



The Straphanger Gazette



Volume 11 No. 4

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April-June, 2019

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

We were proud of our Aerial Rocket Artillery Team then and still proud of it now.

The Straphanger Gazette is a quarterly publication of the Aerial Rocket Artillery Association. Issues will be published on or about the 1st of January, April, July and October. Members who have e-mail will receive a copy as an pdf attachment

WE ARE ROLLING HOT ON SAN DIEGO.

GET ON BOARD FOR THE RIDE!



President's Corner

We are just short of six and a half months away from our Reunion in beautiful San Diego, CA at the Handlery Hotel, 950 Hotel Circle North, 92108, September 11 – 15, 2019. Dave and Pat Borgeson have done an outstanding job of planning; and garnering financial support for our 2019 Reunion. Their efforts have been aimed at making this reunion exceptionally special for all attendees. I highly encourage all of you to make your reservations as soon as possible. I have already make my hotel reservations and will register for the reunion very soon. I encourage you to do the same so that Pat and Dave can increase our room block early, if necessary, and not have to get an overflow hotel.

Great news!!! Joe Galloway and Marvin Wolf have committed to attend our Reunion. Both are well established Authors. Joe will be our keynote speaker at our Farewell Banquet, and Marvin will speak at our Welcome Dinner. They are working on a new book together about Vietnam Veterans who have made significant contributions to their communities after Vietnam. Marvin Wolf was a Combat Photographer with the 1st Cav, First Shift, in 1965 and has pictures of the ARA in action. Joe and Marvin will share and illuminate their ARA experiences with us.

Additionally, plans are in process to have a Cobra available to provide rides during our stay in San Diego. The Arizona Chapter of the Army Aviation Heritage Foundation and Flying Museum has a Cobra that is stationed in Chino, CA during the summer months until the end of September. I am working with the Chapter President to have it on hand for those who desire Cobra rides during our Reunion.

Please reach out to anyone that you know that served in the ARA, at any time, during its existence and encourage them to join us at our San Diego Reunion!!!

We, the Aerial Rocket Artillery (ARA) Association, will have a presence at the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association (VHPA) Reunion in Kansas City, MO with a TOC and recruiting table. The VHPA reunion is 28 May - 1 June 2019 at the Kansas City Marriott Downtown Hotel, 200 West 12th Street, Kansas City, MO 64105. The goal of this effort is to reach out to those aviators who served in the ARA and bring them into our organization.

There is an ongoing effort to collect as much ARA history as possible at the Field Artillery School. The Field Artillery Historian who retired in December 2018 has arranged for your written books, notes, journals, mission briefings, personal logs, personal accounts of missions; and audio recordings to be received by the Morris Swett Library and archived. Please send your written and audio accounts of your ARA experiences to:

Morris Swett Library, 730 SCHIMMELPFENNIG ROAD, FORT SILL, OK 73503

Blessings to you and your families. I look forward to seeing you in San Diego; if not in Kansas City before. But especially in San Diego.

The BEST of ALL things GOOD and WONDERFUL to you ALL!!!

Clovis Jones, Jr.
ARA 6

IT JUST KEEPS GETTING BETTER.

HERE IS THE WORD ON THE 2019 REUNION

This message is from your hosts, Pat and Dave Borgeson, for the San Diego Reunion in September 2019. Pat and I just completed our second planning trip to San Diego.

I will start with the Handlery Hotel. The dates of the reunion are September 11th (WED) to September 15th (Sun). We have a choice of a Superior King or a Superior Double room. The rate is \$119/night plus a 12.7% tax or about \$135/night.

You can book reservations now through the reservation office at (800) 676-6567 or (619)298-0511. Callers must refer to our group name of the Aerial Rocket Artillery Reunion to receive our preferred rate. To register online, the link is: <http://reservations.travelclick.com98118?groupID=2409813>.

The hotel address is: The Handlery Hotel, 950 Hotel Circle North, San Diego, CA 92108.

The hotel is located about 6 miles from the San Diego Airport, adjacent to the Riverwalk Golf Course (27 holes), and close to Fashion Valley Mall with 200 stores. The hotel has a large pool and breakfast is included.



The Handlery Hotel,

The hotel will extend our rate if you are planning to come in a couple days early or stay a couple extra days. There is no charge for parking for hotel guests. There is an Enterprise car rental agency within the hotel. Malia Wimmel is the manager and she can be reached t (619) 296-7493.

On the Wednesday night at 05:30 PM, we will bus to the Casa Guadalajara for a Mexican fiesta in Old Town San Diego. It will be a fun evening including a complimentary margarita.

On Thursday, we will depart the hotel at 09:30 AM. Our destination is the San Diego Air and Space Museum. After a couple hours at the museum, we will travel for a waterfront lunch at the Harbor House Restaurant. Next to the restaurant is Seaport Village so the ladies can look for some souvenirs. The bus will take us around the downtown area and then return to the hotel.

Friday is an **optional** day. If you choose the bus take you to the WWII aircraft carrier Midway. The cost of admission is included. After the tour of the Midway, there is about a two hour harbor cruise with a box lunch. After the cruise the bus will return you to the hotel. The cost for the day is \$79. A minimum of 20 people must sign up. We will refund money if enough people do not sign up.



Casa Guadalajara

On Saturday morning, we will hold business meetings between 10:00 AM to 12:00 noon. The afternoon is free time. The Farewell Banquet will be at the Handlery at 6:00 PM.

This will be a fun filled week with many choices. San Diego is a special city so plan ahead to take full advantage of your time here. We look forward to seeing everyone and sharing time together.

A Celebrity in our Midst.

