worse for wear. Meanwhile, the Thai major, apparently never quite sure of the reliability of his borrowers, witnessed the whole event. He came down the street, nearly levitating, as he screamed what I suppose were Thai obscenities while waving his arms in the air. I was quite certain that this wasn't going to end until I'd spent some time with some Thai and American generals. Fortunately, that never happened. Somehow, things got calmed down. I don't remember precisely what happened after that, but we somehow got the CONEXes loaded and successfully completed the move to Plantation.

I don't think that I ever flew with Bill. But I'll never forget that day with the front loader.”  
Mike Brown

“At Bearcat, Bill had a poster of a Peterbilt semi on the wall of his hooch. So, you had the right man for the job. I used to think, “How does that great big guy get in the front seat of the Cobra,” but he did. We flew missions together when he first arrived. We flew some in the same section after he made AC and got his own Cobra.

I was blessed to have had lunch twice with Bill, in his part of Texas the last couple of years. At lunch with us were Blue Max CE Don Mather, CPT Terry Clark, and our first half of 71 Commander MAJ Gerald Zynda. Bill was the same as always. Big heart, big smile, great memories. Lunch lasted the rest of the day. “

Art Jetter

“What a tragic loss. Prayers for the family as they struggle with the loss of this great American...”

Dean Doudna

“Rest in peace Elvis.”

Al Russo

## *LTC (ret) Clarence Alvin (Al) Smith*

Al Smith checked out on July 3, 2019 in a nursing home in Lafayette, LA where he had been a resident for the past 5 or 6 years. He is survived by wife Rosemary but there was no formal obituary. He served several tours in Vietnam and at least one with F Battery/ 77th Arty (ARA). Thanks to Billy Woods (seen in photo with Al )for the information we have

Friends, the shadows grow long for all of us and the time will come for some editor to announce the last flight for all of us. Don't be caught without an obituary so we can remember the “salad days” of our youth. On a tombstone you read a birthdate and death date, but the important mark is the dash between. That is your life and we all need to get it down where the remaining few can reminisce.



Jim “Bugs” Moran & George Tebbetts of C-2/20 at Quan Loi, May 1970.

# Ladies of the Association

Dear Ladies of the ARA,

I was asked by our President, Clovis Jones, and by our esteemed editor, Asa Talbot (who is always looking for input) to periodically submit articles for our newsletter, and since the next issue is for July, August and September, I thought that something patriotic was in order as July 4<sup>th</sup> is our next great holiday. Following is an article from our hometown newspaper that I would like to share with all of you.

Gloria Hobby

## REFLECTING ON 243 YEARS OF OUR NATION'S HISTORY

I Am The Nation!

I was born on July 4, 1776, and the Declaration of Independence is my birth certificate. The bloodlines of the world run in my veins because I offered freedom to the oppressed. I am many things and many people. I am the nation.

I am 300+ million living souls and the ghosts of millions who lived and died for me.

I am Nathan Hale and Paul Revere. I stood at Lexington and fired the shot heard round the world at Concord Bridge. I am Washington, Jefferson and Patrick Henry. I am John Paul Jones, the Green Mountain Boys and Davy Crockett. I am Lee and Grant and Lincoln.

I remember the Alamo, the Maine and Pearl Harbor. When freedom called, I answered and stayed until it was "over, over there". I left my heroic dead in Flanders Fields, on the rock of Corregidor, on the black slopes of Korea and in the steaming jungles of Vietnam.

I am the Brooklyn Bridge, the wheat fields of Kansas, the granite hills of Vermont. I am the beautiful beaches of Florida, the fertile lands of the west, the Golden Gate and the Grand Canyon. I am Independence Hall, the Monitor and the Merrimac.

I am big. I sprawl from the Atlantic to the Pacific...my arms reach out to embrace Alaska and Hawaii...3 million square miles throbbing with industry. I am more than 5 million farms. I am forest, field, river, mountain and desert. I am quiet villages – and cities that never sleep.

You can look at me and see Ben Franklin walking down the streets of Philadelphia with his bread loaf under his arm. You can see Betsy Ross with her needle. You can see the lights of Christmas, and hear strains of "Auld Lang Syne" as the calendar turns.

