



# The Straphanger Gazette



Volume 5 Issue 3

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

Jan, Feb, Mar. 2013



**“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

## God Dwelt Among Us

### It makes all the Difference!

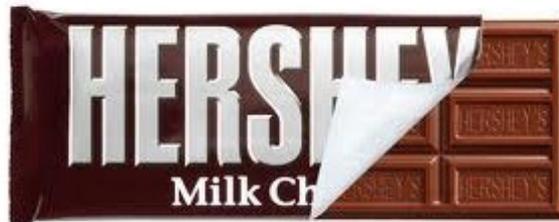
## Merry Christmas

## Happy New Year



### *President's Corner*

It seems that we just concluded the 2012 Reunion in Portland, OR and now it's time to plan for our **16<sup>TH</sup> ARA Reunion in Hershey, PA June 5 - 9, 2013.**



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](http://www.araassociation.com)). Information may also be found in the current issue of the Association Newsletter. These reunions bring together those who served our country, both enlisted and officers and their families. Come and reunite with old friends, exchange good stories and more. If you're not a current member, join now. All members and their families are encouraged to attend this great event.

## **WHERE WE WILL BE STAYING**

Headquarters for the 2013 Reunion will be the Days Inn located at 350 West Chocolate Avenue, Hershey, PA 17033. Reservations should be made by calling the Days Inn direct at 717-534-2162. You must inform them that you are attending the Aerial Rocket Artillery Association Reunion to get the Association rate of \$109.00 + tax (11%). 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. For a virtual tour of the hotel and its amenities go to [www.daysinnhershey.com](http://www.daysinnhershey.com).

A word of caution to all – we are only guaranteed 35 rooms so you need to make reservations early to be assured of accommodations. Also, reservations made after May 5, 2013 will be prevailing rate and availability may be limited.

The Inn will provide a Hospitality Meeting Room for the ARA TOC.

## **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, June 5 is check in, get briefed, meet old friends, have dinner on your own at any of the fine restaurants in the local area. You may also get in an evening tour or activity if you want to or just visit with friends in the ARA Hospitality Suite.

**DAY 2** – Thursday, June 6 begins with breakfast at the hotel or on your own followed by the Gettysburg Battlefield Tour. 2013 is the sesquicentennial remembrance of the Gettysburg battle. The bus will leave the hotel at 8:00 a.m. and return at/about 5:00 p.m. Lunch will be on your own in the Visitors Center.

Our one and a half hour trip will take us through the Pennsylvania countryside to the Gettysburg National Military Park. The National Park Service Museum and Visitor Center is where we will begin our visit. The *Gettysburg Museum of the Civil War*, with 22,000 square feet of exhibit space, features relics of the Battle of Gettysburg and personalities who served in the Civil War, inter-active exhibits, and multi-media presentations that cover the conflict from



beginning to end as well as describe the Battle of Gettysburg and its terrible aftermath. The center also hosts the film, "A New Birth of Freedom", narrated by award winning actor Morgan Freeman and the restored Gettysburg Cyclorama, which depicts the final fury of Gettysburg- "Pickett's Charge". After picking up our tour guide we will tour the Gettysburg Battlefield, scene of some of the most horrific fighting of the American Civil War. The tour will include Big and Little Round Top, Devil's Den, and Cemetery Ridge – scene of Pickett's Charge, the high-water mark of the Confederacy.

For those who wish to remain in the Hershey area there is a multitude of activities. You may tour the Museum on Chocolate Avenue and experience the Hershey Story, visit Chocolate World, Hershey Park, Antique Automobile Club of America, Appalachian Brewing Company, Zoo America, Hershey Rose Garden, etc. For information about these sites go [www.visithersheyharrisburg.org](http://www.visithersheyharrisburg.org). After an active day of touring and sightseeing, have dinner at one of the many dining establishments in the local area.



Finish the day with friends in the ARA Hospitality Suite.

**DAY 3** – Friday, June 7, will begin with breakfast at the hotel or on your own. We will then car pool to Fort Indiantown Gap for a tour of the Eastern Army National Guard Aviation Training Site. We will see current aircraft – UH-60, CH-47, AH-64 and the new UH-72 Lakota



and tour the UH-60 and CH-47 Simulators. Seat time will be available for those who would like to try their hand once more. We will also tour Ground Combat Simulators.