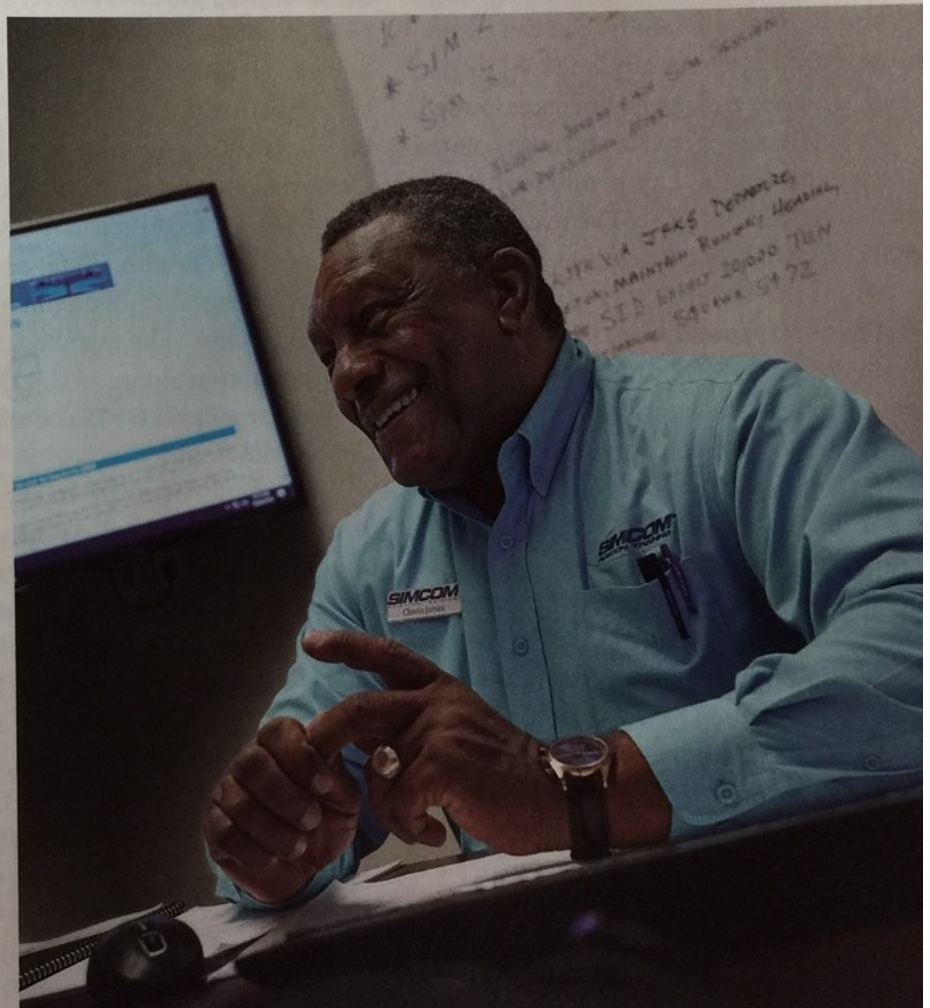
Our own Clovis Jones Jr. was featured in the February, 2018 issue of AOPA Pilot as the instructor for the Simcon Level C full motion simulator in Scottsdale, AZ. Below is the box which ran and gives his history.

CLOVIS JONES JR. Meet the instructor

Clovis Jones Jr. always wanted to fly, but when he signed up for the U.S. Army he was instead assigned for training as an Airborne Infantryman in the 1st Air Cavalry Division. After a tour of duty in the Vietnam War that included service in the battles for Pleiku and the Ia Drang Valley, he served a second tour in Vietnam, this time after speeding up the ranks and becoming the pilot of Bell UH-1 Huey and AH-1 Cobra attack helicopters. He retired as a major, having earned the Combat Infantry Badge, a Bronze Star, 20 Air Medals (one with a "V" device for saving a firebase from being overrun), two Army Commendation Medals, and a Presidential Unit Citation.

Next, he flew as a pilot for Howard Hughes' Summa Corporation. Then came stints as a Xerox corporate pilot, a second officer for Western Airlines, and first officer for Air California—now part of American Airlines. After that, he flew 22 years with FedEx flying Boeing 727s, DC-10s, and MD-11s, retiring once more, this time with more than 11,800 flight hours. Then, six months before he and I

met, Simcom offered him a job as a simulator instructor and training center evaluator (TCE). TCEs serve as a training center's designated pilot examiner. Seems retirement must not agree with him. —TAH



I've sure gotten old! I've had two bypass surgeries, a hip replacement, new knees, fought prostate cancer, and diabetes. I'm half blind, can't hear anything quieter than a jet engine, take 40 different medicines that make me dizzy, winded and subject to blackouts. Have bouts with dementia. Have poor circulation; hardly feel my hands and feet anymore. Can't remember if I'm 85 or 92. Have lost all my friends.

But thank God, I still have my driver's license!

THIS IS SOOOO True!!!! Use for June issue

Dick Durbin, a Senator from Illinois calls senior citizens the Greediest Generation as he compared "Social Security " to a Milk Cow with 310 million teats.

Here's a response in a letter from PATTY NYE from Illinois .. I think she is a little ticked off! She also tells it like it is!

"Hey Dick, let's get a few things straight!!!

1. As a career politician, you have been on the public dole (tit) for FORTY YEARS.
2. I have been paying Social Security taxes for 48 YEARS (since I was 15 years old. I am now 63).
3. My Social Security payments, and those of millions of other Americans, were safely tucked away in an interest bearing account for decades until you political pukes decided to raid the account and give OUR money to a bunch of zero losers in return for votes, thus bankrupting the system and turning Social Security into a Ponzi scheme that would make Bernie Madoff proud.
4. Recently, just like Lucy & Charlie Brown, you and "your ilk" pulled the proverbial football away from millions of American seniors nearing retirement and moved the goalposts for full retirement from age 65 to age, 67. NOW, you and your "shill commission" are proposing to move the goalposts YET AGAIN.
5. I, and millions of other Americans, have been paying into Medicare from Day One, and now "you morons" propose to change the rules of the game. Why? Because "you idiots" mismanaged other parts of the economy to such an extent that you need to steal our money from Medicare to pay the bills.
6. I, and millions of other Americans, have been paying income taxes our entire lives, and now you propose to increase our taxes yet again. Why? Because you "incompetent bastards" spent our money so profligately that you just kept on spending even after you ran out of money. Now, you come to the American taxpayers and say you need more to pay off YOUR debt. To add insult to injury, you label us "greedy" for calling "bullshit" to your incompetence.