I am Babe Ruth and the World Series. I am 130,000 schools and colleges, and 320,000 churches where my people worship God as they think best. I am a ballot dropped in a box or registered on a voting machine, the roar of a crowd in a stadium and the voice of a choir in a cathedral. I am an editorial in a newspaper and a letter to a congressman.

I am Eli Whitney and Stephen Foster. I am Tom Edison, Albert Einstein and Billy Graham. I am Horace Greely, Will Rogers and the Wright Brothers. I am George Washington Carver and Jonas Salk.

I am Longfellow, Harriett Beecher Stowe, Walt Whitman and Thomas Paine.

Yes, I am the nation and these are the things that I am. I was conceived in freedom and, God willing, in freedom I will spend the rest of my days.

May I possess always the integrity, the courage and strength to keep myself upright, to remain the citadel of freedom and a beacon of hope to the world. This is my wish, my goal, my prayer in this year of 2019 – two hundred forty-three years after I was born.

Author unknown.

## Email addresses for the ladies

Baird, Marlene - [flytiger@cablone.net](mailto:flytiger@cablone.net); Borgeson, Pat - [pborgeson@lalique.com](mailto:pborgeson@lalique.com) or [pborg12@yahoo.com](mailto:pborg12@yahoo.com); Brown, Linda -- [lindawbrown@juno.com](mailto:lindawbrown@juno.com); Cooper, Roberta - [rangerover53@yahoo.com](mailto:rangerover53@yahoo.com); Dauley, Donna - [dnurdgd@comcast.net](mailto:dnurdgd@comcast.net); Doty, Maureen - [DotyMaureen@yahoo.com](mailto:DotyMaureen@yahoo.com); Fleming, Gloria - [gwhz@hotmail.com](mailto:gwhz@hotmail.com); Giles, Rose - [r.c.giles41@gmail.com](mailto:r.c.giles41@gmail.com); Gomez., Milly - [chcogomez@aol.com](mailto:chcogomez@aol.com); Grice, Kathy- [Kalgrice@gmail.com](mailto:Kalgrice@gmail.com); Hengeveld, Peggy - [awings72@verizon.net](mailto:awings72@verizon.net); Hirst, Cindy -- [hirst@q.com](mailto:hirst@q.com); Hobby, Gloria - [gloriahobby@yahoo.com](mailto:gloriahobby@yahoo.com); Klinker, Kay - [kayklinker@gmail.com](mailto:kayklinker@gmail.com); Mahoney, Melba - [skyqueen1@sw.rr.com](mailto:skyqueen1@sw.rr.com); McAlister, Marilyn - [5starmcalister@att.net](mailto:5starmcalister@att.net); O'Dell, Kathy - [i\\_am\\_kathy@hotmail.com](mailto:i_am_kathy@hotmail.com); O'Keefe, Maryetta --- [maryetta4@cox.net](mailto:maryetta4@cox.net); Padilla, Mary Jane - [mary\\_jane\\_padilla@hotmail.com](mailto:mary_jane_padilla@hotmail.com); Pullano, Arlene - [jo-seph.pullano@att.net](mailto:jo-seph.pullano@att.net); Quesada, Isabel - [isamubra@hotmail.com](mailto:isamubra@hotmail.com) or [sapriisa44@hotmail.com](mailto:sapriisa44@hotmail.com); Retterath, Carol - [ranch@westriv.com](mailto:ranch@westriv.com); Roberson, Linda - [so\\_shinede@aol.com](mailto:so_shinede@aol.com); Sanchez, Susie - [sksdesigns1@verizon.net](mailto:sksdesigns1@verizon.net); Szabo, Joan --- [sailboats1@verizon.net](mailto:sailboats1@verizon.net); Talbot, Jean -- [asartalbot@gmail.com](mailto:asartalbot@gmail.com); Toepel, Mildred - [mbtoepel@msn.com](mailto:mbtoepel@msn.com); Tokar, Barbara - [BarbTokar@SBC.Golbal.net](mailto:BarbTokar@SBC.Golbal.net); Voeltz, Jean - [cav2\\_20th@hotmail.com](mailto:cav2_20th@hotmail.com); Wilder, Patti - [pattenmom05@yahoo.com](mailto:pattenmom05@yahoo.com); Williams, Dale - [barbierule@aol.com](mailto:barbierule@aol.com); Wilson, Ellie - [geneandellie@comcast.net](mailto:geneandellie@comcast.net)



