



The Straphanger Gazette



Volume 5 Issue 4

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Apr., May, June., 2013

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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.

Chocolate Lovers - Unite - at the 16th ARA Reunion



President's Corner

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



Looking forward to this year's reunion in Hershey PA. Flowers will be in bloom and so will Hershey! Rooms are still available, but going fast. There are new attendees this year looking to renew old friendships. I am sure many great memories will be made too.

Hershey Park has several new roller coasters looking for crews. There are a wide variety of venues to chose from. Vineyards, breweries, stage shows, museums, sports teams and great restaurants.

The rest of us will be enriched by your attendance. Please come to your reunion.

For the benefit of the new members and those who may not have saved the last Straphanger, we are repeating the information.

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.

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.

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 and the local theatre 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

NOTE: The Theatre tour is back on the list and the application form is correct.



ARA HERSHEY RENDEZVOUS

16TH ARA REUNION, HERSHEY, PA *JUNE 5 – 9, 2013*****

Reunion Registration Form

Information	Arriving	Departing	Driving Yes/No	Flying Yes/No
Name/Membership #				
Wife/Guest name(s)				
Additional Guest(s)				
Street Address				
City, State, Zip Code				
Telephone/e-mail				
Any special assistance/ needs required				

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

REGISTRATION/EVENT FEES	Details	Price	# In party	Total
Registration Fee	per member in party over age 18	\$30.00		
Annual Membership Dues	If not already paid for 2013	\$25.00		
Thurs – Gettysburg Tour *	per member in party over age 18 per member in party (K-12)	\$37.00 \$35.00		
Friday Theater/Garden Tour **	per member in party	\$15.00		
Saturday – Farewell Banquet	per adult member in party per member in party (K-12)	\$35.00 \$9.00		
Total for Reunion				

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

** Available tour for those who do not wish to go to Ft. Indiantown Gap.

Please complete and return by May 5, 2013 so that we may finalize all plans and to 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 HERSHEY, PA in June 2013. Other events/tours can be arranged through reunion hosts.

E-mail address for Cecil Hengeveld is 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
Fairfax, VA 22030

THOUGHTS FROM THE IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

Most of us belong to one or more organizations that are military and/or Veteran oriented such as our ARA Association, Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association, Combat Helicopter Crewmembers Association, American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, etc. Most of these organizations publish a magazine or newsletter and if you are like I am you first scan certain sections looking for the names of people that you served with in the Aerial Rocket Artillery, from other aviation assignments, or classmates from Flight Training. In the Nov/Dec issue of the VHPA "Aviator" I found the obituaries of Charlie Gossett (B/C/2/20) and Dick Hale (C/4/77) in the Nov/Dec issue of the "Aviator" and the obituary of John H. "Jack" Michaels (A/4/77) in the Jan/Feb issue. These were forwarded to our editor for inclusion in our newsletter.

The "Aviator" also has a new member section and in it I found the names of three more ARA Aviators – Albert L. Lanstra, who served in 4/77 ARA in 68-69, John C. Mattina who served in C/2/20 ARA in 70-71 and Malcolm H. Roberts who served in C/4/77 in 69-70. None of the three is a member of the ARA Association but will be invited to join when I get full addresses from VHPA.

Further reading in the "Aviator" revealed that we have another ARA author, Michael Lazares (Member #0522). Michael served in C/2/20 ARA and E/82 in 67-68. His book is titled "GOODBYE MY DARLING, HELLO VIETNAM." This book is available in local bookstores, at authorhouse.com, Amazon, or other book suppliers for \$19.95 + \$3.99 S&H. All profits will go to wounded warrior project. Michael is looking for first hand stories for a book about Army Aviators in Vietnam and I am sure that we have members who can provide them. Contact him at mdlazares@comcast.com.

I want to encourage everyone to carefully read your publications for information like this and forward it to our editor for inclusion in our newsletter. I realize that reading obituaries is not the most cheerful thing to do, especially when you realize that many of those who have died are younger than you are, but they were our brothers in arms, even if they didn't serve in the same unit or at the same time, and if we don't acknowledge their passing who will?

