



The Straphanger Gazette



Volume 16 No. 3

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

January—March, 2024

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“Aerial Rocket Artillery”

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

The Straphanger Gazette is a quarterly publication of the Aerial Rocket Artillery Association. Issues will be

published on or about the 1st of January, April, July and October. Members who have e-mail will receive a copy as an pdf attachment

IN THE DARKEST HOURS, HIS LIGHT DISPELS THE DARKNESS



President's Corner

ARA PASSING OF BATON - James departed this world on November 14, 2023, leaving a legacy of courage and a distinguished military career exemplified by bravery, dedication, and unwavering love for his family and country. Jim served for a number of years on the ARA board as vice president and president. Please keep your thoughts and prayers for Jim's family.

Accordingly, under the By-Laws of ARA, Jule Szabo, current VP, has assumed the office of President. The Vice President position will remain vacant during the normal election cycle next year.

Looking Forward - Wishing everyone Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year in 2024. It is time to reflect on new resolutions and our plans for the future year.

Speaking of plans in 2024, we are just short of nine months away from our 2024 reunion aboard the Royal Caribbean ship “*Mariner of the Seas*” for a 5-day cruise, September 7 – 14, 2024, leaving from Port Galveston, Texas. Their efforts have been aimed at making this reunion exceptionally special for attendees.

You can just stay on board and enjoy the on-board activities or participate in shore excursions. We will be able to have the group eat dinner together as a group as well, and some shore tours. The possibility of a designated room to be used as a hospitality room is on the table . Please make your reservations as soon as possible and check those passports. See additional detail in this current newsletter and the *flash* email you received earlier as separate notice.

I hope the newsletter finds you in good health and at a time in your life when you can enjoy your favorite hobby or pastimes.

Jule Szabo

ARA Six

2024 REUNION CRUISE

September 7 – 12, 2024 // Departing Galveston, TX

During our annual 2023 reunion in St. Louis, our members decided to take us where we've never been before – the high seas! Join your fellow ARA members as we set sail on Royal Caribbean's Mariner of the Seas on a 5-night cruise through the Western Caribbean.

Your cruise committee – AKA your cruise directors, Jesse Hobby, Cecil Hengeveld, and James Flemming – are hard at work to make this cruise our most memorable reunion yet! We also have the services of a dedicated cruise planner through AAA. *Read on to learn more and begin planning your travel!*

PLEASE NOTE – THIS DOCUMENT REFERENCES “LINKS” TO INTERNET PAGES. YOU MAY READ THIS DOCUMENT ON OUR WEBSITE ARAASSOCIATION.COM AND CLICK ON 2024 REUNION, FROM THERE YOU CAN SEE THE PAGES THAT ARE REFERENCED.

Dates: September 7 – 12, 2024

Cruise Line: Royal Caribbean

Ship: Mariner of the Seas

Mariner of the Seas Cruise Itinerary:

Day 1 - Depart Galveston at 4:00 PM CST

Day 2 - Cruising Day at sea

Day 3 - Puerto Costa Maya, Mexico

Day 4 - Cozumel, Mexico

Day 5 - Cruising Day at sea

Day 6 - Arrive Galveston, TX (Morning of)

Read on to learn more about costs, how to book, travel to Galveston, and required documentation for cruising!

TRAVEL TO GALVESTON:

ARRIVING BY AIR:

It is recommended you and your party arrive on September 6, 2024 OR in the early morning hours of September 7, 2024. Galveston is south of Houston and there are major airports to fly into.

- **William P. Hobby Airport (HOU)** is SOUTH of Houston and is the closest airport to Galveston. It is serviced by Allegiant, American, Delta, Frontier, and Southwest Airlines (*a major hub for Southwest*).
- **George Bush Intercontinental International Airport (IAH)** is NORTH of Houston and will require more travel time to Galveston.
- Terminal A is the smallest and least crowded terminal for arrivals and departures. *It is serviced by Air Canada, Alaska Airlines, American Airlines, Delta, Frontier, Jet Blue, Southwest, Spirit, and WestJet.*
- All other terminals are serviced by *United Airlines or are international.*

DRIVING:

Houston and Galveston are easily accessible by car. Please note – much of Houston is serviced by toll-roads. If you are arriving by car, please contact Jesse Hobby for tips on driving - including how to register your car's tag (license plate) to use the toll roads in Texas.

