



The Straphanger Gazette



Volume 4 Issue 2

Find us on the web at <http://www.araassociation.com>.

Oct. Nov., Dec., 2011



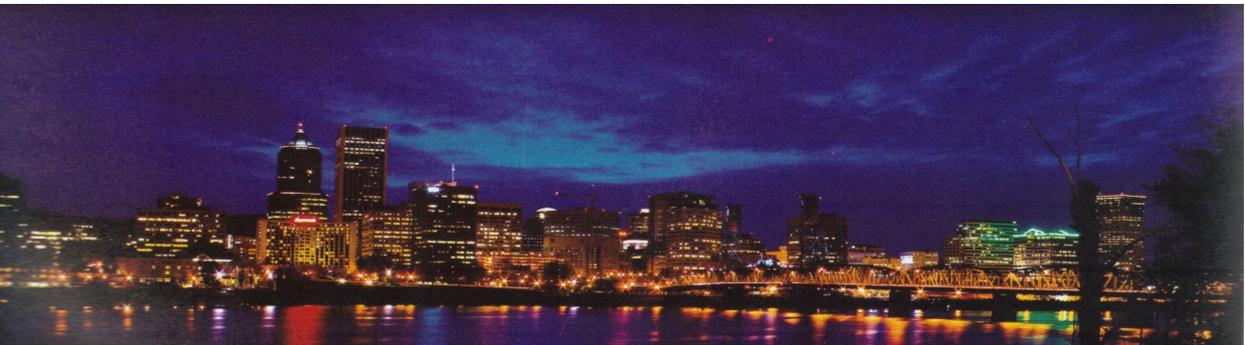
“Aerial Rocket Artillery”when called on by those who were in danger, our units were there laying it on the line.

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



President's Corner



Portland Nighttime Skyline

It seems that we just finished the 2011 Reunion in Charleston and now it's time to plan for our Reunion in Portland, OR. Herb and Cindy Hirst are the sponsors and have put together a great program. We are pleased to present this initial information.

15TH ARA Reunion in Portland, OR May 23 – 27, 2012

Please plan on joining us for the **AERIAL ROCKET ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION REUNION!** We have some great plans and hope to see you there.

Information for the reunion may be found on the Aerial Rocket Artillery Association web site (www.araassociation.com). Additional information will also be published in subsequent editions of the Straphanger Gazette as it becomes available.



WHERE WE WILL BE STAYING

Headquarters for the 2012 Reunion will be the Benson Hotel located at 309 SW Broadway, Portland, OR 97205. A block of King Deluxe Rooms has been reserved for the Association and reservations should be made by calling the Benson Hotel direct at **503-228-2000/800-663-1144**. You must inform them that you are attending the **Aerial Rocket Artillery Association Reunion** to get the Association rate of \$119.00 + tax (12.5%). This rate is good for several days before and after if you wish to come early or extend your stay. On-line booking should not be attempted since there is no promotion code. You may access their website at www.bensonhotel.com to view the hotel and its amenities.

A word of caution to all – This is a very popular area with lots going on and we are only guaranteed 30 rooms so you need to make reservations early to be assured of accommodations. Also, reservations made after April 23, 2012 will be at regular rack rates of \$148.00 nightly + tax and availability may be limited.

Some additional news about the booking. If we book 30 rooms for four nights (120 nights of booking) we will get four upgrades to Junior Suites at the Association rate of \$119.00 + tax. One Junior Suite will be reserved for the Reunion Host & Hostess and the remaining three will be allocated by random drawing to those members who have registered as of April 23, 2012.

The Hotels Presidential Suite will be our Hospitality Room. It is of special interest to note that every U.S. President since Taft that has visited Portland has stayed in this Suite. The Hospitality Room will be BYOB.

Also, if arriving by POV be aware that parking at the hotel will be \$24.00 nightly. This is a discounted rate for us.

WHAT WE WILL BE DOING

We will have lots to do or you can do as little as you want. You can take in all of the scheduled activities or you can make your own schedule. If you like you can just hang out with friends and catch up on what's been happening in the last year.

DAY 1 – Wednesday, May 23 is check in, get briefed, meet old friends, have dinner on your own at the hotel or at any of the fines restaurants in the local area. You may also get in an evening tour or activity if you want to or just hang out in the hotel lounge or the ARA Hospitality Suite.

DAY 2 – Thursday, May 24 begins with breakfast on your own followed by the North Oregon Coast Tour. The bus will leave the hotel at 9:00 a.m. and returns at 6:00 p.m. **Cost is \$52.00 per person and includes box lunch with drink.** You will fall in love with the beautiful, breathtaking Oregon Coast. From the hotel the one and a half



Cannon Beach

hour drive to Cannon Beach is through Oregon's Coastal Mountain Range. Cannon Beach offers seven miles of wide walkable beach. The beauty of sea stacks offshore and headlands onshore make your stroll down the sand particularly memorable. Take pictures of Haystack Rock, which at 235 feet high, is the third largest monolith in the world. Or stroll through the village shops in Cannon Beach enjoying the eclectic tastes of the local artisans. Get back on the bus for the most breathtaking sights along the beautiful Oregon Coast. There will be several stops along the way for photo opportunities. Next stop is the

Tillamook Cheese Factory. This co-op of local dairy farmers has been providing cheese products nationwide for 100 years. See the actual cheese making process and enjoy some of the dairies famous



Tillamook Cheese Factory

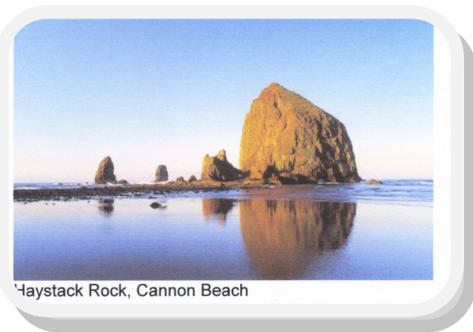
Tillamook Ice Cream.

The final stop (time permitting) will be at the Tillamook Forest Visitors Center before returning oto Portland.

This will be a narrated tour with a professional tour guide on a restroom equipped Motor Coach.