Moving on to other items – Reunion 2013 is fast approaching and if you haven't made a reservation at the hotel you might want to get it done. At last count 23 of our 35 guaranteed rooms were already taken and I was told that there were no deluxe king rooms left.

Lastly – Guys, it's getting tough to come up with articles about ARA actions in Vietnam. We are close to exhausting the material we have and I am sure that there are many more stories to be told. What was it like to be a cook, clerk, operations specialist, mechanic, crew chief, door gunner, ammo handler, etc.? You were the guys who made it work. What happened in the 4/77th area of operations? What was it like to be the last ARA in Vietnam? If you don't tell your story who will?

Jesse Hobby
ARA 6 X

Notice of need

We have received another request for information from Charles Brown who served with Hq/1/5th Cav which was part of 2nd Bde/1st Cav Div. On May 5, 1968 they were operating in the vicinity of LZ Peanuts which was west of Khe Sahn and in close proximity to the Lang Vei SF Camp when they were attacked and overrun by a large force of NVA. They called for and received support from an ARA element which was instrumental in repelling the attack. Their historian, John McGuire, is writing an account of this action and they would like to get in contact with the ARA unit that provided that support to get their input and also to say thanks for their help.

It would appear that this support would have come from B" Battery/2/20th since they normally supported 2nd Bde but also possible that it could have come from "A" or "C" Batteries. I believe that this was during the time that the 1st CavDiv was relieving the Marines at Khe Sahn.

If any of our readers can provide input please contact Jesse Hobby and he will pass on to Brown and McGuire.

ATTENTION

There will be a special shirt available for the reunion!

Arrangements have been made to offer a specially designed shirt for the Hershey reunion. This is a quality collared shirt which will be suitable to be worn anywhere –dining, golf, casualwear or even to work.

The shirt can be almost any color of the wearer's choice and will bear the unit patch of his choice. Each shirt will have only one unit patch so if you wish to have more than one patch, you would need to get two different shirts. Asa has most of the patches but if he does not have yours, he will need a picture of it. The techniques will be silk screen and the colors will be vibrant



The red ARA logo is on all shirts and there will be a line of type between the logo and the unit patch which says "Hershey—2013" in a color appropriate to shirt color .

Cost will be approx. \$16.50 for small through x-large. XXX approx. \$18.00, XXXX approx. \$20.00, 5X approx. \$24.00. Very tall people may be limited in the colors they can choose. This is a function of shirt availability. The more shirts ordered, the better the price can be. Each shirt must be ordered and paid for by 15 May 2013. The funds must be in Asa's hands before a shirt is ordered.

This would be a great shirt for children and grandchildren to wear and show the family colors. Because of the nature of shirt manufacture the more shirts of similar patch the less expensive. Color is not a problem.

A chart of available colors is below. Any questions should be directed to Asa ASAP. (See page 15)



ORDER FORM

Name _____

Address _____

Email address _____

Size: (Circle) Small Medium Large X-Large XX-Large XXX Large XXXX Large XXXXX Large

Color(s) _____ Desired Unit Patch(s) _____

Quantities:(Specify No., color and size) _____

Unit Patches on Hand.



Halos will be removed before printing shirts

Ladies of the Association

Ladies, the Hershey Gardens will be in bloom and the Hershey Theater awaits our arrival in June. I hope everyone is enjoying Spring and looking forward to our June reunion. There will be new faces this year and I am anxious to meet these ladies and rekindle "old" friendships. Stay safe and well and happy travels to the land of chocolate. Ladies: Be sure to get your husbands to read the Straphanger and share it with you. Fondly, Peggy Hengeveld

ATTENTION ALL ARA MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

This newsletter is the property of the membership of the ARA. As Editor my function is put together as much interesting material as I can and to see it is presented in an acceptable format.