There is parking at the Port of Galveston and you can reserve parking there – [click here to learn more.](#)

AAA CRUISE PLANNER / TRAVEL COUNSELOR:

To make this a seamless and easy booking experience, the board has added the services of a dedicated AAA Cruise AND Travel Planner, that you may contact directly to help you with all of your travel plans – including air and hotel in the Houston/Galveston area. (Costs are outlined below as well)

Ms. Hasmita Babulal, Travel Counselor, The Auto Club Group (AAA)

hbabulal@acg.aaa.com

407-638-2041 or 407-444-4240

(Please note, AAA membership is not required)

2024 REUNION CRUISE COST / STATEROOM RATES**:

Interior Stateroom: \$1005.84

Oceanview Stateroom: \$1273.84

Balcony Stateroom: \$1587.84

The rates for these categories are for two (2) passengers per stateroom, prices are subject to change, and number of rooms of each type is subject to availability.

A \$100.00 per person (non-refundable) deposit is required, remainder may be paid in full or installments with PIF due no later than 5:00 PM June 9, 2024. At least eight (8) reservations are required to get group rates. There is also a \$90.00 gratuity payment per person due upon booking or as part of installment payment (s) or will be added as final payment prior to leaving ship.

*** These are group rates and are refundable. Please contact Hasmita if you have questions about refunds.*

IMPORTANT: *If you would like a suite or other cabin that is not listed here, Hasmita will help you get the best rate possible. We have not negotiated any rates beyond our stateroom categories. This would NOT be a part of our group rates.*

BEVERAGE PACKAGES/EXCURSIONS/ENTERTAINMENT & MORE:

After booking you should establish a Royal Caribbean account directly on Royal Caribbean.com

From there, you can then obtain information for Beverage Packages, Excursions, Dining, Entertainment, Spa, etc.

REQUIRED TRAVEL IDENTIFICATION DOCUMENTS:

Directly from Royal Caribbean's Travel Document Page:

In order to sail, you and your guest (s) must meet the requirements of

ONLY ONE from the list below

AND

**All documents must be original – no photocopies.
Your name must match across ALL documents.**

- **U.S. Passport Book OR U.S. Passport Card**

Royal Caribbean strongly recommends that all guests travel with a valid passport. [Learn why a passport is best.](#)
Passports must be valid at least 6 months after your cruise ends.

[Read more about passport requirements.](#)

- **U.S. Birth Certificate AND Valid Government Issued ID (State ID Card, Driver's License OR Military ID)**

- Original U.S. State Certified Birth Certificate or a certified copy; or an original Consular Birth Abroad Certificate from the U.S. State Department.

- [Read more about birth certificate requirements.](#)

- Guests **age 15 and under** are NOT required to have a photo ID, just the birth certificate.

Permanent Resident Card (Alien Resident Card "ARC" OR Green Card) **AND Valid Passport from Country of Citizenship**

- Guests must bring their physical Permanent Resident Card and it must be original – no photocopies.
- **Passports must be valid at least 6 months after your cruise ends.**
- [Read more about passport requirements.](#)
- Guests **age 16 and older** whose ARC has no photo must present a valid government issued photo ID
- Barbados & Martinique require ARC guests to provide a valid passport.
- **Any additional requirements are the responsibility of the guest.**
- **U.S. Naturalization Certificate **AND** Valid Government Issued ID (State ID Card, Driver's License OR Military ID)**
- Original U.S. Naturalization Certificate or a certified copy.
- Guests must bring their physical Permanent Resident Card and it must be original – no photocopies.
- **Enhanced Driver's License (EDL) that is not expired**
- Enhanced Driver's Licenses are only available from the following states: Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Vermont and Washington State.
- **An Enhanced Driver's License is different from a REAL ID (compliant ID). An EDL will have a flag on the front.**

ANCHORS AWAY! SEE YOU IN GALVESTON

Editor's Note:

It has become clear that age, health, and available energy are leading us to embrace a somewhat modified approach to our reunions. The concept of substituting a cruise for a city-based site has been well received by those who have answered our questionnaire.