Lunch at Fort Indiantown Gap will be on your own at the base Community Club or close taverns. A tour of Hershey Gardens will be available for those who choose not to go to Indiantown Gap.. Here you may tour the butterfly house and any or all of the 11 distinct theme Gardens, and of course the

gift shop. Transportation is by individual carpool.

**DAY 4** – Saturday, June 8, will be breakfast at the hotel or on your own.

The Board of Directors will meet at 8:30 a.m. followed by the Association Business Meeting in the hotel conference room from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

The remainder of the day is available for you to visit your favorite attraction in the Hershey, Harrisburg and Lancaster areas.

The final activity will be the Farewell Dinner at the American Legion Post 272 in Harrisburg, PA from 6:00 – 10:00 p.m. There will be a social hour with appetizers and cash bar.

After dinner and return to Hershey, meet with friends in the ARA Hospitality Suite.



**DAY 5** – Sunday, June 9 is final breakfast and departure from the Hershey area.

*Editor's Note:*

*Our President has done a really great job of putting together a first rate program for our 16th Reunion. Perhaps you have not considered what goes into preparing such an occasion. Perhaps you have never been charged with such a task in your military or civilian career. Perhaps you have not considered all the glass balls one must juggle to please and meet all the needs which such a disparate group as ours brings to the table. There is geography (how far one must travel to get the reunion site), cost (in our age group fixed income takes on real meaning and the current and anticipated economy are very significant factors). One must consider having activities which will satisfy men, women and even children (Hershey Park and the surrounding area provide this) . But in addition to these things we need to remember who we are and where we came from. In this edition are the reports of the passing of three who impacted on our lives and now are gone.*

*The years are passing quickly and there are many whose fate we do not know. The images grow dimmer with each year. For me personally, there are many I would dearly love to see one more time before they begin to cite the daily death rate of the Vietnam era veterans as they now do those of the WW II and Korean veterans. Changes in the art of war and demands of the terrain have made the ARA a footnote in the history of war. There likely will be no more of us. However, what we shared and what we did are worth retelling, if only among ourselves.*

*I would encourage you to begin setting aside the means and the time for getting to Hershey for this reunion. It will be fun as well as refreshing. Think about bringing the grandkids to Hershey Park. Tempus fugit.*

Asa



## **ARA HERSHEY RENDEZVOUS**

**16<sup>TH</sup> ARA REUNION, HERSHEY, PA \*\*\*June 5 – 9, 2012\*\*\***

### **Reunion Registration Form**

<b>Information</b>	
Name/Membership #	
Wife/Guest name(s)	
Additional Guest(s)	
Street Address	
City, State, Zip Code	
Telephone/e-mail	
Any special assistance/ needs required	

Arriving on \_\_\_\_\_ Departing on \_\_\_\_\_ Driving Yes/No Flying Yes/No

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

<b>REGISTRATION/EVENT FEES</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Price</b>	<b># In party</b>	<b>Total</b>
Registration Fee	per member in party over age 18	<b>\$30.00</b>		
Annual Membership Dues	If not already paid for 2013	<b>\$25.00</b>		
Thursday – Gettysburg Tour**	per member in party over age 18	<b>\$37.00</b>		
	children in party (K-12)	<b>\$35.00</b>		
Saturday – Farewell Dinner	per member in party over age 12	<b>\$35.00</b>		
	children in party (K-12)	<b>\$9.00</b>		
<b>Total for Reunion</b>				

**\*\*Registration forms will be numbered in order received to insure seating on bus.**

**Please complete out and return by May 5, 2013 so that we may finalize all plans and secure set prices for events. Please send a confirmation of attendance e-mail to reunion host for head counts. Thanks and hope to see you all in June in Hershey, PA. Other events/tours can be arranged through reunion hosts.**

E-mail address for host – Cecil Hengeveld is [cufly66@verizon.net](mailto:cufly66@verizon.net): Telephone # 717-566-8941

Please make checks payable to **ARA ASSOCIATION** and mail to:

ARA ASSOCIATION  
c/o Jule Szabo  
5118 Brentwood Farm Drive

## **THOUGHTS FROM THE IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT**

**I want to share an email that I received from Cecil Hengeveld - a letter that was written by a 27 year old veteran of Iraq in anticipation of Veteran's Day, 2012. The writer is Alex Horton, who served 15 months as an infantryman with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Stryker Brigade.**