I have been blessed in the past with good contributions from members, both original and obtained from other sources. This is critical to the continuance of a quality publication. No one wants to hear war stories from one person. Too many of us have tales of our own to tell. Our lives as brave, but foolish, youth are the repository of history which will be forgotten if not recorded. Already new generations have no idea of what we did, why we did it, and when we did it.

Two point eight million men went to Vietnam. There are only about 700, 000 left. There were never any like us before and there will probably never be again. Help me create a record which future young men and women can research and remember we were real.

Please share with me what you know and what you see. I will present it in an acceptable fashion maintaining the flavor of the original author.

Thank you,

Red Baron 16
Editor

U.S.S. Barb: The Sub That Sank A Train

In 1973 an Italian submarine named Enrique Tazzoli was sold for a paltry \$100,000 as scrap metal. The submarine, given to the Italian Navy in 1953 was actually an incredible veteran of World War II service with a heritage that never should have passed so unnoticed into the graveyards of the metal recyclers.

The U.S.S. Barb was a pioneer, paving the way for the first submarine launched missiles, and flying a battle flag unlike that of any other ship. In addition to the Medal of Honor ribbon at the top of the flag identifying the heroism of its captain, Commander Eugene "Lucky" Fluckey, the bottom border of the flag bore the image of a Japanese locomotive. The U.S.S. Barb was indeed, the submarine that "SANK A TRAIN".

July 18, 1945 (Patience Bay, Off the coast of Karafuto , Japan)

It was after 4 A.M. and Commander Fluckey rubbed his eyes as he peered over the map spread before him. It was the twelfth war patrol of the Barb, the fifth under Commander Fluckey. He should have turned command over to another skipper after four patrols, but had managed to strike a deal with Admiral Lockwood to make one more trip with the men he cared for like a father, should his fourth patrol be successful. Of course, no one suspected when he had struck that deal prior to his fourth and what should have been his final war patrol on the Barb, that Commander Fluckey's success would be so great he would be awarded the Medal of Honor.

Commander Fluckey smiled as he remembered that patrol. "Lucky" Fluckey they called him. On January 8th the Barb had emerged victorious from a running two-hour night battle after sinking a large enemy ammunition ship. Two weeks later in Mamkwan Harbor he found the "mother-lode" ...more than 30 enemy ships. In only 5 fathoms (30 feet) of water his crew had unleashed the sub's forward torpedoes, then turned and fired four from the stern. As he pushed the Barb to the full limit of its speed through the dangerous waters in a daring withdrawal to the open sea, he recorded eight direct hits on six enemy ships.

What could possibly be left for the Commander to accomplish who, just three months earlier, had been in Washington , DC to receive the Medal of Honor? He smiled to himself as he looked again at the map showing the rail line that ran along the enemy coastline. Now his crew was buzzing excitedly about bagging a train.

The rail line itself wouldn't be a problem. A shore patrol could go ashore under cover of darkness to plant the explosives.. .one of the sub's 55-pound scuttling charges. But this early morning Lucky Fluckey and his officers were puzzling over how they could blow not only the rails, but also one of the frequent trains that shuttled supplies to equip the Japanese war machine. But no matter how crazy the idea might have sounded, the Barb's skipper would not risk the lives of his men. Thus the problem... how to detonate the charge at the moment the train passed, without endangering the life of a shore party. PROBLEM?

Solutions! If you don't look for them, you'll never find them. And even then, sometimes they arrive in the most unusual fashion. Cruising slowly beneath the surface to evade the enemy plane now circling overhead, the monotony is broken with an exciting new idea. Instead of having a crewman on shore to trigger explosives to blow both rail and a passing train, why not let the train BLOW ITSELF up? Billy Hatfield was excitedly explaining how he had cracked nuts on the railroad tracks as a kid, placing the nuts between two ties so the sagging of the rail under the weight of a train would break them open. "Just like cracking walnuts," he explained. "To complete the circuit (detonating the 55-pound charge) we hook in a micro switch ...between two ties. We don't set it off, the TRAIN does." Not only did Hatfield have the plan, he wanted to be part of the volunteer shore party.