For those who wish to remain in the Portland area there is a multitude of activities. You may tour the Portland Waterways on the "Portland Spirit" (www.portlandspirit.com), visit the Oregon History Museum (www.ohs.org), the Portland Art Museum (www.portlandartmuseum.org), the Portland Japanese Garden

(www.japanesegarden.com), the Lan Su Chinese Garden (www.lansugarden.org), the Grotto (www.thegrotto.org),



Haystack Rock, Cannon Beach

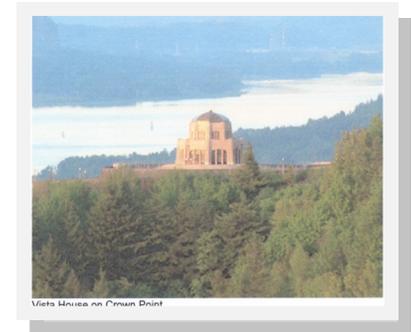
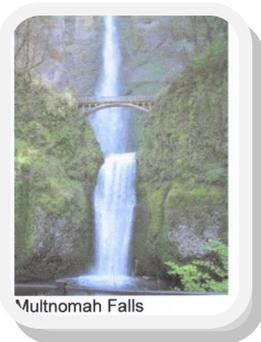
or any of many other fascinating destinations. For more information on things to see and do visit www.traveloregon.com.

After an active day of touring and sightseeing, have dinner at the Benson or one of the many fine dining establishments in the local area. For more information go to www.travelportland.com.

Finish the day with friends in the hotel lounge or the ARA Hospitality Suite.

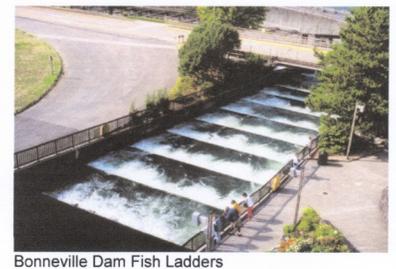
Day 3 – Friday, May 25 will begin with breakfast on your own followed by the Scenic Tour of the Columbia River Gorge. The bus departs at 9:00 a.m. **Cost is \$48.00 per person and includes lunch.**

This full day tour begins with the mouth of the Columbia River Gorge (Oregon side), an 80 mile geologic wonder that forms the border between Northern Oregon and Southern Washington. Glacial floods thousands of years ago carved this 1200 mile long river with cliffs rising as high as 4000 feet. The gorge acts as a funnel for North America's fourth largest river, the Columbia, whose tributaries include the mighty Snake River. The river's canyon-like walls create ideal wind conditions for wind surfing and sailing. First stop is Crown Point for a breathtaking view of the Gorge both east and west. Visit Vista House, built from 1916 to 1918 as a memorial to Oregon Pioneers, and providing a comfort station for those traveling on the Historic Columbia River Highway, and serving as an observatory. The tour continues along the Historic Highway where you can see Latoune Falls, Shepard Dell Falls, Horsetail Falls, and stopping at the nationally famous Multnomah Falls, the second highest waterfall in the U.S. where we have lunch at the Multnomah Falls Lodge (www.multnomahfalls lodge.com). After lunch we will travel on to the Bonneville Dam to check out the fish ladders and Fish Hatchery, which is home to Herman, the 70 year old, 11 foot long, 500 pound sturgeon before returning to Portland at/about 3:00p.m.



This will be a narrated tour with a professional tour guide on a restroom-equipped Motor Coach.

For those who choose to remain in the Portland area you may take advantage of the previous day's offerings listed above or you may elect to depart the area for other attractions. Suggestions are the tour of the Columbia River Gorge on board the Columbia Gorge Sternwheeler (www.portlandspirit.com), a visit to Mount St. Helens (www.visitmthelens.com), or to the Sea Lions Cave (www.sealioncaves.com). For more information on things to see and do visit www.traveloregon.com or www.goseeoregon.com.



Once again, after an active day of touring and sightseeing have dinner at the Benson or one of the many fine dining in the local area. For more information go to www.travelportland.com.

Finish the day with friends in the hotel lounge or the ARA Hospitality Suite.

Day 4 – Saturday, May 26 is breakfast on your own.

The Board of Directors will meet from 8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.

9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. is set aside for the Association Business Meeting in the hotel conference room.

The Ladies activity for the day will begin at 10:00 a.m. Join Cindy Hirst for a short (and free) MAX light rail ride to Portland's Saturday Market. Enjoy a distinctive experience at the nation's largest open-air arts and crafts market. Stroll down row upon row of unique creations made by the people who sell them and enjoy live music and international snacks. Then gather for lunch at a place (to be determined) where the Ladies can convene their own meeting and learn more about each other. The only cost will be the price of the meal which will be determined when the restaurant is chosen. Return to the hotel at/about 3:00 p.m.



The final activity for the day will be the Farewell Dinner in the hotel banquet room from 6:30 – 10:00 p.m.

There will be a social hour with appetizers and cash bar.

APPETIZERS FOR SOCIAL HOUR

Imported and Domestic Cheese Including:

Brie, Saint Andre, Port Salut, Oregon Bleu, Boursin Herb, Havarti
Tillamook Cheddar, Swiss and Pepper Jack with Oregon Dried Figs
and Hazelnuts served with Sliced Baguette

THE BROADWAY BUFFETT

Corn Chowder

Fresh Baby Field Greens with Cucumber Dill Dressing
Apple Jicama Salad with tequila Lime Vinaigrette
Endive Spears with Creamy Gorgonzola and Roasted Pecans
Fresh Melon Skewers with Mint and Basil Vinaigrette

Carved New York Striploin with Green peppercorn Au Jus
Carved Roasted Turkey Breast with Cranberry Relish
Oregon Hazelnut Crusted Sole

Soufflé Potatoes
Braised Carrots and Fennel

Rustic and French Dinner Rolls with Creamery Butter

DESSERT BUFFET

An Assortment of Fruit Tarts, Mousse, Cheesecake, Classic Petit Fours,
Traditional Tiramisu, Crème Brule, Chocolate Pastries,
Chocolate Dipped Strawberries

All Dinner Buffets are accompanied with Fresh Brewed Gaffe Appassionato Coffee and Tazo Tea Selection

Cost for meal is \$55.00 per person.