**To my 21 year old self, on the eve of war.**

**I know you have a lot on your mind right now, but I need to tell you a few things before you take that bird into Iraq.**

**Now you're sitting in Kuwait drinking warm near-beer for your 21<sup>st</sup> birthday, wondering what combat is going to be like, and if you're going to keep calm when that first bullet cracks over your head. You're worried about making a mistake that gets someone killed. But you're going to be fine. Your training will kick in. You'll watch your platoon's back, and for the rest of your life, they'll have yours.**

**But some of your brothers are going to die out there. It's not only part of combat, but life itself, something hard for you to understand right now. I don't want to tell you who is going to be killed. I want you to cherish every moment you have with your buddies. I want you to savor it. Let their presence linger. Remember what their laugh sounds like. Remember what their dreams were. Someday, when you're back home, you'll have to live for them.**

**You're going to be in Iraq for 15 months, but it's going to take the rest of your life to come home. Remember mom talking about grandpa having issues 40 years after the Korean War? He had it much worse than you, but you will see many of the same things he did. That's a strange thing about war. It never changes, and it will never leave the air.**

**Nothing I can say will prepare you for life back in the states. Running water and supermarkets will feel like decadent luxuries. The warm touch of a woman will feel so good that it'll be almost unbearable. But your heightened senses will also betray you. Crowded bars will suffocate you. Loud noises in the night will launch you out of bed and into the embrace of a pistol. But it's up to you if it's going to be a point of strength or a point of weakness. But every night gets easier, and after a while, you'll sleep like a rock most nights.**

**Despite some challenges, the Army and the war will give you more than they took. You know when I said the guys in the platoon will always be there for you? They're your best friends now, but what's about to happen up north will forge something greater than friendship, even greater than love. You will be linked to them forever. Keep that in mind when they call. You'll need to lean on them when no one else will understand.**

**And this might be the most important lesson: remember to enjoy the gift of life your fallen comrades will give you. Slow down once in a while. See what the world looks like without a rifle in your hands.**

**You don't know it yet, but someday you'll be looking for peace. And you'll find it.**

**As I read this letter it occurred to me that it could have been written by any one of us as we made our way to war some 40+ years ago, just change the name of the place from Iraq to Vietnam and everything in this letter falls into place.**

**Jesse Hobby  
ARA 6X**

# A Scientific Pearl From our Normally Taciturn Texas Vice President

Ever walk into a room with some purpose in mind, only to completely forget what that purpose was? This well-known phenomenon has been noted for many years among advancing seniors and is a matter of concern for grandparents and children alike. Most commonly referred to as, "The Hereafter Syndrome" it is described as walking into a room and trying to remember what it was you came here after.



Turns out, doors themselves are to blame for these strange memory lapses.

Psychologists at the University of Notre Dame have discovered that passing through a doorway triggers what's known as an event boundary in the mind, separating one set of thoughts and memories from the next.

Your brain files away the thoughts you had in the previous room and prepares a blank slate for the new locale.

Whew! ..... Thank goodness for studies like these!

N. G. Brown ARA 5

## WHICH MILITARY SERVICE IS BEST *Courtesy of Ray Pollard*

A Soldier, a Sailor, an Airman and a Marine got into an argument about which branch of service was "The Best." The arguing became so heated that the four service men failed to see an oncoming truck as they crossed the street. They were hit by the truck and all killed instantly.

Soon, the four servicemen found themselves at the Pearly Gates of Heaven. There, they met Saint Peter and decided that only he could be the ultimate source of truth and honesty. So, all four servicemen asked him, "Saint Peter, which branch of the United States Armed Forces is the best?"

Saint Peter replied, "I can't answer that. However, I will ask God what He thinks the next time I see him. Meanwhile, thank you for your service on Earth and welcome to heaven."

Sometime later the four servicemen see Saint Peter and remind him of the question they had asked when first entering heaven. They asked him if he was able to find the answer. Suddenly, a sparkling white dove lands on Saint Peter's shoulder.

In the dove's beak is a note glistening with gold dust. Saint Peter opens the note, trumpets blare, gold dust drifts into the air, harps play crescendos and Saint Peter begins to read the note aloud to the four servicemen.