The solution found, there was no shortage of volunteers. All that was needed was the proper weather...a little cloud cover to darken the moon for the mission ashore. Lucky Fluckey established his own criteria for the volunteer party:

....No married men would be included, except for Hatfield,
...The party would include members from each department,
...The opportunity would be split between regular Navy and Navy Reserve sailors,
...At least half of the men had to have been Boy Scouts, experienced in how to handle themselves in medical emergencies and in the woods.
FINALLY, "Lucky" Fluckey would lead the saboteurs himself.

When the names of the 8 selected sailors was announced it was greeted with a mixture of excitement and disappointment. Among the disappointed was Commander Fluckey who surrendered his opportunity at the insistence of his officers that "as commander he belonged with the Barb," coupled with the threat from one that "I swear I'll send a message to ComSubPac if you attempt this (joining the shore party himself)." Even a Japanese POW being held on the Barb wanted to go, promising not to try to escape.

In the meantime, there would be no more harassment of Japanese shipping or shore operations by the Barb until the train mission had been accomplished. The crew would "lay low," prepare their equipment, train, and wait for the weather.

July 22, 1945 (Patience Bay, off the coast of Karafuto, Japan) Patience Bay was wearing thin the patience of Commander Fluckey and his innovative crew. Everything was ready. In the four days the saboteurs had anxiously watched the skies for cloud cover, the inventive crew of the Barb had built their micro switch. When the need was posed for a pick and shovel to bury the explosive charge and batteries, the Barb's engineers had cut up steel plates in the lower flats of an engine room, then bent and welded them to create the needed tools. The only things beyond their control were the weather....and time. Only five days remained in the Barb's patrol.

Anxiously watching the skies, Commander Fluckey noticed plumes of cirrus clouds, then white stratus capping the mountain peaks ashore. A cloud cover was building to hide the three-quarters moon. This would be the night.

MIDNIGHT, July 23, 1945

The Barb had crept within 950 yards of the shoreline. If it was somehow seen from the shore it would probably be mistaken for a schooner or Japanese patrol boat. No one would suspect an American submarine so close to shore or in such shallow water. Slowly the small boats were lowered to the water and the 8 saboteurs began paddling toward the enemy beach. Twenty-five minutes later they pulled the boats ashore and walked on the surface of the Japanese homeland.

Stumbling through noisy waist-high grasses, crossing a highway and then into a 4-foot drainage ditch, the saboteurs made their way to the railroad tracks. Three men were posted as guards, Markuson assigned to examine a nearby water tower. The Barb's auxiliary man climbed the ladder, then stopped in shock as he realized it was an enemy look-out tower....an OCCUPIED tower. Fortunately the Japanese sentry was peacefully sleeping and Markuson was able to quietly withdraw and warn his raiding party.

The news from Markuson caused the men digging the placement for the explosive charge to continue their work more slowly and quietly. Twenty minutes later the holes had been dug and the explosives and batteries hidden beneath fresh soil.

During planning for the mission the saboteurs had been told that, with the explosives in place, all would retreat a safe distance while Hatfield made the final connection. If the sailor who had once cracked walnuts on the railroad tracks slipped during this final, dangerous procedure, his would be the only life lost. On this night it was the only order the saboteurs refused to obey, all of them peering anxiously over Hatfield's shoulder to make sure he did it right. The men had come too far to be disappointed by a switch failure.

1:32 A.M.

Watching from the deck of the Barb, Commander Fluckey allowed himself a sigh of relief as he noticed the flashlight signal from the beach announcing the departure of the shore party. He had skillfully, and daringly, guided the Barb within 600 yards of the enemy beach. There was less than 6 feet of water beneath the sub's keel, but Fluckey wanted to be close in case trouble arose and a daring rescue of his saboteurs became necessary.

1:45 A.M.