Guest Speaker – To Be Announced

After dinner meet with friends in the hotel lounge or the ARA Hospitality Suite.

Day 5 – Sunday, May 27 is final breakfast and departure from the Portland area.

Jesse Hobby

ARA 6

WINGS

Once the wings go on, they never come off whether they can be seen or not.

It fuses to the soul through adversity, fear and adrenaline and no one who has ever worn them with pride, integrity and guts can ever sleep through the `call of the wild` that wafts through bedroom windows in the deep of the night.

When a good pilot leaves the `job' and retires, many are jealous, some are pleased and yet others, who may have already retired, wonder.

We wonder if he knows what he is leaving behind, because we already know.

We know, for example, that after a lifetime of camaraderie that few experience, it will remain as a longing for those past times.

We know in the world of flying, there is a fellowship which lasts long after the flight suits are hung up in the back of the closet.

We know even if he throws them away, they will be on him with every step and breath that remains in his life.

We also know how the very bearing of the man speaks of what he was and in his heart still is.

Because we fly, we envy no man on earth.

-Author Unknown Contributed by Rodger McAlister-Immediate Past President

ARA PORTLAND RENDEZVOUS

15TH ANNUAL ARA REUNION, PORTLAND, OR May 23 – 27, 2012

Reunion Registration Form

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN NLT APRIL 24, 2012

INFORMATION	
Name/Membership #	
Wife/Guest Name(s)	
Additional Guests	
Street Address	
City, State, Zip Code	
Telephone #/Email	
Special Assistance?	

Please list name(s) as you would like for them to appear on NAME TAG(S)	Where From
Member	
Spouse/Guest	
Unit(s)	
Dates	

REGISTRATION/EVENT FEES	PRICE	DETAILS	# IN PARTY	TOTAL
Registration Fee	\$30.00	Per Adult Member (over 15)		
Oregon Coast Tour	\$52.00	Includes box lunch w/ drink		
Columbia River Gorge Tour	\$48.00	Includes lunch		
Farewell Banquet	\$55.00			
Total for Reunion				

What day will you be arriving? _____ Departing? _____

Please contact host if you are bringing children under age 15 so that we can get number and ages and coordinate with caterer for the cost of their meals. Can be paid at time of check in.

Contact information for host: Herb Hirst (hirst@g.com). Telephone # 503-647-4600

Mail completed form and check payable to **ARA ASSOCIATION** to:

ARA ASSOCIATION
c/o Larry Mobley
779 County Road 106
Ozark, AL 36360

Charleston was a blast but Portland will be over the top!



Mandatory Morning Formation before the tour of the USS Yorktown

Picture by Jule Szabo



Who says a doctor can't command a ship?



Revisiting the F4B Phantom; one of which I flew at Tam Ky in 1968

A Flight Surgeon's Memories in Charleston

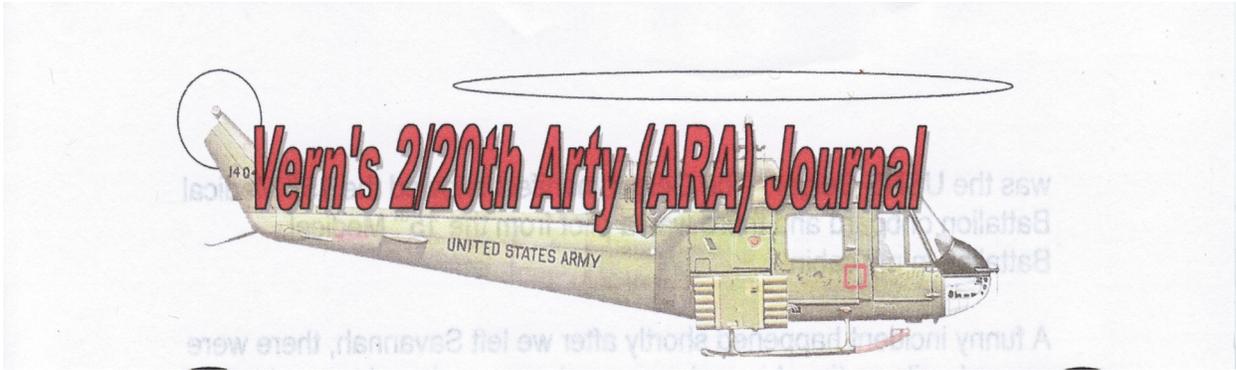
Pictures by Jean and Asa Talbot



The Flight Deck does not seem to be all that long when you are landing on it!