### *MEMORANDUM FROM THE DESK OF THE ALMIGHTY ONE*

TO: All Former Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines

SUBJECT: Which Military Service is Best?

All branches of the United States Armed Forces are honorable and noble.

Each serves America well and with distinction.

Serving in the United States Military represents a great honor warranting special respect, tribute, and dedication from your fellow man. Always be proud of that.

Warm Regards,

GOD  
MASTER AVIATOR  
US ARMY (Retired)



# The Survival of Captains Mike Brown and Marco Cordon

Copyrighted art by Joe Kline

The following is a transcription of a tape recorded debriefing of Mike Brown. This debrief was performed on the same day that Mike and Marco survived being hit by an SA-7 missile while operating at an altitude of about 4,000 feet.

**Mike Brown**—On 21 June 1972 I was working on a mission in support of an ARVN airborne brigade in the vicinity of the village of Tan Khai on highway 13, approximately 6 miles south of An Loc. We were escorting a US slick unit that was tasked with extracting the ARVN airborne brigade from Tan Khai for redeployment. In support of this, we had a heavy fire team, 3 AH-1G's Cobras. I was the AC of Chalk 3. The method of support was to put one ship low with the lift flight and two ships high to provide overall area coverage. Chalk 2 and 3 in the heavy team were the high birds. I was chalk 3

On my second gun run into the area, in which I was providing suppressive fires, I broke to the right and made a pass from SE to NW breaking right over Highway 13 and was in the process of rejoining Chalk 2 and taking his wing position, when I was struck by a SA 7 missile.

So far as I know, no one else has survived in a helicopter, this type of anti-aircraft fire. I think there was a combination of things that account for the fact that I am alive and my pilot is alive. I don't want to underestimate the importance of luck which was the most significant contributor to our good fortune. I do feel, however, there are some things that we did, some that we had not done, and a lot of luck which was able to save us.

Before describing the impact of the SA-7, let me back track a little bit. I think the single most important thing that happened was the fact that other personnel in the area, other aircraft in the area, were able to observe the missile being fired. As they observed it, they yelled, "missile, missile, missile!" over the VHF radio. I think the fact that I knew what I was hit by, and what the aircraft should do was the single most important contributing factor, outside of luck, in my survival.

I feel every unit, or every task force, that is operating in an area where SA 7's are known to be, should have an SOP on alerting aircraft when a missile is fired. They should also have someone posted in such position as to advise or observe 360 degrees around the flight as possible, so that these can be seen.

After hearing the words, "missile, missile!", I looked over my left shoulder, and I saw the signature of the missile. I thought it was heading for my aircraft. Just as I saw the missile, I also saw it hit the aircraft. Probably at the same time as it was hitting my aircraft, I was rolling off my throttle, and bottoming my collective pitch. The impact of the missile on my aircraft did not seem to be that severe. There was concussion, but there was not as much as one might expect. I would say judging on the way it felt to me, as far as concussion was concerned, there was probably not more HE charge in the warhead of the SA 7 than there was in a 40MM grenade. What happened to the aircraft as it was hit, was the tail boom was totally severed in the vicinity of the battery compartment, which on the Cobra is directly below the exhaust stack. The aircraft, as soon as it was hit, jostled slightly. It seemed to pitch up and pitch down and from side to side. This was followed, during the autorotation, the aircraft beginning to spin about its mast to the right at a nose low attitude. As the aircraft descended, it spiraled, making a spiraling descent, and continued to spin slowly about the mast. The speed of the spin was, I would say, about the same angular velocity as one would experience in a normal rate pedal turn.