The two boats carrying his saboteurs were only halfway back to the Barb when the sub's machine gunner yelled, "CAPTAIN! Another train coming up the tracks!" The Commander grabbed a megaphone and yelled through the night, "Paddle like the devil!," knowing full well that they wouldn't reach the Barb before the train hit the micro switch.

1:47 A.M.

The darkness was shattered by brilliant light and the roar of the explosion. The boilers of the locomotive blew, shattered pieces of the engine blowing 200 feet into the air. Behind it the cars began to accordion into each other, bursting into flame and adding to the magnificent fireworks display. Five minutes later the saboteurs were lifted to the deck by their exuberant comrades as the Barb turned to slip back to safer waters. Moving at only two knots, it would be a while before the Barb was into waters deep enough to allow it to submerge. It was a moment to savor, the culmination of teamwork, ingenuity and daring by the Commander and all his crew. "Lucky" Fluckey's voice came over the intercom. "All hands below deck not absolutely needed to maneuver the ship have permission to come topside." He didn't have to repeat the invitation. Hatches sprang open as the proud sailors of the Barb gathered on her decks to proudly watch the distant fireworks display. The Barb had "sunk" a Japanese TRAIN!

On August 2, 1945 the Barb arrived at Midway, her twelfth war patrol concluded. Meanwhile United States military commanders had pondered the prospect of an armed assault on the Japanese homeland. Military tacticians estimated such an invasion would cost more than a million American casualties. Instead of such a costly armed offensive to end the war, on August 6th the B-29 bomber Enola Gay dropped a single atomic bomb on the city of Hiroshima , Japan . A second such bomb, unleashed 4 days later on Nagasaki , Japan , caused Japan to agree to surrender terms on August 15th. On September 2, 1945 in Tokyo Harbor the documents ending the war in the Pacific were signed.

The story of the saboteurs of the U.S.S. Barb is one of those unique, little known stories of World War II that was obscured by the sinking of the U.S.S. Indianapolis and then the use of the Atomic Bomb. It becomes increasingly important when one realizes that the 8 sailors who blew up the train near Kashiho, Japan conducted the ONLY GROUND COMBAT OPERATION on the Japanese "homeland" of World War II. The eight saboteurs were:

Paul Saunders

William Hatfield

Francis Sever

Lawrence Newland

Edward Klingsmith

James Richard

John Markuson

William Walker.

Footnote: Eugene Bennett Fluckey retired from the Navy as a Rear Admiral, and wears in addition to his Medal of Honor, FOUR Navy Crosses...a record of awards unmatched by any living American. In 1992 his own history of the U.S.S. Barb was published in the award winning book, THUNDER BELOW. Over the past several years proceeds from the sale of this exciting book have been used by Admiral Fluckey to provide free reunions for the men who served him aboard the Barb, and their wives.

PS: The Admiral graduated from the US Naval Academy in 1935 and lived to age 93, passing on in 2007.

A social worker from Boston, Massachusetts was recently transferred to the mountains of West Virginia and was on the first tour of her new territory when she came upon the tiniest cabin she had ever seen in her life.

Intrigued, she went up and knocked on the door.

"Anybody home?" she asked.

"Yep," came a kid's voice through the door.

"Is your father there?" asked the social worker.

"Pa? Nope, he left afore Ma came in," said the kid.

"Well, is your mother there?" persisted the social worker.

"Ma? Nope, she left just afore I got here," said the kid.

"But," protested the social worker, (thinking that surely she will need to intervene in this situation) "are you never together as a family?"

"Sure, but not here," said the kid through the door. "This is the outhouse!"

Government workers are so very smart. Aren't you overjoyed that they'll soon be handling all our financial, educational and medical needs?

Army Helicopter Pilots Are Truly Honorable

One day, while an Army Helicopter Pilot was cutting a branch of a tree above a river, his axe fell into the river. When he cried out, the Lord appeared and asked, "Why are you crying?"