ORDER FORM FOR APPAREL, CAPS, PATCHES, STICK-ONS

CAPS, Men's, come in one size (has adjustable headband) and will have the ARA Logo embroidered on the front and can have your name on the right side and call sign on the left side, if desired. **Cost will be \$10.00**

Print name as you want it to appear: \_\_\_\_\_

Print call sign as you want it to appear: \_\_\_\_\_

CAPS, Women's, come in one size and in two (2) styles – Short brim and low profile or as a Headband (both have adjustable headband) and will have the ARA Logo embroidered on the front and can have your name on the right side, if desired. If you would like to give yourself a call sign such as **DRAGON LADY, LADY TORO, GRIFFIN MISTRESS, BLUE MAX MISTRESS, FALCONESS** that can be put on the left sign. Cost will be **\$10.00**

Print name as you want it to appear: \_\_\_\_\_

Print call sign as you want it to appear: \_\_\_\_\_

Shirts for men and women are available in sizes Small, Medium, Large, 2XL, 3XL, 4XL, and 5XL and will have the ARA Logo embroidered on the left side. Cost is \$20.00 per shirt regardless of size.

Men's Shirt(s) - \_\_\_\_\_ X \$20.00 = \_\_\_\_\_ Size \_\_\_\_\_  
# ordered

Women's Shirt(s) - \_\_\_\_\_ X \$20.00 = \_\_\_\_\_ Size \_\_\_\_\_  
# ordered

Patches, Cloth – \_\_\_\_\_ X \$5.00 = \_\_\_\_\_  
Specify Unit

Bumper Stickers - \_\_\_\_\_ X \$2.00 = \_\_\_\_\_  
Specify Unit

Patches, Stickers - \_\_\_\_\_ X \$1.00 = \_\_\_\_\_  
Specify Unit

Total for order - \_\_\_\_\_

Send form and check(s) made payable to **ARA ASSOCIATION** to:

**ARA ASSOCIATION**  
c/o Herbert L. Hirst  
P.O. Box 220  
North Plains, OR 97133-0220



## AERIAL ROCKET ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION

### Membership Application/Renewal Form

This form may be used for Applying for New Membership or for Renewing Existing Membership. Please circle that which is appropriate.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Wife's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Rank \_\_\_\_\_ Membership Number \_\_\_\_\_

(At time of service in ARA)

(If known)

Retired Rank (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_ Service Number \_\_\_\_\_

List all ARA Units that you served in.

<u>Battery/Battalion</u>	<u>Dates of Service</u>	<u>Call Sign</u>
_____	From mo/yr to mo/yr	_____
_____	From mo/yr to mo/yr	_____

Current Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Street or PO Box

\_\_\_\_\_

City	State	Zip Code
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Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Home

Work (if okay)

Cell

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Association membership is on an annual basis (unless member opts for life membership) running from January 1 to December 31 and is past due on January 31.**

Annual dues are **\$25.00** regardless of when submitting.

Life membership (if paid in full) is **\$250.00**. Life membership may also be paid in **\$50.00** installments on a quarterly basis until paid in full.

Total amount enclosed \_\_\_\_\_ (Please indicate in remarks section of check whether this is Initial Membership, Membership Renewal, Life Membership in full, Life Membership payment #.

Mail completed application to: Aerial Rocket Artillery Association

C/O Herbert L. Hirst

For Office Use Only

P.O. Box 220

Check # \_\_\_\_\_

North Plains, OR 97133-0220

Check Date \_\_\_\_\_

Amount \_\_\_\_\_

Web address – [www.araassociation.com](http://www.araassociation.com)

Date Rcvd \_\_\_\_\_