I did not look at any of my instruments after being hit. Shortly after I was hit, or as soon as I was hit, I lost all radio communication. I had no radio communication whatsoever. I did however have intercom with my front seat. Using the intercom, I instructed my pilot, CPT Cordon, to empty the his turret weapons system, fire it out. He attempted to do so, but was unable to do it. My control movements, during the descent, were very few. Having been aware, for some time, that this could happen, I had pretty well thought it through, what I would do, if I were hit by a SA-7, and my tail boom were severed. It seems to be characteristic of the missile that it does sever the tail boom, if it strikes you from the side. I felt the biggest problem that I would have with no tail boom would be the CG shift. That and that it would be most difficult to prevent the nose from becoming extremely low particularly in a loaded helicopter. And this would have to be the biggest problem I would have to cope with. As it worked out, that was exactly the case. I told myself, that this were case, and prior to the crash, I told myself, that my action would be to pull complete aft cyclic and attempt to correct for the CG shift. This I did, it but did not prevent a nose low attitude. Those who observed my descent said I appeared to be descending in a skids level attitude, however I felt that I was nose low. I attempted to experiment with the cyclic enroute to the ground. I tried slight left and right cyclic movements which did little for me, and as far as I am concerned, was a waste of time. I feel that anybody that has the same misfortune that I had in flight, should attempt to only pull aft cyclic. Their only concern should be CG. As far as cyclic movement should be, I bottomed the pitch and I left it that way. I made no attempt to control RPM. I made no attempt whatsoever to select a forced landing area. There was no way I could have controlled the aircraft to bring it to a forced landing area. Probably if I had selected a forced landing area, I probably would have not made anyway, even if I could have guided the aircraft to it. I'll explain the reasons for this later on.

During the descent, RPM built. As it built, I felt feedback forces in the cyclic and the collective. The cyclic tried to pull itself forward. I pulled it back and I was able to keep it against the rear stop during the entire descent. The collective attempted to push it self up, I was able to keep it on the bottom, until my pitch pull. Also, during the descent, a couple things I tried to do were trying to fire out my turret as I was able to see that I was not able to adjust my CG. I also attempted to jettison my wing stores but my wing store jettison did not function. I suspected, as I thought about this prior to my accident, that it would not, since the wing store jettison circuit breakers and your electrical power is largely located in the forward portion of the tail boom. So my wing store jettison capability was lost, and having determined this, I attempted to fire out the remainder of my ordnance. I was 50% expended at the time. My ordnance, my 2.75 inch rockets, could not be fired. With these three unsuccessful attempts, the turret, the wing store jettison, the rocket firing, all failing, I abandoned all further hope of slowing my rate of descent, by getting rid of extra weight or by shifting my CG by getting rid of extra weight in the wrong places.

As I said before, the only control movement that I made, cyclic-wise, was to pull complete aft cyclic and held it there and bottomed my collective pitch and held it there.

At about 30 feet above the trees, was where I pulled my pitch. I pulled pitch at about the same rate that I would in a normal autorotation, except I pulled every bit of pitch that I had. The collective was full up as I reached the ground. This significantly slowed my descent and also assisted in my CG problems. I wouldn't say that I recovered from the nose low attitude, but it recovered somewhat. It had also begun a violent spin. At this point, I can't remember if the spin went to the right or the left. I do know it was violent, I do know that it was stopped by my landing in the trees.

The second most significant thing that saved me, was the fact that I did land in trees. I had no choice over whether I was going to land in trees or land in an open area. It was something that fate alone could determine. As I said, there was no directional control nor was there any selecting a forced landing area. But luck was with me and I did land in trees, which helped me in two ways. One, they stopped the spin of the aircraft, two they assisted in cushioning my fall.

On impact there was no fire, the engine had continued to run. I had rolled of the throttle to the flight idle position initially, however I did not attempt to make further attempts to shut the engine down. If I had it to do over again, I would probably do that. I would probably attempt to shut the engine down, if I would have had time to do so.

My concerns were, fire and my ordnance exploding, however my impact was soft enough that I do not believe the fuel cells were broken, and therefore the fire was not a factor, as it had been in other cases where people come down as a result of a SA 7 strike.

As far as what I did on the ground, I was on the ground for approximately 10 or 15 minutes. And I don't believe what I did on the ground is of that much assistance to anyone else. Suffice it to say, that I did land in a bunker complex; my front seat and I both made attempts to conceal ourselves until friendly aircraft got in the area. My survival radio would not operate, so we moved into a clear area and waved until we were spotted by friendly aircraft. At this point we concealed ourselves again to await pickup.

Other significant things which I think contributed to success here were, number one I had only had 600 pounds of fuel on board the aircraft at the time of the crash, and I was 50% expended. I had fired all of my outboard pod, and I believe, a few of my inboard rounds.