Well, Captain Bullshit, I have a few questions for YOU:

1. How much money have you earned from the American taxpayers during your pathetic 40+ year political career?
2. At what age will you retire from your pathetic political career, and how much will you receive in annual retirement benefits from the American taxpayers?
3. How much do you pay for YOUR government provided health insurance?
4. What cuts in YOUR retirement and healthcare benefits are you proposing in your disgusting deficit reduction proposal, or as usual, have you exempted yourself and your political cronies?

It is you, Captain Bullshit, and your political co-conspirators called Congress who are the "greedy" ones. It is you and your fellow nutcase thieves who have bankrupted America and stolen the American dream from millions of loyal, patriotic taxpayers.

And for what? Votes and your job and retirement security at our expense, you lunk-headed, leech.

That's right, sir. You and yours have bankrupted America for the sole purpose of advancing your pathetic, political careers. You know it, we know it, and you know that we know it.

And you can take that to the bank, you miserable son of a bitch.

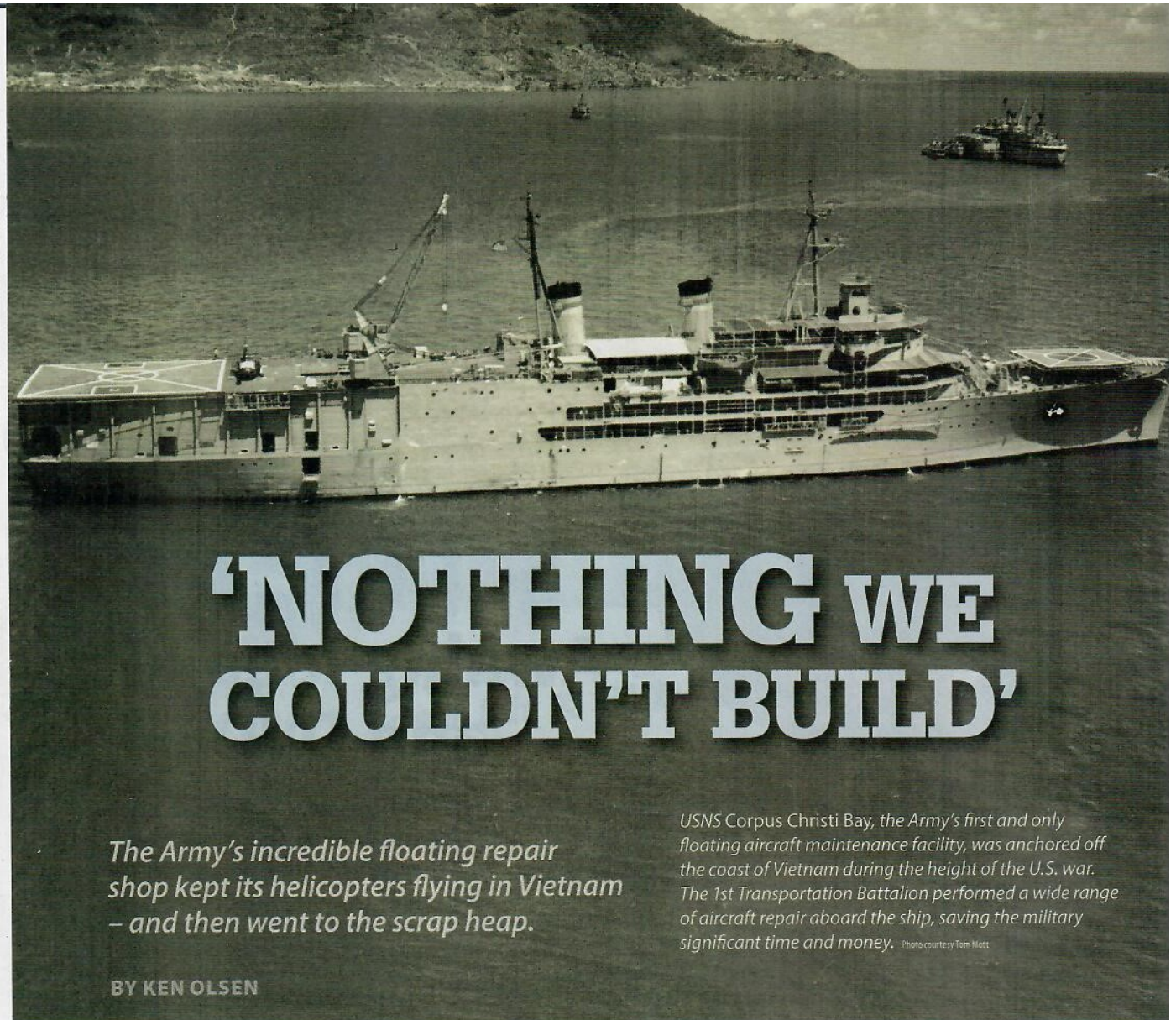
P.S. And stop calling Social Security benefits " entitlements ". WHAT AN INSULT!!!!

I have been paying in to the SS system for 45 years "It's my money"-give it back to me the way the system was designed and stop patting yourself on the back like you are being generous by doling out these monthly checks

“GOVERNMENT CAN BE LIKENED TO A BABY—A LOT OF NOISE AT ONE END AND NO RESPONSIBILITY AT THE OTHER”

Ronald Reagan

Editors Note: I kited around Vietnam a lot but I never knew this existed. Thanks to Ken Olsen and the American Legion Magazine



'NOTHING WE COULDN'T BUILD'

The Army's incredible floating repair shop kept its helicopters flying in Vietnam – and then went to the scrap heap.

BY KEN OLSEN

USNS Corpus Christi Bay, the Army's first and only floating aircraft maintenance facility, was anchored off the coast of Vietnam during the height of the U.S. war. The 1st Transportation Battalion performed a wide range of aircraft repair aboard the ship, saving the military significant time and money. Photo courtesy Tom Mott

Aron Lilley Jr. was stunned when he received what amounted to a recall notice halfway through his tour in Vietnam. The ship he commanded – a one-of-a-kind floating aircraft repair station with a stellar reputation for quality work and quick turnaround – should abandon its post and head home to save money, Army Audit Agency officials wrote.