Admittedly, at our age we don't buy green bananas, but it would behoove us to register early for this reunion. That would enhance our bargaining power for group dining, collective tours, Hospitality Room, and all the things which would make the trip as smooth as possible.

Ms. Hasmita Babulal, Travel Counselor, The Auto Club Group (AAA) hbabulal@acg.aaa.com 407-638-2041 or 407-444-4240 is our travel planner and is extremely helpful and knowledgeable. I recommend utilizing her for whatever needs you may have. You may also contact any member of the Cruise Committee or the Board for questions or clarification.

This reunion will be a consistent subject in future issues of the Straphanger.

A SHORT HISTORY OF COMBAT RATIONS

In times of war, ensuring the well-being of soldiers becomes a critical priority. The Army C-Ration, an iconic part of military history, played a critical role in providing sustenance to troops in the field. The origins of the C-Ration can be traced back to the early 20th century, when the United States recognized the need for a standardized field ration. Prior to its development, soldiers relied on perishable food items and often struggled to find nourishment amidst the challenges of combat.

The first iteration of the C-Ration was introduced during World War I, in 1917. Initially known as the “reserve ration”, it consisted of canned meat (usually corned beef or bacon), hardtack biscuits, and coffee. While it provided sustenance, the early rations lacked variety and taste, leading to widespread discontent among the troops.

In response to feedback and advancements in food preservation technology, the C-Ration underwent significant improvements during World War II. The canned meals were now more diverse, containing items like meat and vegetable stew, beans and franks, and even canned fruits. These rations were specifically designed to withstand harsh weather conditions and could easily be transported to different theaters of operation. They were packed in compact containers, making them convenient for soldiers on the move.

The Korean War in the 1950s brought further refinements to the C-Ration. This iteration included additional components such as cigarettes, chewing gum, and instant coffee, which served as morale boosters for soldiers in challenging combat environments. However, despite these advancements, complaints persisted regarding the taste and monotony of the rations.

The Vietnam War saw the introduction of the MCI (Meal, Combat, Individual), an improved version of the C-Ration. These meals were packaged in lightweight, vacuum-sealed pouches, reducing both the weight and bulkiness of the rations. The MCI included a wider variety of meals, with choices ranging from spaghetti and meatballs to beefsteak with mushrooms. The addition of hot sauce packages and other condiments further enhanced the taste and overall satisfaction among soldiers.

As the 20th century progressed, the C-Ration underwent continued evolution. In the 1980s, the MRE (Meal, Ready-to-Eat) replaced the C-Ration, offering more diverse menu options, improved nutritional value, and better packaging. The MREs included a flameless ration heater, allowing soldiers to enjoy a hot meal even in the absence of cooking facilities.

While the C-Ration is no longer in use, its legacy endures as a testament to the Military’s dedication to ensuring the well-being of its troops. The development and refinement of the C-Ration reflected a commitment to providing soldiers with nourishment, even in the most challenging circumstances. It served as a lifeline to countless men and women serving in the frontlines, sustaining them through the toughest of times.

The Army C-Ration remains an integral part of military history, representing not only the evolution of field rations but also the resilience and resourcefulness of those who fought to defend their nation. It stands as a symbol of the unwavering commitments to meeting the essential needs of soldiers, ensuring that they were not only armed but also nourished to face the challenges that awaited them in the defense of freedom.

Submitted by:

Jesse L. Hobby

Armed Falcon 29 Fox 1

Copied from the June issue of the newsletter of The National Vietnam War Museum located in Weatherford, TX.

Editor's Note: One of the few pleasures of being the Editor of the publication is to be able to tell stories which hopefully compliment other contributions and give enjoyment to his readers.

This is in response to Jesse Hobby's preceding excellent historical piece.