The officer replied that his axe had fallen into water, and he needed the axe to make his living.

The Lord went down into the water and reappeared with a golden axe.

"Is this your axe?" the Lord asked. The pilot replied, "No."

The Lord again went down and came up with a silver axe. "Is this your axe?" the Lord asked.

Again, the Army Helicopter Pilot replied, "No."

The Lord went down again and came up with an iron axe. "Is this your axe?" the Lord asked. The Army Helicopter Pilot replied, "Yes."

The Lord was pleased with the Army Helicopter Pilot honesty and gave him all three axes to keep, and the pilot went home happy.

Some time later the Army Helicopter Pilot was walking with his wife along the riverbank, and his wife fell into the river. When he cried out, the Lord again appeared and asked him, "Why are you crying?"

"Oh Lord, my wife has fallen into the water!"

The Lord went down into the water and came up with ANGELINA JOLIE. "Is this your wife?" the Lord asked.

"Yes," cried the Army Helicopter Pilot.

The Lord was furious. "You lied! That is an untruth!"

The pilot replied, "Oh, forgive me, my Lord. It is a misunderstanding. You see, if I had said 'no' to ANGELINA JOLIE, You would have come up with CAMERON DIAZ. Then if I said 'no' to her, you would have come up with my wife. Had I then said 'yes,' you would have given me all three.

"Lord, I am a poor man, and am not able to take care of all three wives, so THAT'S why I said yes to ANGELINA JOLIE."

The moral of this story is: Whenever an Army Helicopter Pilot lies, it is for a good and honorable reason, and for the benefit of others. That's our story, and we're sticking to it! -



Thanks for the concept to Anonymous, assumed to be a real fighter pilot unimpressed with remote combat.

Editor's Note: This was submitted by our beloved Chaplain and the editorial staff takes no responsibility.

FINAL FLIGHT

JOHN H. “JACK” MICHAELS

Graduated flight training with Flight Class 68-14 & 68-22. Flew in Vietnam with A/4/77 ARA/101st ABN (1969) and the 48th AHC (1970) under the call signs Dragon 32 and Joker.

John H. “Jack” Michaels was born April 21, 1944 in Watford City, ND and passed away on November 16, 2012.

As a young boy, Jack moved to Seattle, where he grew to love the mountains and forests of the north-west, and in particular his work with the Boy Scouts at Camp Parsons. Jack graduated from the University of Washington, and shortly thereafter served his country as an Army helicopter pilot in Vietnam. During his second tour he sustained a serious injury, and thereafter began a lifetime of service for people with disabilities: he helped found and lead local organizations serving veterans and those with disabilities. He served as chairman of the Governor’s Committee on Disability and Employment Issues, and National President of Paralyzed Veterans of America. In recent year, Jack helped prepare meals at the St. James Cathedral Kitchen, and led a Sister Parish relationship with people in El Salvador. Jack’s life was a quiet testimony of service. Always wearing a gentle smile, he reached out to people who were struggling, and who needed a courageous voice to support them.

Jack is survived by his loving wife Rosanne, one brother, one brother-in-law, and numerous nieces, nephews, and their children. Memorial contributions to NW Chapter of Paralyzed Veterans of America, Burién, or St. Francis of Assisi Sister Parish Fund.

Published in VHPA “Aviator” January/February 2013 issue.

Colonel George “Jake” Benjamin,

COL (Ret) George “Jake” Benjamin III passed away on January 1, 2013, at the age of 73. Jake spent his early years in Baltimore, MD. After high school he attended Morgan State University as a major in math and chemistry. Jake joined the US Army in 1964 and served three tours in Vietnam. His piloting experience included AH1G, UH1H, UH60 helicopters and the U8 and U21 airplanes.

Jake was released from active duty in 1973 and joined the Army Reserves in 1974. Jake retired from the Army Aviation Branch with the rank of Colonel in 1999. His numerous military awards include the Meritorious Service Medal, Bronze Star, Air Medal, Army Commendation Medal, National Defense Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal and Senior Army Aviator Badge.