Lilley and the more than 350 machinists, mechanics and other specialists on USNS *Corpus Christi Bay* knew the auditors were wrong. With the ability to overhaul everything from engines to electronics and parachutes to propellers, *Corpus Christi Bay* kept the helicopter-dependent Army flying in Vietnam. It was faster and far less expensive than the alternative: shipping aircraft components back to the United States for repair or re-creating the ship's sophisticated facilities on land somewhere in Vietnam.

“We could do a lot of things that had never been done before,” says Lilley, commander of the 1st Transportation Battalion (Seaborne) from June 1969 to June 1970. The ship repaired as many as 20,000 aircraft components a month and saved the military millions of dollars.

“There was nothing we couldn't build,” adds Doug Sapp, a sheet metal fabricator and airframe repairman during Lilley's tenure. “It was virtually a little Boeing.”

Lilley ultimately prevented the Army Audit Agency from recalling *Corpus Christi Bay*, and it remained off the coast of Vietnam until 1972. But the storied ship suffered a cracked hull in a tropical storm after the war and was sold for scrap in 1975, he says. Despite its success and a forceful lobbying effort by Lilley and other supporters, the Army never replaced its shipborne repair depot.

THE BEGINNING

The idea of a floating aircraft maintenance shop first arose during the U.S. military's island-hopping campaign across the South Pacific in World War II. The combat zone changed too quickly to justify land-based facilities, according to the U.S. Army Center of Military History. The concept was revived as a growing number of Army helicopters arrived in Vietnam in the early 1960s, when it became clear that the cavalry had to move by air.

Widely respected Army aviator Col. John Sullivan oversaw conversion of USS *Albemarle*, a World War II Navy seaplane tender, into a sophisticated repair depot that was rechristened USNS *Corpus Christi Bay*. At its peak, the makeover involved 1,000 workers at the Charleston Naval Shipyard.

The result was the first Army floating aircraft maintenance facility, with 37 repair specialties including molten-salt heat-treating ovens (temperature 1,800 degrees), metal-plating, chemical and metallurgical testing, and two deck cranes for unloading helicopter engines and other heavy freight. "You name it, there was a shop for it," says Alan Barrick, who served an 18-month tour on *Corpus Christi Bay* from 1969 to 1970.

"The ship provided several advantages," adds Ed Raines, a military historian. "It concentrated all the machinery and skilled mechanics and other technicians required to keep the aircraft, both fixed-wing and rotary-wing, flying."

A library of 180,000 blueprints made it possible for the 1st Transportation Corps to make practically any part for the aircraft components they serviced. The rest of the ship was equally impressive, with air-conditioned living quarters,



Alan Barrick served 18 months aboard *Corpus Christi Bay*, where he dealt primarily with rotor heads and swashplates, helping restore every piece to precise factory specifications. Photo courtesy Alan Barrick

dry cleaning and shoe-repair shops, a post exchange and a barber shop. There were facilities for a flight surgeon, medical staff and a dentist. But the renovated ship was so top-heavy that the military had to place five feet of concrete in the bottom of the hold to stabilize it.

Sailing and maintaining *Corpus Christi Bay* fell to a Merchant Marine captain and crew. The ship arrived in Vietnam in April 1966 with about 370 Army personnel running repair facilities. It was first posted to Cam Ranh Bay, then moved to Qui Nhon to be closer to the 1st

Cavalry, which relied on hundreds of aircraft, from helicopters to fixed-wing spotter planes. *Corpus Christi Bay* did work for other units and other branches as well, Barrick says.

DREAM ASSIGNMENT Soldiers selected to serve on *Corpus Christi Bay* had aircraft repair training or demonstrated aptitude for the work. Some, like Sapp, had wanted to become aircraft mechanics since childhood. All were at the top of their class. "I had the best battalion in the Army," Lilley says. "They could do anything in the world and had no complaints."

A ranch kid from Curlew, Wash., Sapp was drafted during his first year of college. He signed up to serve an extra year to avoid the infantry. He trained in airframe repair and sheet metal work at Fort Eustis, Va., and then received a year of additional training at the Army aircraft maintenance facility in Corpus Christi, Texas – as did most soldiers who served on the ship.

It was serendipity. Sapp headed to Vietnam in 1968 buoyed by his older brother's promise that they would start an aircraft company when he

came home from the where he was destined thought was, "It looks sus Perez was born to ing tires in the gas Mercedes, Texas, Air Force after high come a radar operator colorblind. He instead man, patched bullet damage on B-26 light 1953.

Perez joined the Army from the military, ny during his first tour repair instructor. He powertrain repair pla- *Corpus Christi Bay* in highest echelon in we were saving the Perez says. He retired second career with a on airplanes for the ment agencies. That among *Corpus Christi* of those kids got good rick fits that bill. He and signed up for an

qualify for aviation maintenance training. Barrick got a taste of what was coming in Vietnam during his year at the Army aircraft maintenance depot in Texas, where he worked on helicopter engines, transmissions, gear boxes and everything else "from the rotor head to the tail," he says. Part of that duty included cracking open

crates that contained worn-out or damaged aircraft parts and mud, sand and smells that had hitchhiked from the war zone. Once aboard *Corpus Christi Bay*, Barrick primarily dealt with rotor heads and swashplates. A lot of them. "There was a constant flow of repair work," he says.

Every piece *Corpus Christi Bay's* shops worked on was restored to factory specifications.

Reassembled engines and other parts were taken through the paces in one of the ship's test cells before being returned to service, About a dozen crew members were stationed on land. They gathered helicopter and airplane parts as they came in from combat units, boxed them up and transported them to the ship.

Tom Mott was one of these "sand crabs." Mott had already trained as an amphibious vehicle mechanic when he was tapped to go to Vietnam in 1969. He lived at the Vung Tau airfield, loaded and unloaded trucks bearing helicopter parts, and made at least one freight run a day to *Corpus Christi Bay* - moored about a mile off shore - in his 15-ton amphibian. The waves made unloading the steel cans with engines, or the long boxes with rotor blades, a challenge. He tied up to a barge alongside *Corpus Christi Bay*. That gave the ship's crane operator a clear view of what he was hoisting from below. And yet "the ship is rolling one way, the barge is rolling the other way, and then there's the amphibian - the smallest of the three," Mott says.