Another legacy of the C Ration is the P-38 can opener, which came with larger quantities of packages, and were kept by those fortunate enough to obtain one (or more) for future reference. Even after leaving combat and the service, one could be found on the key chain, in the wallet, still attached to the dog tag chain, or preserved with love in a jewelry box or some other treasure chest. They were often passed down through the generations as a necessary part of emerging manhood. No self-respecting Boy Scout would be without one in the woods.

On my first duty station in 1958, as a fledgling 2nd Lt, I was detailed from Ft. Ord, CA to Camp Roberts, CA to serve as Property Book Officer and Chief of the Maintenance Section. The role of the latter was to re-open the mess halls, barracks, and other buildings to be used by the National Guard and USAR units who came for their annual summer training sessions, and then to "mothball" them again at the end of the summer camps. One would quickly learn to loathe cosmoline, the military's idea of the perfect preservative.

The former task made a poor 25 year old, New York street fighter, into the sole signatory for a 20 million dollar equipment pool, and all the logistical supplies which were needed for the support mission, which included a warehouse of C-Rations. The upside was that I got to play with major hardware, including wheeled, treaded, towed and self-propelled. The downside was that I did not sleep easily with that responsibility.

One day, I got a brilliant idea. Back in about 1942, Lucky Strike cigarettes were packaged with the characteristic bullseye circle colored green. The green dye was found to be a critical component of munitions and, thus "Lucky Strike Green went to war" replaced by red and was never to be seen again. However, C-Rations all contained small packages of 4 cigarettes (of varying brands), so, having a warehouse filled with endless C-Rations, I went on a search to see if the common idea that the government was decades behind in issuing material to the troops was true. I began a careful inventory of "C's" to be issued to the troops that summer to see if any contained cigarettes with the green circle. After all, he had been 15 years since the transition. Junior officers often have too much time on their hands. However, it was a lot less dangerous than hanging out with my boss's teenage daughter; not to mention the viewpoint of my pregnant wife.

In short, it took about a week of opening and resealing boxes but, low and behold, I found some. In case you have ever thought your field rations tasted like stale dog doo-doo, now you know why. My only regret is that I did not save some of them. It would probably augment my retirement nicely.

HOLIDAY EATING TIPS FROM LARRY MOBLEY

1. Avoid carrot  sticks. Anyone who puts carrots on a holiday buffet table knows nothing of the Holiday spirit. In fact, if you see carrots, leave immediately. Go next door, where they're serving rum balls. 
2. Drink as much eggnog as you can. And quickly, it's rare. You cannot find it any other time of year but now. So drink up! Who cares that it has 10,000 calories in every sip? It's not as if you're going to turn into an eggnog-alcoholic or something. It's a treat. Enjoy it. Have one for me. Have two. It's later than you think. It's Christmas! 
3. If something comes with gravy, use it. That's the whole point of gravy. Gravy does not stand alone. Pour it on.  Make a volcano out of your mashed potatoes . Fill it with gravy. Eat the volcano. Repeat.
4. As for mashed potatoes, always ask if they're made with skim milk or whole milk. If it's skim, pass. Why bother? It's like buying a sports car with an automatic transmission. 
5. Do not have a snack before going to a party in an effort to control your eating. The whole point of going to a Holiday party is to eat other people's food for free. Lots of it. Hello?
6. Under no circumstances should you exercise  between now and New Year's. You can do that in January when you have nothing else to do. This is the time for long naps , which you'll need after circling the buffet table while carrying a 10-pound plate of food and that vat of eggnog.