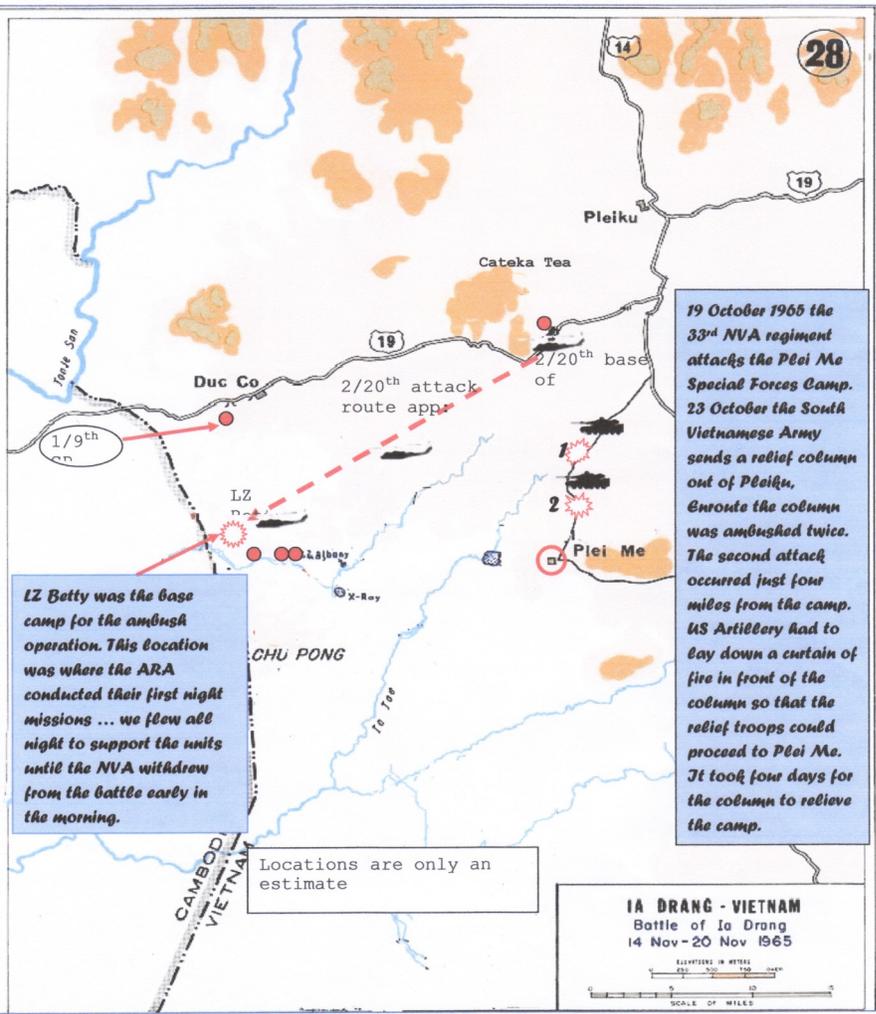


Ye Olde Bn Aid Station (Navy style)



Editor's Note: We continue sharing the journal of Vern Estes from his tour in Vietnam. 1965-66. Once again we ask that anyone who has journals, records, or pictures which reflect the life and times of one of the most unique military units in the history of warfare share them with this publication and the association historian, George Govignon. We are history and history is lost when not recorded.

Battle of Plei Me and 3 November
1965 1/9th Night Ambush Sites



On 19 October 1965 the Plei Me Special Forces Camp was besieged by the 33rd NVA Regiment. Even though the CIDG Montnards fought fiercely through the night the NVA was successful in taking part of the camp. South Vietnam Army (ARVN) reinforcements were dispatched from Pleiku on 23 October however; due to the column being ambushed by elements of the 33rd NVA Regiment it took them four days to reach Plei Me.

There were two ambushes; one at about twenty miles from the objective and a major ambush approximately four miles from the camp which inflicted major casualties on the ARVN troops. The 1st Cav heli-lifted forward artillery observers to the front of the column and they had US Artillery lay down a curtain of fire in front of the column; allowing the troops to reinforce Plei Me.

During the first part of the battle one of "B" Battery's UH-1B helicopters engaged the NVA at **Plei Me** using the SS-11 wire guided Missile system. This mission utilized the best qualified SS-11 system pilot in the unit Captain Jim Foreman. Jim's mission was to destroy the heavy timber gate to the

village... Jim's first missile did that and as I remember he fired one more missile into the compound after destroying the gate. I can only remember one other occasion where the SS-11 system was employed. I do not remember the location but I do recall that Jim fired a missile through a water fall into a cave. The ARA received praise for their support during battle for Plei Me.

I read a statement by an Infantry commander that was in the fight which said "The enemy was all around us, and the volume of fire was murderous. We were taking casualties right and left, when the ARA arrived over us. Suddenly, we were alive again. They took the breath of death out of our faces and blew in back towards Charlie (Viet Cong)".



SS-11 Missile System



Plei Me Special Forces Camp

The la Drang Operation became the first night mission for the ARA. We were operating out of the Catecka Tea Plantation;



Catecka Tea Plantation

an old French Plantation airstrip located about 12 miles southwest of Pleiku. I remember the Tea plantation because at times the crew chief and gunner would run along side the helicopter until we almost reached effective translational lift speeds (a speed where the main rotor starts to develop more lift). This maneuver was necessary because we routinely operated at approximately one thousand pounds over the aircraft's max gross weight. Also, we did not want to crash into the large garbage dump at the end of the runway.

One of the missions required the unit to support the 1/9th and 2/8th troops at LZ Betty they were surrounded and in close contact with the enemy all night. As I remember the troops were in a 500 pound bomb crater and set up light signals for us because we were firing within 50 meters of the friendly troops at night. There was an artillery officer directing our fire during the night however, by morning he had lost his voice and was hardly able to talk to us.

During the night we developed a procedure for getting crew rest; one pilot would sleep enroute to the target and the other would nap on the return trip and the crew chief or door gunner would sleep on the return trip. There were two firsts; the first night mission for ARA units and the first time we had to fired within 50 meters of friendly troops.

As in most situations there is humor if you look for it; for example during one of our night refueling stops the aircraft was parked on a slope with the overflow tube on the down slope side, the door gunner looked at the refueling pump and observed that we had pumped 300 gallons (this exceeded the fuel capacity of the aircraft). I walked around to observe fuel squirting out of the over flow tube. My bad joke side took over and I asked the crew chief did he think we had a full tank (cannot repeat his response).