There were plenty of perks. To a man, those who served on the ship fondly remember the food.

Navy river rats and passing helicopters made it a point to show up for drive-by repairs around lunchtime, Barrick says. Christmas dinner in 1969

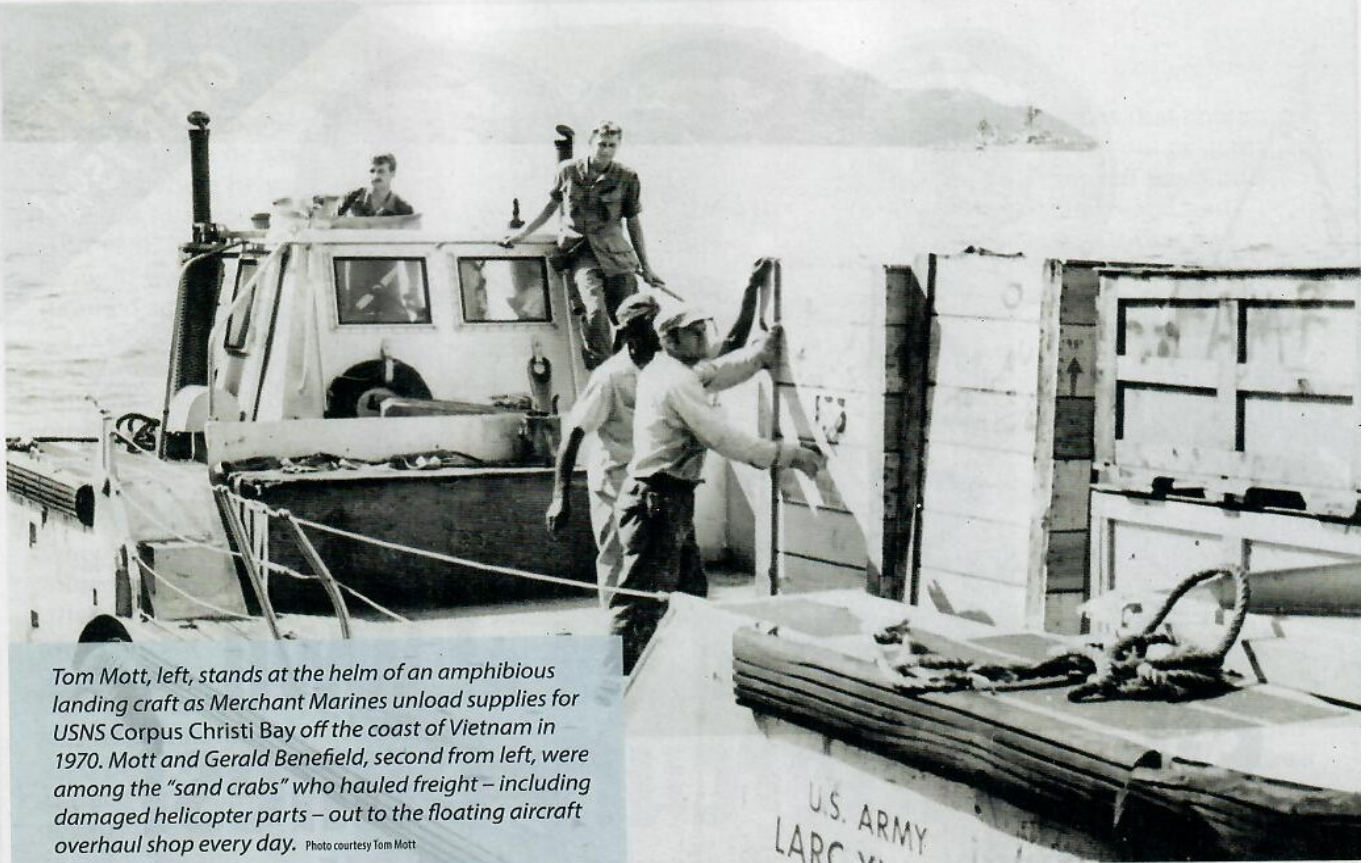


At its peak, the conversion of USS *Albemarle*, a World War II Navy sea-plane tender, to a helicopter repair depot renamed USNS *Corpus Christi Bay* involved 1,000 workers at the Charleston Naval Shipyard.

war. But when he saw the ship to spend the next year, his first damned small." Like Sapp, Jedo this work. He started repair-station his father managed in when he was 9. Perez joined the school and was on track to be-until they discovered he was trained as an airframe repair-holes and fixed other combat bombers in Korea from 1952 to

in 1958 after a four-year hiatus served with a helicopter compa- in 1962 and became an airframe was in charge of the engine and toon during his two tours on the late 1960s. "We were the Army aviation in Vietnam, and government lots of money," from the military and enjoyed a civilian contractor that worked Army, FBI and other govern-sort of success was the norm *Bay* veterans, Perez says. "All jobs when they got out." Bar-too was drafted while in college additional year in the Army to

additional year in the Army to



Tom Mott, left, stands at the helm of an amphibious landing craft as Merchant Marines unload supplies for USNS Corpus Christi Bay off the coast of Vietnam in 1970. Mott and Gerald Benefield, second from left, were among the "sand crabs" who hauled freight – including damaged helicopter parts – out to the floating aircraft overhaul shop every day. Photo courtesy Tom Mott

made the biggest impression. There was lobster, turkey, ham and all the sides. "You'd think you were eating in a five-star restaurant," he says. "It was really sweet compared to what many other GIs endured," Sapp adds.

PAYING FORWARD The 1st Transportation Battalion did more than precision aircraft work and eating well. The first contingent adopted an orphanage in Cam Ranh Bay in 1966, Barrick says. And the ship's medical staff helped local villagers after the relocation to the Vung Tau area. For example, the ship's doctor and dentist helped arrange for a 9-year-old Vietnamese girl to have surgery to correct a congenital heart problem – an event chronicled in the September 1970 issue of the ship's newspaper, the *FanTail*.