7. If you come across something really good at a buffet table, like frosted Christmas cookies 🍪 in the shape and size of Santa 🎅 position yourself near them and don't budge. Have as many as you can before becoming the center of attention. They're like a beautiful pair of shoes 👠. If you leave them behind, you're never going to see them again.
8. Same for pies 🥧. Apple 🍏, Pumpkin 🎃, Mincemeat. Have a slice of each. Or if you don't like mincemeat, have two apples 🍏 and one pumpkin 🎃. Always have three. When else do you get to have more than one dessert, Labor Day?
9. Did someone mention fruitcake? Granted, it's loaded with the mandatory celebratory calories but avoid it at all cost. I mean, have some standards. 🐼 🐼 🐼
10. One final tip: If you don't feel terrible when you leave the party or get up from the table, you haven't been paying attention. Re-read tips; start over, but hurry, January is just around the corner. Remember this motto to live by:

Life should NOT be a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in an attractive and well preserved body, but rather to skid in sideways, chocolate and wine in one hand, body thoroughly used up, totally worn out and screaming " WOO HOO what a ride!"

A LESSON WORTH REPEATING

When I was a HS sophomore – decades ago! – my World History teacher was Mrs. Holloway, but we all called her Granny Holloway. She was a slight woman, scarcely 5 feet tall, seemingly fragile, but full of vim and vinegar...you know the type. She could speak for hours about the Fall of the Roman Empire, the Inquisition, the Industrial Revolution, and the World Wars. She never sat while she lectured, never stood at a lectern, but moved around the room making eye contact with all of her students. She was demanding too, and I can't remember how many papers were sent back to me because she would note "you can do better than this"

One day during class, an office aid interrupted her lecture to hand her a note. She read it silently, apologized, and said she needed to leave the room. We knew it had to be important because Granny Holloway stopped lectures for no one.

We sat in the room talking to one another when the door opened, and in walked Mrs. Abels, another teacher in our HS. She explained to us that Granny had been faced with an emergency, a serious one, and it was questionable if she would even be returning to finish out the semester. We were stunned. Would we get a chance to tell her goodbye? Would we get updates, so we would know she was ok? Mrs. Abels assured us that we need not worry, that Granny was safe but needed time away, and that the best thing we could do for her, and the best way we could show our devotion to her, was to be cooperative with her replacement. Mrs. Abels confirmed that she had been asked and had agreed to step in as Granny's replacement.



Cheer up, she told us, this could be a good thing. Other teachers still believed in endless homework and projects with deadlines and hard work. She would not bring that into our class. She believed in clean slates. If there were grades that we did not like, she could give us a chance to bring them up. She asked us what suggestions we had to make the semester a better learning experience. Someone mentioned that lectures were boring and we wanted more films. Done, she said. Someone else mentioned that a free day now and then would help us if we needed to catch up on work in other classes. She didn't see a problem with that. She asked us how we felt about an end-of-semester party. Um, yeah, sounded very good to us. And on and on. Mrs. Abels listened intently and agreed to all of our suggestions, continually emphasizing that her concern was that we have a good learning experience and enjoy the semester. She also reminded us that we were lucky to not be sent out to other classes where we would be working to catch up, and that of course this was all for Granny.

Near the end of the period, shortly before the bell rang, the door opened and Granny sauntered in with her usual Granny Holloway attitude. "How did they do?," she asked. "Marvelous," said Mrs. Abels. "They were completely in my hands."

Granny then faced us and said "And that, my students, is how a dictator takes over a nation. Not with guns or tanks or laws or mandates. They do it using a poster child and promises and gifts and protection from an enemy."

I can't remember a lesson all through 12 years of public school that made such an impression on me, and has stayed with me.

We are among wolves in sheep clothing, many are being deceived with a false light! I was falling for it myself until the Lord opened my eyes to see and my ears to hear.

Stay awake! And buckle up. Put on the FULL armor of God, we are going to need it in the days to come, NO man is going to "Save the World"! Jesus Christ is the only Way, Truth and the Light!

Final Flight:

CW4 JAMES CASTILLO (RET)

It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of James Gilbert Castillo, President of the ARA, born on July 29, 1948, in Los Angeles, California. Surrounded by the love of his family, James departed this world on November 14, 2023 at the age of 75, leaving behind a legacy of courage, dedication, and unwavering love.

James, known to many as a devoted husband, father, grandfather, brother, and esteemed member of the military and aviation communities, led a life marked by selfless service and a commitment to excellence. He was the beloved husband of Rachel Castillo, sharing a lifetime of love and companionship. Together, they navigated life's challenges and celebrated its joys.