NVA flag



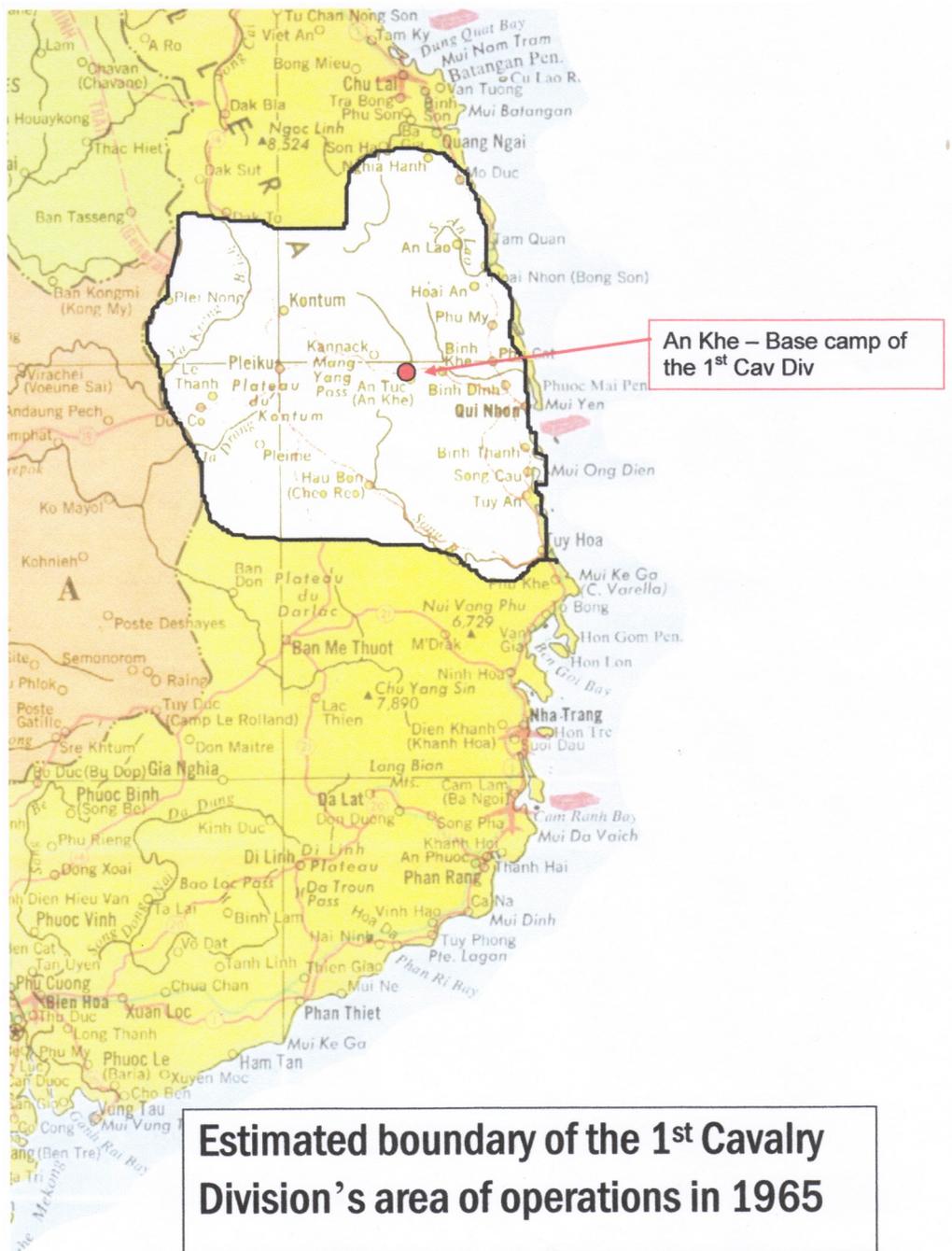
1/9th Cavalry



2/8th Cavalry

Prior to the la Drang Valley becoming a hot bed around 14 November 1965 there were reports of heavy NVA movement in the Valley and the 1/9th Cavalry Squadron was tasked with setting up night ambush sites. The following are the events as Major Billie Williams remembers them.

About 3 November 1965 LTC John B. Stockton, Commander of the 1/9th Air Cavalry (Cav) Squadron (Sq), scrambled the squadron placing all three platoons of the ground units (Blues) under the command of Major Bob Zion. Major Guy Beardsley commanded the gunship platoons and Major Billie Williams was in command of the scout platoons. A company of US Special Forces CIDG Montagnards (Mountain People) from the Due Co Special Forces camp also, Company A of the 2/8th Cavalry was placed under Operational Control (OPCON) of the 1/9th Cav Sq; 2/8th Cav troops were held in reserve near the Due Co Camp.



The planning of the ambush site, landing zones and Command Post (CP) locations were completed by LTC Stockton and his staff and the plan was activated immediately.

Major Zion was in charge of the ambush operation and all the forces on the ground. There were three ambush sites which Major Zion manned with two platoons from Troop B and C they were augmented by one platoon of Montnards. Personnel from Troop A and the remaining two platoons of Montnards were located with Major Zion and Troop B Headquarters in the Command Post at L/Z Betty. All other Squadron personnel were located at the CP near the Special Forces Camp at Du Co. Major Beardsley the gunship commander was placed on alert to support the ambush sites and Major Williams was in charge of CP security and control of the lift ships; coordinating personnel and aircraft for possible reinforcements if needed.

At approximately 1930 Troop C triggered their ambush near the base of the Chu Pong Mastif and successfully killed a company size NVA unit. The platoon leader wisely decided to return to LZ Betty. Approximately 45 minutes later LZ Betty came under attack by the NVA. During the night the attacks became more intense LTC Stockton wanted to reinforce his unit but BG Knowles would not approve his request instead he stated that the units should **escape and evade**. Major Zion contacted LTC Stockton and told him that if he did not get help they would not be there when morning came... this equated to sending out a "Broken Arrow" call which means that a unit is being overrun and most probably will not survive the battle.

After the call was received there are some points of the process that are a bit muddled as to how Company A of the 2/8th was released and inserted during the night. The original story was that the lift ships had never been to that LZ which I found out later that the statement was not true however; the troops had never been in the area. There were rumors that LTC Stockton overrode BG Knowles standing order that only he could release the reserve forces and more or less forced the unit commander to launch the aircraft. The reinforcements were not a total cure for the situation but most of the ambush troops did survive the battle.



LTC John B. Stockton



BG Richard T. Knowles

Stockton's troops thought that he should have been awarded a medal for his actions and stated that **"Those that served with Stockton knew that he was an SOB but, he was their SOB and was respected by all and loved by most"**.

I remember a radio call between BG Knowles and LTC Stockton concerning the incident. The conversation went something like; "Bull

Whip 6 (Stockton) this is Long Knife 6 (Gen Knowles) report to me immediately when you land "and LTC Stockton replied "That's a big roger Sirrrr". This incident resulted in Stockton being relieved of his command in Dec 1965.