Barrick earned his FAA airframe and power-plant license after he got out of the Army, and enjoyed a 33-year civil service career that included overseeing maintenance and repair of all Army Reserve unit aircraft in a region extending from Maine to Puerto Rico. When he retired in 2002, he was working in Army logistic research and development. Separately, he rose through the ranks to aviation chief warrant officer in the Army Reserve. "I owe it all to getting drafted into the Army," he says.

Sapp also feels fortunate to have been drafted. "It's probably the best thing that ever happened to me," he says. His brother made good on his promise, and the two ran an aircraft salvage and repair company for the first 12 years after he got out of the service. One of their specialties was retrofitting Piper Super Cubs for use in the Alaska bush. Today he runs a company in Omak, Wash., that sells parts for a vintage Chinese fighter/trainer popular with collectors, and continues to restore airplanes.

Like many of the men who served on the ship, he's active in the USS *Albemarle*/USNS *Corpus Christi Bay* Reunion Association, which still includes a few veterans from the ship's World War II service era, as well as a large contingent of Vietnam veterans. They are proud to have served on the only floating Army aircraft shop ever to go to sea. 🇺🇸

Ken Olsen is a frequent contributor to The American Legion Magazine.

Find the USS *Albemarle*/USNS *Corpus Christi Bay* Reunion Association online: ussalbemarle-usnscorpuschristibay.org/reunion.htm
On Facebook: USNS *Corpus Christi Bay* Alliance

BUT WE ALREADY KNEW THIS



ABOVE: GEN Abrams (right) presents AAAA's "Outstanding Aviation Unit Award" to MAJ Lawrence E. McKay, Jr. (left), and SFC Lionet S. McDonald, of F Battery, 79th Field Artillery (AFA).



LEFT: An Informal photo of several F/T9th members present.

Year," and, believe me, this is quite tough to do when all of the units are so good. But having gone through our deliberations we have picked as this year's 'Outstanding Army Aviation Unit,' F Battery (AFA), 79th Field Artillery, 3d Brigade, and I'm going to ask our Chief of Staff, *General Abrams*, to make that presentation" (The remarks of General Abrams follow this story)

F BATTERY 77TH FIELD ARTILLERY (AFA) CHOSEN AS 'OUTSTANDING UNIT"

■ Remarks of Lieutenant General Harry W. O. Kinnard, USA (Ret.), AAAA National President: "We gather at this time to honor Army Aviation's outstanding individuals and units, Regarding the first award we always face a very difficult chore in the selection of the 'Outstanding Army Aviation Unit of the

■ Remarks of Major Lawrence E. McKay, Jr. Commander of *F Battery (AFA), 76th Field Artillery, 3d Brigade*: "The Army Aviation Association has kindly recognized the efforts of three groups by presenting this award to F Battery, 79th Field Artillery, You have honored a small, unselfish unit that was dedicated to supporting the infantryman on the ground. "Secondly, you acknowledge the success in the development and the employmen! of Aerial Field Artillery by the long, proud line of men privileged to have been part of the 'Blue Max,' and finally, you pay homage to the team of Army Aviation units that performed so courageously during the 1973 Spring invasion.

"It has been said of these units that never have so few done so much for so many. For this award we of F of the 79th are humbly grateful. Thank you, very much.

Recovered from the December, 1972 edition ARMY AVIATION



THE OUTSTANDING AVIATION UNIT AWARD

CITATION

F Battery, 79th Artillery (AFA), 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) has been selected as the "Outstanding Aviation Unit" for 1971-1972.

The last aerial field artillery unit remaining in the Republic of Vietnam, the 79th AFA's mission was to support the U. S. Army and Navy, and allied troops including ARVN, Thai, Australian, and Cambodian forces.

On two occasions since August 1971, the unit demonstrated its capability to relocate on short notice and be 100 percent operational on arrival. This unit was a part of "Task Force Garry Owen," which carried out major operations in support of key U. S. and ARVN fire support bases in Tay Ninh Province. The high readiness and continuous day and night firepower support of the "Blue Max" battery enabled U. S. armored cavalry units to secure the route to besieged fire support bases, allowing their safe relocation.

The enemy spring offensive highlighted the AFA unit's accomplishments for the year. As an enemy offensive was launched to capture the city of An Loc and expand North Vietnamese control over the population, the full assets of the Aerial Field Artillery were committed in defense of the city. This support was provided in an area that contained the most intense and sophisticated automatic ground-to-air fire ever arrayed against Army aircraft. Spearheaded by an armored tank regiment, three enemy divisions attacked the city.

In spite of antiaircraft fire from multiple positions around the city, the Cobra helicopters of F Troop battled their way through the enemy threat and engaged the attackers. Six T-54 and four PT-76 Soviet tanks were destroyed and six T-54's were severely damaged and abandoned by the enemy.

Shown that the Soviet tanks could be defeated, AVRN soldiers were spurred to attack the remaining armor with antitank weapons and prevent a superior enemy force from gaining its objective. In the ensuing months the battery provided highly accurate close air support at An Loc.



MAJ McKay

■ Remarks of Sergeant First Class Lionel S. McDonald, representative NCO of F Battery, 79th Field Artillery (AFA):

"Major McKay has always been the public relations man of the unit and so, for myself, I'd just like to say that F of the 79th was my first opportunity to work with an AFA unit, and in my short experience in Army Aviation, I've never found a unit with the amount of pride, the motivation, and the professionalism that I saw among its pilots.

"Major McKay is, without a doubt, the finest officer I've ever had the pleasure to work with and it has been a pleasure to have been part of what I consider to be the finest unit in Army Aviation. Thank you."



SFC McDonald

The AAAA Trophy, sponsored by the Hughes Tool Co-Aircraft Division, will be retained at Ft. Hood during 1972-1973.

Reviewing the many accomplishments of Army Aviation over the past decade, General Abrams expresses . . .