As a father, James leaves behind a profound impact on the lives of his sons, Sam and Carlos Castillo. His wisdom, guidance, and unconditional love shaped the men they became, reflecting the values instilled by their father.

James took immense pride in his role as a grandfather, finding joy in the laughter and energy of his grandchildren: Ella, Joaquin, Phoebe, and Alexander. He cherished the special moments spent with each of them, creating lasting memories that will endure through generations.

A dedicated brother, James is survived by his siblings, Daniel and Genaro Castillo, and sister Ruth Goble. Their bond was unbreakable, a testament to the strength of family ties that endured the tests of time.

Professionally, James Castillo forged a remarkable career as a helicopter pilot, retiring with honor from Federal Services. His commitment to duty extended beyond civilian life, as he proudly served in C Batt. 2/20th in 1970, and retired from the Army as a CW4. His distinguished military career exemplified bravery, leadership, and a steadfast dedication to his country.

James will be remembered not only for his professional achievements but also for his generosity, humility, and the warmth he brought to all who knew him. He leaves behind a void that cannot be filled, but his spirit will live on in the countless lives he touched.

Jim served the Aerial Rocket Association for many years as Vice-President, and was in his first term as President when cancer struck and cut short his tenure.

In honoring James Castillo's memory, let us reflect on the lessons he imparted, the love he shared, and the legacy he leaves behind. May he rest in eternal peace, and may his family find comfort in the enduring impact he had on their lives and the lives of all who were fortunate enough to know him.

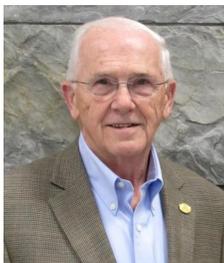
Jim was a great pilot who I flew with when he was in the Civil Air Patrol. He was the consummate professional and a great teacher. Although he loved his family, he also loved his Bonanza and took meticulous care of it. We all salute his service his dedication and mourn his passing.

Gene Cartier, a friend

Gary Bishop

Gary Bishop, 82, died peacefully at home on November 2, after struggling with pulmonary fibrosis for the past three years. Despite the limitations of his illness Gary remained cheerful and uncomplaining. Gary loved the LORD and loved life and brought great enthusiasm to all who knew him.

He was born in Erie, PA to Ned and Edna Bishop, in 1941. After High School he joined the army and served in the Military Police for three years. He participated in the Cuban missile crisis, the Berlin airlift, while stationed in France. He then returned to PA and married his first wife, adopting and raising her two small boys and together they had a daughter Tricia.



After three years he reenlisted, this time becoming a helicopter pilot, serving two tours in Vietnam in B Batt. 2/20th, 1968-69, where he earned a battlefield commission. He was awarded a Silver Star for gallantry in action. His distinguished military career took him to several US states, Germany and Kenya. While assigned to Nairobi to teach the Kenyan army to fly he met Licia, who was on vacation from England. (They liked to joke that she was on a "husband hunting safari" and clearly bagged a good one.) They married in 1982 and enjoyed over 40 happy years together, living in KY, Kenya, Germany, GA and for the past 20 years here in Bozeman, MT.

Gary's final assignment was to the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, Fulda, Germany during the last days of the Cold War, guarding the East/West German border. After returning to the US, he spent 12 years in the business world which prepared him for his last career, teaching at MSU in the Jake Jabs College of Business for 15 years. He loved his time there and his interaction with his students as he prepared them for careers in the business world.

Gary is survived by his wife, Licia, daughter Tricia, granddaughter and great granddaughter. He was preceded in death by his parents, stepmother, half-sister, stepsister and his two adopted sons, and his dear dog, Cooper.

Gary is to be buried in Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, D.C. at a later date. His funeral was on December 7 at Grace Bible Church in Bozeman.



Chaplain's Corner

Alas, parting is such sweet sorrow.