Jake had also spent over 20 years as a member of the Executive Board of Quad-A and he also revitalized the So Cal Quad-A Chapter at Los Alamitos, CA. During his 38 year civilian career with GE, he was Western District Manager Aircraft Engines Business Group. He coordinated engine/airframe programs with various aircraft manufacturers including the Apache and Blackhawk Helicopters.

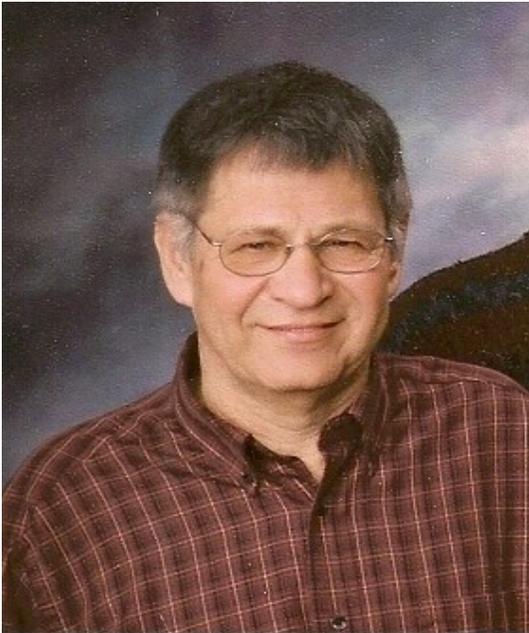
Jake was a loving husband, father, grandfather, son and lifetime soldier. Jake lived, loved life to the fullest and in grand style. He was a loyal and trusted friend, world traveler, great story teller and a more than avid golfer. Jake leaves behind his wife Mamie of 42 years, two sons, his mother and two grandsons. Jake will be greatly missed by the family and friends who cherished and loved him dearly.

Published in the March/April 2013 issue of the VHPA Aviator.

Jerry L. Myers, 65

EAST LIVERPOOL, PA - Jerry L. Myers, of Glenmoor, passed away at 3:09 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 3, 2013 at UPMC Presbyterian Hospital in Pittsburgh. Jerry, who had fought a long and courageous battle with diabetes, was 65.

Born on March 3, 1947 in Grove City, Pa., he was the son of the late Ashley and Helen Varner Myers. A U.S. Army veteran, Jerry served his country in Vietnam. During the war, he served honorably and faithfully as crew chief on the UH-1B/C and AH-1G Aircraft while assigned to "A" Battery, 2nd Battalion (ARA) "Blue Max" 20th Artillery, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) during combat operations in the Republic of Vietnam from July 1968 to July 1969.



Jerry L. Myers

A graduate of Butler High School, he continued his education at the Pittsburgh Institute of Aeronautics. He was a member of the Glenmoor Presbyterian Church, the Aerial Rocket Artillery Association and he enjoyed classic cars and motorcycles. He worked as a mechanic for United Airlines for many years until his retirement in 2003.

Surviving him are two daughters, Adrienne Hall and her husband, Jason, of Hookstown, and Ava Sabol and her husband, David, of East Liverpool. There are four grandchildren, Madison and Michael Loy, and Braeden and Benjamin Hall.

In addition, he is survived by three brothers, Roger Myers, and his wife Joyce, Terry Myers, and his wife Cassie, and Randy Myers, and his wife Kitty, all of East Liverpool.

He will also be missed by his beloved Boston Terriers, Suzie and Maxi.

Rev. Dr. Vel Vais of the church conducted a funeral service and burial took place at Greenlawn Burial Estates in Butler, Pa.

The Tri-State Veterans Burial Group will conduct full military honors.