A debt of gratitude



GENERAL Kinnard, distinguished guests, friends. It's an honor to be here today in this distinguished company.

This is the kind of occasion when you need have no fear of laying it on a little too thick. In this group the only thing you can do wrong is picking inadequate words to describe what Army Aviation has accomplished, what it stands for and for its future.

I realize that this is quite a mixture here today. First of all there are a good many here, some retired, some older who had faith in Army Aviation and the helicopter especially, through thick and thin in the past and a lot of it mighty thin. Their faith was strong enough, their professional conviction deep and hard enough, and their character unwavering enough, so that Airmobility came to fruition. We all owe them a great debt of gratitude.

Also here are the representatives of in-

dustry who put these machines together and built the reliability and flyability into them. They are a great credit to our country, to industry, and to the talent and skills of Americans, and we owe much to them.

There are also a lot of fellows here — some of whom I recognize — who have participated in writing one of the most brilliant chapters in the history of our Army.

I guess at one time we had about 4,000 — plus flying machines in the Army in South Vietnam. Their contribution was great. It's hard to see how it all would have been possible without them. It's not only those who flew them and those who commanded them, but also those who took care of them, patched them up, filled them up, and checked them out so they were going every day.

The men of the 34th Group . . . I remember in *Lam Son 719* that the environment got a little stiff and there had been a lot of holes in our aircraft. When you have an outfit like the 34th Group who

Remarks of General Creighton W. Abrams, Jr., at the AAAA Honors Luncheon held at the Sheraton-Park Hotel, Wash., D.C. on Oct. 13, 1972.

really know their business and who know where to find the skills to get all that done, it's a great feeling. You've got to have something like that if you're going to fly where it's tough. That's a great bunch.

"A very difficult task"

I feel very happy and relieved that I did not have any part in the selection of the outstanding unit because that would be a very difficult task. It's kind of like picking the best out of the hundred Congressional Medal of Honor winners. It surpasses the frailties of human judgment. They're all great.

I think I should say one word, too, a special word, about the "Dustoffs" — the Med-evacs. This was a great group of men. All those who flew them, all those who did it. Courage above and beyond the call of duty was sort of routine to them. It was a daily thing, part of the way



TRANSPORTABILITY — An airlift capability characterizes tomorrow's UTTAS. Here two Boeing UTTAS helicopters with rotor blades and tail booms folded are airlifted easily in a C-141.

they lived. That's the great part and it meant so much to every last man who served there. Whether he ever got hurt or not, he knew *Dustoff* was there. It was a great thing for our people.

Finally, something which I hope those in Army Aviation will hold close and dear to their hearts forever — the aviator was the brother, the friend, the fellow who lived and worked with the men on the ground. And everywhere we always had something that was more than cooperation, something more than teamwork. Those are sort of formal words. In a way it was an *affair of the heart* — in the planning, in the working, in the fighting.

That's why we *must* have, and we *have* to have *always*, Army Aviation.

There's no way that you can manufacture that outside. It won't work. They all have to be of the same suit, and all of the same, you might say, all of the same father and mother. Just one blood line that runs through it all.

And then when the going gets tough, and when each has to depend upon the other, they do it with confidence. They know that everybody on the team is going to give more than his share in getting the job done. And the test always comes when it's the hardest going and that's the kind of a team we had and that's what we *must* always have and must preserve.

New Chapter



DAVENPORT, IOWA — Officers of the newly-activated Mississippi Valley Chapter of AAAA are shown Sept. 16 following their activation meeting. Front, l-r, are Mrs. Carol McDowell, Sec; CW4 Henry Luchner, Pres; CPT Donald Kisting, ExVP; & CPT R. Don Taylor, Treas. Rear, 1st Arnold Newsum, VP, Prog; CPT Robert Maynard, VP, Publ; SSG Robert Jewell, VP, Memb Aff; LTC Donald Leeham, Ret., VP, Indus Aff.

Lawrence E. "Larry" McKay

Lawrence E. "Larry" McKay commanded "The Blue Max," an attack helicopter unit that delivered the decisive blow during the Vietnam War's Battle of An Loc—the first armor battle in which armed helicopters proved their lethality and changed the future of warfare. Born on 26 August 1936, McKay was raised in Charleston, South Carolina. His interest in aviation was stimulated through the Army Reserve Officer Training Corps flight program at The Citadel where he was a member of the class of 1958. There he was exposed to General Robert E. Lee's immortal creed, "Duty is the sublimest word in our language. Do your duty in all things. You cannot do more. You should never wish to do less." In 1966, he served as aviation officer for 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne) in Vietnam, where he coordinated and flew tactical, logistical and prisoner of war recovery missions. That tour was followed by assignments in the Office of the Director of Instruction at Hunter Army Airfield and company command. Following command, he completed Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, which prepared him for the most challenging, yet most rewarding, assignment of his career: On 1 September 1971, he assumed command of F Battery, 79th Aerial Field Artillery (AFA) in the famed 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile). In Vietnam, the unit would come to be known as The Blue Max. On 13 April 1972, McKay flew in the front seat of the lead aircraft that destroyed a T-54 Soviet-built tank just 30 meters north of a South Vietnamese command bunker. Using high explosive anti-tank (HEAT) warheads mounted on free-flight aerial rockets, his Cobra was credited with the first modern tank kill by a helicopter with HEAT in combat. Blue Max members in their AH-1Gs would prove helicopters could kill tanks in a hostile environment. The duty and contributions of Blue Max members were formally recognized in 1972 when the unit was selected as the Army Aviation Association of America Unit of the Year. The unit also received Presidential and Meritorious Unit Citations for combat excellence. After returning from Vietnam, McKay completed the graduate economics program at Duke University, taught at West Point and commanded the 101st Aviation Battalion at Fort Campbell. His decorations include the Silver Star, Distinguished Flying Cross, Legion of Merit with two oak leaf clusters, Bronze Star with two oak leaf clusters and 15 Air Medals. His badges include Combat Infantry, Senior Aviator, Parachute and Air Assault. After retiring as a lieutenant colonel in 1978, he and his family returned to Charleston where he became founding president of Wild Dunes Telecommunications. On 10 November 2006, he received the Alumnus of the Year award from The Citadel School of Business Administration. McKay and his wife Fay have four children and nine grandchildren.