Time does, indeed, march on; relentlessly and it does not hide its actions. For most of us, the start of a new day brings a realization that, “what does not hurt, does not work”. Creaks, cracks, lack of the old levels of energy, diminution of visual (and perhaps auditory) perception, a disturbing inability to remember where we put things or why we were here in first place, and the revelation that people we have known, and perhaps loved, are suddenly no longer with us. The vast majority of us who take a daily paper, although there is tragic decrease in the availability of ones worth reading, start with the obituary page; not so much to see if our names are there or whether we should bother to get up, but to timorously check which of our friends and acquaintances are there.

Solomon, supposedly the wisest man to ever live, told us that there is a time for everything, including a time to die. *Ecclesiastes 3:2*) Physiology teaches us that the heart begins to beat early in gestation and stops at some time determined by forces beyond ourselves. In spite of the aches, pains and wrinkles of aging, growing old beats the alternative. That is unless nature has brought you an illness of disability which makes living less than desirable. In real life, bad things happen to good people. In the last two issues we printed obituaries for six of our comrades. Some died of natural causes, some of chronic diseases and some of illnesses which claimed them quickly. In every case, they were gone before we knew it and before we could renew our relationship and perhaps say goodbye. In my own personal life I have recently lost friends of a lifetime.

For this reason we continue to urge members to attend a reunion and take the opportunity to see old friends again. The reunions are not so much for sightseeing or adding another place label to your luggage. They are to “see again” those we served with, flew with, sweated with, laughed and labored alongside. Among the saddest words of tongue and pen are. “Alas, it might have been”. If you are reading this, read the information on the next reunion, a five-day cruise out of the western Caribbean, and secure your place on the ship.

We need to end on a positive note and so I share the words of William Wordsworth and others.

*“Though nothing can bring back the hour of splendor in the grass,
Of glory in the flower, we will grieve not,
Rather find strength in what remains behind”.*

“Nothing is inherently and invincibly young except spirit. And spirit can enter a human being perhaps better in the quiet of old age and dwell there more undisturbed than in the turmoil of adventure”.—*George Santayana*

“The older I get, the greater power I seem to have to help the world; I am like a snowball — the further I am rolled the more I gain”.—*Susan B. Anthony*

“A human being would certainly not grow to be 70 or 80 years old if this longevity had no meaning for the species to which he belongs. The afternoon of human life must also have a significance of its own and cannot be merely a pitiful appendage to life’s morning”.- *Carl Jung*

“Beautiful young people are accidents of nature, but beautiful old people are works of art.—*Eleanor Roosevelt*



From the cradle to the grave

Enjoy the joys and blessings of Christmas,

Asa (Doc) Talbot
Chaplain and Editor

THE REAL CHRISTMAS STORY

Without the end
— *the tomb is empty*

Ladies of the Association

Christmas is often the hardest time of the year

Ladies,

I'm sorry about the circumstances making Jule president of ARA. I will always remember our time with Jim and Rachel at previous reunions. We hope memories of Jim will help Rachel and their family through this difficult time.

I hope you all have had a better Fall than we have. The girls and I have been sick for weeks. It is a busy time of year, and we can't seem to get better. We only brought our trees in the house a week and a day before Christmas. We are usually too busy to make cookies before Christmas. This year, we have been too sick to make cookies, yet.

Jule and I have already made our reservations for the cruise next year. We are looking forward to see as many people that can make it. This group is about shared memories and experiences. We all benefit from our time together.

Enjoy your holidays! Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, and/or Kwanza!

Joan



A young lady sat in a bus. At the next stop a loud and grumpy old lady came and sat by her. She squeezed into the seat and bumped her with her numerous bags.

The person sitting on the other side of the young lady got upset, asked her why she did not speak up and say something. The young lady responded with a smile:

"It is not necessary to be rude or argue over something so insignificant, the journey together is so short. I get off at the next stop."

This response deserves to be written in golden letters: "It is not necessary to argue over something so insignificant, our journey together is so short" If each one of us realized that our time here is so short; that to darken it with quarrels, futile arguments, not forgiving others, discontentment and a fault finding attitude would be a waste of time and energy. No one knows the duration of this journey. No one knows when their stop will come.