View Jerry's memorial website and send condolences to the family online at www.dawsonfuneralhome.com

Special Note from your Chaplain

We have received word from Chuck Palmer who was the Maintenance Officer for Roger Bartholomew (CO, C Btry 2/20, 1965-66 and Bn Cmdr, 4/77, 1968) and a close friend of the Bartholomew family that Bart's widow, Shirley Bartholomew Gilbert, has terminal cancer. It was diagnosed late. She had been the primary care provider for her late husband, Mr. Brad Gilbert, who died of heart disease several years ago. Shirley is an Honorary Member of the ARA Association. Chuck thinks calls should be limited to dear friends. The two daughters are taking turns staying with their Mother. They said their mother would appreciate cards from people she knew back in the earlier ARA days at Fort Benning and in Vietnam. Her address is:

**Mrs. Shirley Gilbert
4481 Chattahoochee Plantation Dr.
Marietta, GA 30067**

We pray for God's loving and comforting touch during Shirley's illness and for her to experience God's full and abiding peace.

Bruce Wilder , Chaplain



Chaplain's Corner

“Missed Opportunities”

The emails I have received over the past few months have made it clear once again that we are missing many opportunities to stay in touch and to let others know how much their relationship means to us. Most of us had close relationships while in country with our “hooch” mates. We were with each other 24 – 7 for the entire tour, minus the R & R with our significant others. We were together each night for our sleep overs! We shared our meals, briefings, drinks, games, birthdays, anniversaries, Easter, Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Years Eve, suffering through the effects of the malaria pills, and to top it off, we risked our lives with each other on every mission. How many times have we called each other to say thanks for those precious days? I have said to myself, “I’ll call tomorrow.” But tomorrow never comes. Last month I received word via email that Tom Cochran had died. Now the news of Tom’s death was greatly exaggerated, but it hit me like a rock! This was Tom Cochran, the man with whom I flew many harrowing missions and got to know as a brother. We shared our shelter-halves as tent mates upon arrival in An Khe. He and I were the same age. He was born in Harve de Grace, Maryland (named for the port city of Le Harve, France, which meant Haven of Grace, and in 1789 was seriously considered to become the capitol of the United States). He grew up in High Point, NC. He had already spent a successful career with the 82nd Airborne Division. We sang together the popular 1959 song, “Long Black Veil” recorded by Lefty Frizzell, while Tom played his ukelele. We encountered several IFR night flights when we had to rely on his tactical instrument ticket and my limited fixed-wing instrument rating to get back to An Khe, we learned that the UH-1B fully loaded in the “Hog” configuration required the “running takeoff,” and we even learned what it was like to run out of pitch on an approach to LZ Oasis on a hot day and come plowing through the saplings while I was yelling, “Tom, Tom, Tom!” Tom Cochran, my brother, my friend, my stick mate, was dead. How could that be? There were things I wanted to tell him, to share an old story even if I had told it to him at our last meeting in 2006 at the ARA Reunion in Tampa with the VHPA Florida chapter, and to thank him for the happy times we shared.

I tried contacting every funeral home in the Biloxi area, but could not find our Tom Cochran’s name. I even went to every newspaper in the Kernersville, NC, area with no success. I sat at my computer stunned. I was so shocked and dismayed, sad for the news of Tom’s death and angry with myself for not having stayed in contact the past seven years. Tom, my friend from Armed Falcon 28Delta Section, A Btry 2nd/20th ARA, was gone!

Then, I get word from Joe Pullano that Bob Furney had just talked with Tom, and that he was not dead! Hallelujah!!!! I had been given another chance. I called Tom and when I identified myself he immediately exclaimed, “This is Tom and I’m not dead!” How relieved I was. I could now tell him how much he meant and how happy I was to be in contact once again.

Tom, I love you, man!

My prayer for us is that we not wait until we get the sad news to remember those who matter. God has given us today; let’s make use of

it and make that call! See you in Hershey, PA where we will celebrate that Tom is still with us!

God bless and keep you in his grace.

Bruce Wilder
Chaplain

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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 _____ 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 Jule Szabo
5118 Brentwood Farm Drive
Fairfax, VA 22030

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

Web address – www.araassociation.com