As far as feelings, I think the psychology is as important as anything else, as how you survive this thing. There was no question, having been around SA 7 environment, for the last two months, in my mind, that I was dead on the way down. However, I never gave up. I had enough control over the aircraft to do something for myself. I still had a good rotor, I still had two controls, my aft cyclic and my pitch control, and in the end, the things I was able to do, assisted in saving my life.

I think, probably, the most critical point, is when you come to the altitude where you should pull pitch, the 30 feet or so, you know in your mind, or I knew, in my mind, that I had it, that I was dead from this point on or would be dead in a very short span of time. However, I did what I thought I should do anyway, and fortunately for me, it worked out to the best. I hope that by putting these things on a tape and putting them in a place where other people operating in the same environment can have access to what I say, that it will save others' lives. I feel however that all the elements must be working in one's favor, because they were with me. I feel that, as I said initially in the tape, luck was the biggest factor in saving my life. The aircraft did go to a place, i.e. the trees, where ground conditions assisted in bringing the descent to a favorable conclusion.

There is no question in my mind, that I had I gone to an open area, that the outcome would have been much different. As I said, whether I would have wanted to or not, I would have had no control over the aircraft. I will not say it's impossible to survive this type of crash by landing in an open area. I feel now that an important thing is that as long as you continue to fly the aircraft, no matter what your situation is, that you use every available control that you have. Every control you have is an asset and you have some chance. I do feel, however, in my case, that the violence of spin after pitch pull, and probably that fairly high rate of descent, I don't believe we would have made out of the aircraft it had not been for the trees.

Other things that were beyond my control, were the situation factors; the fact that I was 50% expended and that I only had 600 pounds of fuel. Had I had 100% ordnance on board, and a 1200 pound load of fuel, the situation would have been far different.

So again, I conclude and say that it is my hope that this tape will do some good, and the right combination of luck and knowing what to do with the aircraft, in the event that this happens to anyone else, will result in saving somebody's life.

## Ladies of the Association

Dear ladies of the ARA members,

I am looking forward to our June reunion and hope all of you can attend. As we prepared for this holiday season, I took some time to reflect on my blessings and the good fortune I have had in meeting all of you. We each have unique memories of this holiday season and sometimes these memories may include sadness and loss, but when you look into a child's face of wonder either at your church or home, you remember the true meanings of the season. My wish is to try and celebrate Christmas every day---love, peace, random acts of kindness and gratitude for my many blessings. May 2013 bring all of us good health, happiness, and many more of life's finer and richer memories.

Fondly,

Peggy

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## ARA Association now on Facebook

The Association now has a Facebook address where members can post comments, pictures, stories or whatever you post on the social media.

It is <https://www.facebook.com/AerialRocketArtilleryAssociation>. Feel free to use this media for communication or chat.

# FINAL FLIGHT



**CWO Charles W. Gossett** - 66, flew with B & C Btry. 2/20th ARA in 1970 and later with 138Avn. Co. passed away on July 31, 2012 after a valiant but futile three month battle with aggressive lung cancer. Ironically, he was the author of the "Let's Smoke on This" stories in the VHPA Aviator. Charlie also was notable in his close call concerning a threatened court-martial driven by a DivArty commander who had been too long in the field. (See The Straphanger Gazette, Vol. 4 No. 1)

He is survived by Lynne, his wife of 21 years, one daughter and one son. He became interested in aviation at 19 through the Ft. Bliss Flying club, served one tour in Vietnam as a grunt, in '65, and went to flight school in 1968. During his more than 20 year career in the army, Gossett flew Hueys, Cobras and then OV-1 Mohawks and RU-21. He retired as a CWO 4, Master Aviator with over 4,000 flight time (1600 hours of combat flight). He was awarded the Silver Star, the DFC, Purple Heart, Bronze Star (1OLC) and 60 OLC on his Air Medal.

Charlie had set four goals for himself early in life. He wanted to become Army aviator, a Law Enforcement officer, a Park Ranger and a firefighter. After his retirement from the Army he joined the Ormond Beach Police completing the Academy at 43. After retiring from that he began volunteering at state parks and eventually was taken on a full-time ranger. In time he became an authority on Wildfire Firefighting and use of Controlled Burns. Thus, Charlie came full circle and he and Lynne "retired" to Hendersonville, NC. To complete his days.