It should be noted here that the pilots in Cav units referred to the ARA as nose bleed pilots because of the altitude we flew in comparison to the Cav units who flew at tree top level

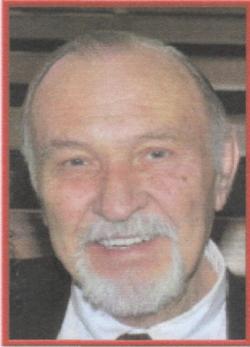


Stockton was a character; I remember a story about him and Col Becker the Division Artillery Commander. Col Becker was a very straitlaced individual and believed in proper decorum at all times. He was invited to a party at Stockton's Headquarters tent and when he arrived he found Stockton stripped to the waist wrestling with another officer, immediately Stockton invited Becker to join in. As the story goes Becker did not stay long.

/ believe that LTC Bill Kilgore played by Robert Duval in the movie "Apocalypse Now" was based on John B. Stockton.

To be continued in the next Straphanger

FINAL FLIGHT



Lt. Colonel (Ret.), Donald Paul Bennett, of Rolla, MO, passed away at his home on Wednesday, September 7, 2011 at the age of 78. He was born in Snyder, Oklahoma. On September 23, 1961 he married Carol Bohannon and they were later blessed with two children. Don earned a B.S. Degree from Oklahoma State University and an M.B.A. from Webster University.

He was a 23-year veteran of the U.S. Army serving from 1953-1976, which included two tours in Vietnam. He was the the most senior alumnus of the ARA having been in C Battery 2/42nd Arty, 11th Air Assault Division Feb.- Oct. 1963; HHB 3/377th Arty, 11th Air Assault Division. Nov. 1963-Jun. 1965; and B/2/20th ARA 1st Cavalry Division. July 1965-Aug. 1966.

This made him the longest serving member of the ARA having spent 42 months in the evolving unit.

He became a Rolla resident in 1972. After his military career, he taught business at Drury University for 27 years and owned and operated a local ranch and cattle operation. He was an elder of the First Presbyterian Church in Rolla.

He will be greatly missed by his surviving family which includes his wife of nearly fifty years, Carol Bennett, two children, Charles "Chuck" Bennett and wife Tammy, of Rolla, and Pam Van Bebber and husband Bruce, of Wichita, KS; one brother, Duane Bennett, of Chickasha, OK; nine grandchildren, nieces, nephews, other extended family members and dear friends.

A funeral service for Don was held at 11:00 a.m. Monday, September 12, 2011 at the First Presbyterian Church in Rolla. Interment with full military honors followed in the Rolla City Cemetery. Flowers were sent on behalf of the Association.

Chaplain's Corner



Distracted

There will be times when we are distracted from our goals in life. This could be the result of an overcrowded schedule or an event that changes our course of action which creates anxiety for us. Take for example a time when you thought you had a clear sense of purpose and direction when someone did or said something that drew you off track. A few people may be able to deal with this distraction most of the time; however, when the created conflict causes such confusion that our minds are busy trying to determine a corrected course of action; we need to remember the words of the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Philippians, "Press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus... let us hold true to what we have attained... Rejoice in the Lord always... Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God, and the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Peace to all,

Bruce Wilder
Chaplain

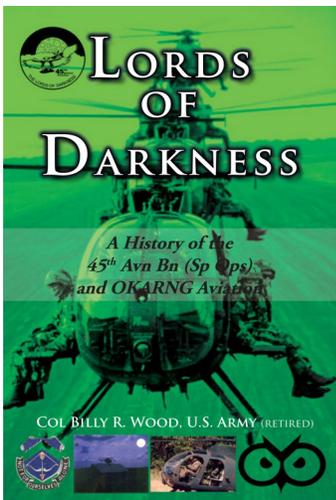
ARA Alumnus Tells Tale of Secrecy and Stealth

Our own Billy Woods, A/2/20 1966-67, has published a 605 page (plus more than 200 pictures) book concerning the events failed attempt to hostages held in (1979-1981). The Claw, broke down place called Desert the conception, evolution of a highly classified Army National Guard "counter-terrorism" helicopter aviation battalion. Military officials at the Pentagon stated, "There can never be another "Desert One," regardless the cost."



page (plus more pictures) book concerning the rescue American Tehran, Iran operation, Eagle in disaster at a One and led to creation and

You never heard of this unit because you weren't supposed to know it even existed. It was a secret special operations aviation unit never before created. The soldier aviators and crewmembers were teachers, lawyers, insurance agents, policemen, in the daytime; citizen soldiers who became stealth fighters at night



that you didn't see or hear. They delivered Special Forces, CIA, Navy Seals and hell fire to their targets with speed, stealth and accuracy.

You can sleep securely at night because there are American men and women in uniform doing their job while you rest. Their souls belong to the night, but their dedication and ethos are to aviation.

Although the ARA does not endorse the sale you can purchase the "Lords of Darkness" in hard back (\$35, soft back(\$25) [plus \$4.95 postage] directly from Billy or e-reader format (Kindle, Nook or KOBO) at Amazon.com, BarnesandNoble.com, kobobooks.com (\$8), or other major book stores. If you would like an autographed copy contact Billy or Carolyn Wood at wood.brw.44@gmail.com. Questions? Call 479.234.1503.

Please give the Aerial Rocket Artillery Assn.

our sincere thanks for the beautiful basket of plants they sent for Don's Memorial. It's a huge basket with 3 large plants, including a peace lily - one of a kind. Don enjoyed the remembrance with everyone so much. And cause you all were a very important part of his life.

Your kind expression of sympathy and friendship will always remain in our memories. Thank you for your thoughtfulness.

Carol Bennett and family

This card of thanks for the flowers sent to Don Bennet's memorial service came from Carol Bennet and reflects the reason the Association exists. Don will be missed by his family and us.

Contact information for Board of Directors – Please add us to your contact list.

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e-mail jesse_hobby@hotmail.com

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Ladies of the Association

In response to my requests for articles from the Ladies of the Association I received the following from Mrs. Anna Henderson, wife of Life Member Colonel (Ret) Lewis J. Henderson. This article, which appeared in the July 2011 issue of the Nashville Bar Journal, is re-printed with their permission. Photos are reproduced with permission of Kathleen Henderson Pohlid.