Did someone break your heart? Be calm, the journey is so short.

Did someone provoke or intimidate you? Be calm, forgive; the journey is so short.

Did someone betray, bully, cheat or humiliate you? Be calm, forgive; the journey is so short.

Whatever troubles anyone brings us, let us remember that our journey together is so short.

No one knows the duration of this journey. No one knows when their stop will come.

Let us cherish friends and family. Let us be respectful, kind and forgiving to each other.

Let us be filled with gratitude and gladness.

If I have ever hurt you, I ask for your forgiveness. If you have ever hurt me, you already have my forgiveness. After all, Our Journey Together is so Short! God bless you!

Have a safe journey!

Contributed by Gloria

Hobby

The most expensive vehicle to operate in 2023.



Mother-in-law came for dinner and said, "Why does the dog keep looking at me?" I said, "Because you're using his plate!"

Email addresses for the ladies

Baird, Marlene - flytiger@cablone.net; Borgeson, Pat - pborg12@yahoo.com; Brown, Linda -- lindawbrown@juno.com; Cooper, Roberta - rangerover53@yahoo.com; Dauley, Donna - dnurdgd@comcast.net; Doty, Maureen DotyMaureen@yahoo.com; Drew, Vickie—vdrew1214@gmail.com, Fleming, Gloria - gwhz@hotmail.com; Giles, Rose - r.c.giles41@gmail.com; Gomez., Milly - chcogomez@aol.com; Grice, Kathy- Kalgrice@gmail.com; Hengeveld, Peggy awings72@verizon.net; Hirst, Cindy --hirst@q.com; Hobby, Gloria - gloriahobby@yahoo.com; Jones, Diane— dianethomas40@yahoo.com; - Klinker, Kay -kayklinker@gmail.com; Mahoney, Melba - skyquen1@sw.rr.com; McAlister, Marilyn - 5starmcalister@att.net; ; O"Keefe, Maryetta ---maryetta4@cox.net; Padilla, Mary Jane mary_jane_padilla@hotmail.com; Pullano, Arlene - joseph.pullano@att.net; Quesada, Isabel—isamubra@hotmail.com or sapriisa44@hotmail.com; ; Retterath, Carol - rranch@westriv.com; Roberson, Linda - so.shinede@aol.com; Sanchez, Susie - sksdesigns1@verizon.net; Szabo, Joan -- sailboatjs1@verizon.net; Talbot, Jean -- asartalbot@gmail.com; Toepel, Mildred - mbtoepel@msn.com; Tokar, Barbara - BarbTokar@SBC.Golbal.net; Voeltz, Jean - cav2_20th@hotmail.com; Wilder, Patti - pattenmom05@yahoo.com; Williams, Dale - barbierule@aol.com; Wilson, Ellie -geneandellie@comcast.net

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To Be Elected in 2025

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Herb Hirst—Asst Treasurer

If Men are from Mars
& Women are from Venus.
I assume all those other
genders were pulled out of
Uranus. 😊

Thank you Ray Hatfield



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

Name: _____

Address: _____

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.

Men's Polo Shirt(s) - _____ X \$20.00 = _____ Size _____

ordered

Women's Polo Shirt(s) - _____ X \$20.00 = _____ Size _____

ordered

Women's Long or 3/4 Sleeve Button Shirt(s) - _____ X \$25.00 = _____ Size _____

ordered

Patches, Cloth – _____ X \$5.00 = _____

Specify Unit

Bumper Stickers - _____ X \$2.00 = _____

Specify Unit

Patches, Stickers - _____ X \$1.00 = _____

Specify Unit

Please add 7% GA ST and \$14.35 shipping charge to your order:

TOTAL = _____

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

ARA ASSOCIATION

c/o Jesse Hobby

145 Oakdale Rd.

Cairo, GA 39828

"Note from the Quartermaster - Apparel orders are taking longer to fill due to the supply chain crisis. Please be patient."



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
------	-------	----------

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 Jesse Hobby

For Office Use Only _____ 145 Oakdale Rd.

Cairo, GA 39828

Check # _____

Check Date _____