Charlie Gossett was a hero in war and a servant of his community in peace. High Flight, Charlie

**Major Dick Hale**—83, flew with B Troop 1/9 Cav 1966-67 and was CO of C Btry. 4/77 ARA 101 ABN Div 1970-71 entered eternal rest September 16, 20112.

He began his flying career in Class 58-13 and left the service to become a police officer with the Dayton (OH) department. However, in 1963 due to the need for experienced pilots Dick was recalled and would serve two tours in Vietnam. During that time he was shot down three times but avoided serious injury or capture. Hale remained on active duty until his retirement. In addition to his service he earned a BA from the U. of Omaha and for several years was the Airborne Traffic Reporter for WONE/ WTWO radio.

Dick is survived by his wife of 58 years and one daughter, three grandchildren and 9 great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by one daughter, one grandson and three brothers.

Family members, friends and Soldiers attend the funeral and memorial service for **Command Sgt. Maj. (Retired) Basil L. Plumley**, October 16, 2012 at The Infantry Center Chapel and The Fort Benning Cemetery. Plumley was well known for his actions as Sergeant Major of the 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment at the Battle of Ia Drang and was a veteran of World War II, Korea and Vietnam. He passed away October 10, 2012.

Present to honor CSM Plumley were his former commander, LTG (Ret) Hal Moore, and several holders of the Medal of Honor. Presenting the flag to the family was MG Bruce McMaster.





# Chaplain's Corner

## “Joyful”

I am having a difficult time being “joyful” today, even though we are only a week from Christmas. I usually have no trouble “getting into” or “being in” the “Christmas Spirit” by this time of the year. Our church choir here at Parrish United Methodist Church just completed the Christmas Cantata yesterday where we sang of “Jesus here with us,” “Joy to the World,” “Bring a torch, Jeanette Isabella,” “Go, tell it on a mountain!” “Ring the Bells,” and “It’s a time for Christmas, it’s a time for Joy!”

I feel a great emptiness when I think of how this Christmas will be so different for so many people because of tragedy, sickness, and evil in this world. The events in Newtown, CT, recent news from the combat zone, news from your doctor about a terminal illness, or a betrayal by a loved one, have left so many facing a different Christmas. One asks the question, “Where is God in all this mess?”

The inordinate horror in the massacre of those innocent little children brings to memory the readings of Herod’s slaughter of the innocent children in hopes of finding and killing the Christ Child. This Biblical account comes to us during the time of Christmas, even though Jesus is no longer a babe in a manger when the killing of the innocent takes places. I can only imagine the pain of the mothers and fathers, sister and brothers, and other family members as they experience this great loss of life. What was the purpose of this slaughter? Why was it such a necessary part of our Christmas Story?

Then, as it is today, our world is filled with sin and evil. These conditions were the very things from which Christ came to redeem us. The baby Jesus was a threat to Herod and his kingly rule because Jesus’ birth was to show that God had come in the flesh to show us that his rule of the world was greater than mere man.

How does one speak to this latest mass killing or the loss of life in a foreign country fighting for a cause that seems questionable? What do we say about the pathology report that accompanies a doctor’s announcement that we have very few days left on this earth? How do you explain to a wife and children why the husband/father was killed in a drive-by shooting while stopped at a traffic light waiting to turn left?

No matter how we try, we fall short of providing a complete and satisfactory answer.

God knows the pain of losing a child, - His son. This was the ultimate price God paid for you and me, to get us beyond an eternal death. Some of us will travel this earth longer than others. Jesus died a young death by our standards. Many young soldiers live much shorter lives.

Life is like running. Some don’t even make it out of the start blocks; others may make it to 100 yards, some complete one lap of the field; then there will be the few who finish the race. But in life, we don’t know how far we will make it until the race for us is over. Let us not forget that evil still exists in this world and as humans we each will be exposed to it in our daily lives. In a world of sin and evil there is death; however, God came to conquer death and to give us life, abundant life! God desires peace for us. In that promise we should find “joy!”

My prayer for today is that we all find some form of peace in our lives as we struggle through these days of tragedy, sickness, adversities, and bad news. I pray that all families who suffer will find reassurance from the God of peace, love, hope, mercy, and joy.  
Peace,

Bruce Wilder  
Chaplain

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