Editor's Note: When we were all thrilling to the adventures of Catherine Bell as Major "Mac" McKensie, Marine Lawyer, on "JAG" it all seemed unbelievable. Well, believe it!

Kathleen Henderson Pohlid

by Eleanor Wetzel

A loud bang disrupted the night, startling her out of sleep. At first she was not sure whether it was incoming or outgoing fire. The Marines in her unit carried their weapons at all times, so she had her weapon ready and was reaching for her flak jacket and helmet, preparing to head out for her "can" and face the attack. But then, she heard another bang, followed by the comforting "swoosh" that indicated the fire was outgoing. All was okay that night; she could go back to sleep and so she did, sleeping through the rest of the fire. It was her first night in Iraq.



Attorneys often characterize preparing for a contentious trial or hearing as getting ready for battle. But very few have actually done so in combat.

The Nashville Bar can be proud that several of our own have honorably served our country, including Kathleen Henderson Pohlid of Drescher Heller Pieper Marin, P.C. who served two combat deployments over the course of her legal career before retiring from the Marine Corps last year.

When first meeting Kathleen you might not guess that she was a member of the military, let alone a decorated Colonel in the Marine Corps, the military branch known as the "First to Fight." Although she has two brothers who did not serve in the military, Kathleen opted to follow a similar path as her father, a retired U.S. Army Colonel. The idea of serving her country was very appealing: "I was attracted to that challenge,"

she says. "Most of all, I liked the idea that I was making a contribution with my life."

Kathleen's pioneering spirit led her to the U.S. Naval Academy, where she was a member of the first class of female midshipmen. Upon graduation, she entered the Marine Corps as a commissioned officer. When she resigned from active duty in 1986 to enroll in law school, Kathleen elected to remain in the active reserves. She began her legal career in Alabama in 1989, first serving as a federal clerk (1989 – 1990) and then working as a trial attorney with the U.S. Department of Labor. (1990 – 2002). In 2003, she was promoted to Colonel and moved to Tennessee where she joined and later became partner, at the law firm of King & Ballow (2003 – 2011).

It was just a couple of years after she moved to Tennessee that she first deployed overseas as part of the reserve duty. She had been activated as a reservist once prior for Operation Desert Storm, but her unit was not deployed. Kathleen is grateful to King & Ballow for their support of her military service during her two combat deployments.

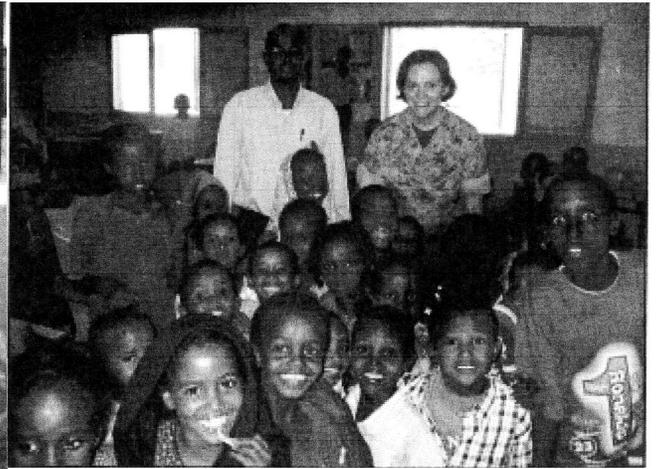
Her first deployment took her to Djibouti, a small country in the horn of Africa (activated July 2005 – March 2006), where she served as the Staff Judge Advocate to Major General Timothy Ghormley, Commanding Officer of the Combined Joint Task Force – Horn Of Africa. This Joint Command involving the Marine Corps, Army, Navy, and Air Force covered twelve countries in Africa and included both anti-terrorism and humanitarian assistance missions. Coalition forces from the U.K., Pakistan, Netherlands, Poland, Germany, Kenya, and other nations participated.

Kathleen found this assignment as counsel for Major General Ghormley to be her most rewarding military experience. She provided legal counsel to support the Command's mission of anti-terrorism and humanitarian assistance.

We did numerous humanitarian assistance projects including digging wells, providing a life source of much needed water to parched areas. Water is a scarcity in many areas and is desperately needed for people and their livestock. We also worked with local governments and people to refurbish schools promoting education for both boys and girls. It was a fun and exciting event to attend a school dedication. We met the families, teachers and students. Dedicating a school is a major event in many of these communities.



Mouloud School Dedication in Djibouti, Africa—September 2005



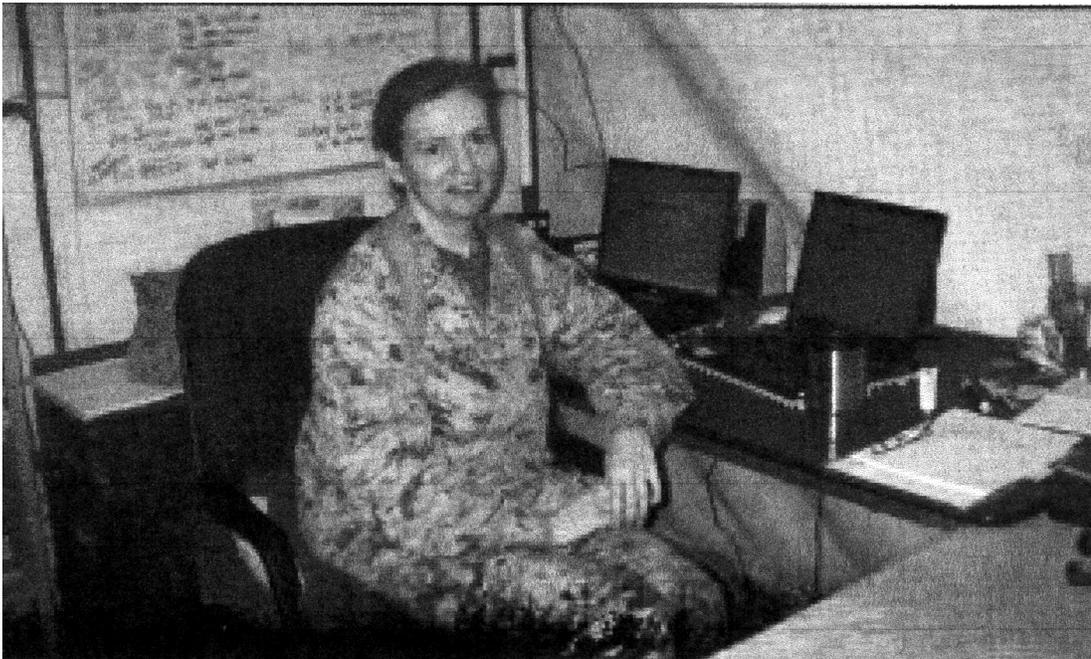
The children and teacher of the Mouloud School in Djibouti, Africa

After returning from Africa, Kathleen could have retired from the reserves but chose to remain, noting that conflicts were growing in Iraq and Afghanistan, and she did not feel comfortable retiring without having served there should she be needed.

She was back in the civilian practice of law for only one year before she received a call from “out of the blue” from a Marine Colonel asking if they could count on her support “in Theater.” She assured they could and this time she was deployed to Fallujah, Iraq (activated December 2007 – March 2009) and assigned to the Command, Multi-National Forces – West, Iraq, which covered Al-Anbar Province.

Kathleen explains that the battle for Al-Anbar Province was “one of the hardest fought urban battles in American history.” The military mission began as a kinetic (with shooting and killing) and then moved to a consensus effort to provide support and governance to the Iraqis, promoting democracy and the rule of law.

I was mobilized for duty in Iraq in 2007. I arrived in Iraq via Kuwait. My arrival occurred just after the first snow fall in Baghdad in decades. I was prepared for the summer heat in Iraq [which exceeds 120 degrees Fahrenheit], but not the cold. In Iraq, I was assigned as the Assistant Staff Judge Advocate and reviewed investigations preparing endorsements on behalf of three Marine Generals.



Colonel Henderson’s trailer office in Fallujah, Iraq

These investigations covered a diverse variety of subject matter including deaths, civilian casualties, escalation of force, alleged law of war violations, oil smuggling, discrimination, sexual harassment, detainee abuse, corruption/theft, among others. During her assignment Kathleen reviewed hundreds of classified and unclassified investigations.

Kathleen was also assigned as Deposition Officer to preside over depositions of the Iraqi civilian witnesses involved in the criminal case involving the deaths of twenty-four Iraqi

civilians that occurred in Haditha on November 19, 2005. Eight Marines were initially charged in the incident. Charges were dismissed against six, one was acquitted, and the remaining defendant is pending court-martial proceedings.

As Deposition Officer, Kathleen's duty was to maintain order in the proceedings conducted in Haditha, protect the parties and witnesses, record objections, and authenticate the record.

The Command worked to ensure a peaceful transition in the Al-Anbar Province, successfully turning over Camp Fallujah to the Iraqis. Kathleen was on the last chopper of the Command Element to depart the Camp.

Kathleen retired from the Marine Corps in January of 2010, but her life has not slowed down. With over twenty years of experience in litigation and employment law – in both federal government and the private sector – she focuses her practice at Drescher Heller Pieper Martin, P.C. on employment, litigation, governmental compliance, occupational safety, and health law issues including Medicare audits. She continues to professionally write and speak on employment law and regulatory compliance matters.

She also remains active in the Nashville community, as a parishioner at the Cathedral of the Incarnation; Regent with the Daughters of the American Revolution, Francis Nash Chapter; vice-President for the Nashville Catholic Business Women's League; and as a member of Kiwanis, a global institution dedicated to improving the lives of children.

Although Kathleen is no longer actively involved in the Marine Corps, she cherishes her military service.

I am grateful for the opportunity to have been able to serve and be a part of the Commands in all we did for humanitarian endeavors and anti-terrorism in Africa and Iraq, promoting the Rule of Law and providing stability. My role was extremely small but I consider it a privilege to have served with so many people who gave their time and sometimes even their lives to provide the people of Africa and Iraq the opportunity for peace and sperity.

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If anyone has a daughter who has served in the military we would very much like to tell your story. It's no longer "just the guys" who serve and face the dangers of combat.

Hope to see you all in Portland next year.

Gloria Hobby
Falconess 6
gloriahobby@yahoo.com

News You Can Use

We want to remind you that membership expires on December 31 for those members who renew annually and is past due on January 31. Please use the new form and note that annual dues are now \$25.00. Update any information that has changed.

This may be of interest to those of you who are military retirees.

DOD is finally removing Social Security Numbers from Military ID Cards.

The program to remove Social Security Numbers (SSNs) from military ID cards continues to roll along. The program actually began in 2009 and will continue through 2013 and become standard operating procedure from then on.

Do not rush to your closest ID card office to replace your cards. All cards will be replaced over the normal course of updating cards as they expire. Those with indefinite expiration dates (INDEF) may get a new card by making an appointment at your ID card office. See this web site to find your closest ID card office by zip code: <http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsl/>.

The program is planned to remove SSNs over time in 3 separate phases.

Phase I started in 2009 with the removal of dependents' printed SSNs from their ID cards. The sponsors' SSNs remain for now.

Phase II started June 2011. This time all printed SSNs will be removed from the cards. The SSNs will be replaced by DOD ID numbers.

Phase III is expected to begin in late 2012. This is the final phase. SSNs will be removed from the barcodes on the back of ID cards. At this point, no SSNs will be on ID cards in any format.

Make sure you take 2 forms of ID when you go to the ID card office. See this site for types of ID, <http://www.uscis.gov/files/forms/i-9-pdf>. For those of you getting close to age 65, note your expiration date is just prior to your 65th birthday.

MOAA news dated 04/25/2011.



AERIAL ROCKET ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION

Membership Application

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 _____
(At time of service in ARA)

Membership Number _____
(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

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 Larry Mobley
779 County Road 106
Ozark, AL 36360

For Office Use Only
Check # _____
Check Date _____
Amount _____
Date Rcvd _____

Web address – www.araassociation.com