SETTING: On 13 April 1972, then-Major McKay and Chief Warrant Officer Barry McIntyre, along with their wingmen, Captain Bill Causey and First Lieutenant Steve Shields, delivered the decisive blow during Vietnam's Battle of An Loc by stopping a column of 40 tanks. In the end, five Blue Max AH-1Gs were destroyed by heavy antiaircraft fire and eight Blue Max aviators were lost defending An Loc.

Lt. Col McKay took his last fire mission in August, 2013

A BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE REASONS FOR THE NOMINATION

F Battery (AFA), 79th Artillery, has performed all assigned missions in support of Us and allied troops in an outstanding manner. The only remaining AFA unit in Vietnam has maintained an availability rate of 91 percent utilizing one of the finest maintenance, safety and standardization programs in Army Aviation. During the first month of the Loc Ninh/An Loc siege the average of 12 AH-1Gs flew 1472 hours versus an USARV program of 660 and expended 23,056 rockets versus the unit average of 9,972 2.75 inch rockets. The unit has proven the theory that the AH-1G Cobra can successfully engage and destroy the Soviet t-54 tank in a high intensity ground-to-air environment. "Blue Max" is a unit of professionals who have been battle tested in the most extensive anti-aircraft fire ever experienced in South Vietnam and demonstrated the unselfishness and courage required throughout the most challenging period in the history of Army Aviation.

S/BG James F. Hamlet

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ATTENTION ALL ARA MEN:

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

Know how to prevent sagging?

Just keep eating until the wrinkles fill out!

Its scary when you start making the same noises as your coffee maker.



Chaplain's Corner

"Where Are You Planted?"

How many of us wanted to be a Superlative in High School? How many wanted to have their picture in the Yearbook as "Most likely to Succeed!" or "Most Athletic!" You know what I'm talking about. I didn't even get "Most Likely to Fail or even Least Athletic!" We all wanted to be admired by friends. Now that we have grown-up, we still desire some recognition.

This begs the question. "Who are we?" In Luke 6:17, Jesus gathers the twelve and a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea, Jerusalem, and the coast of Tyre and Sidon. Then he started to speak and delivered his "Sermon on the Mound." In the Beatitudes, Jesus said, "Blessed are the poor, you who hunger, you who weep, and when others hate you." Why? How can that be? Well, because yours is the kingdom of God, for you will be filled, for you will laugh, and you will rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven! For that is what their ancestors did to the prophets.

But then Jesus took on the others with his proclamation of woes! "Woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation, woe to you who are full now, for you will be hungry, woe to you who are laughing now, for you will mourn and weep, and woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is what their ancestors did to the false prophets?

Grownups still want; and Jesus' words hurt. Are we part of that group that fits the "Woes?" Are we busted, found out? The Beatitudes versus the Superlatives! How do we stack up with the two groups? Where do we get our strength and nourishment in life? What is it that sustains us day-to-day? The Prophet Jeremiah has an answer for us in Chapter 17 where he contrast two ways of life: Life with God brings blessings; the power and vitality of God is active in our life. Life without God brings a curse, the power of death.

Cursed are those who trust in mere mortals and make mere flesh their strength, whose hearts turn away from the Lord because they shall be like a shrub in the desert and shall not see when relief comes, they shall live in the parched places of the wilderness, in an uninhabited salt land. Blessed are those who trust in the Lord, they shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream, it shall not fear when heat comes and its leaves shall stay green; in the yearly drought it is not anxious, and it does not cease to bear fruit.

Where are you planted? Where are your roots? Do you trust in mere mortals, when God is the one who gives life? All mortals die, God will not die! Do your roots reach out to the steams of living water? You know water always wins! Trees planted by living waters bear fruit! May we be as those trees and bring forth good fruit in our lives!

Peace,

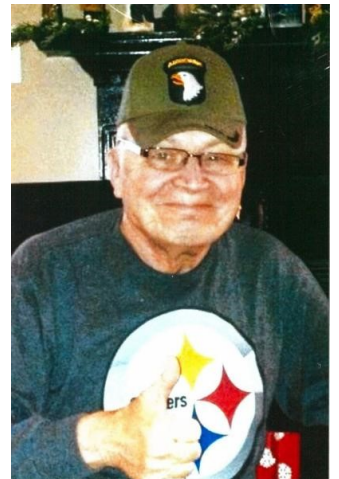
Bruce Wilder.
Chaplain



Final Flight

Mike Borland

James M. Borland Major (Ret.) J. Michael "Mike" Borland, passed away peacefully on May 3, 2018 at age 70. He fought hard the last few years without complaint, but finally succumbed to the effects of several Agent Orange related diseases. Mike was born in Indiana, Pa. on November 15, 1947 to Thomas and Eva Borland. He spent his childhood in the same hometown as actor Jimmy Stewart, graduating from Indiana High School in 1965. His journey in military service initially began at the U.S. Naval Academy. Mike left the Academy in 1968 and enlisted in the Army for the Warrant Officer Flight Training Program. He excelled in Flight Training and was selected to fly the AH-1G Cobra Attack Helicopter. He flew Aerial Artillery gunship missions in support of the 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile) and cross border MACV-SOG MLT-2 operations. These operations include the evacuation of Firebase Ripcord and LAMSON 719, where he was injured in a Cobra crash and medically evacuated back to the United States. Mike recovered from his injuries and returned to Cobra Hall, Hunter Army Airfield, Georgia as a Standardization Instructor Pilot. He served the next several years as an AH-1G and UH-1H Standardization Instructor Pilot in various Assault and Air Cavalry Units. Mike understood the value of education and completed a Bachelors of Science degree at Embry-Riddle University and a Masters of Public Administration from Pepperdine University. He was selected for a direct commission to Captain and served his remaining years of service as an Attack Platoon Leader, Operations Officer, Airfield Commander/U-21 Pilot, Assistant Professor of Military Science North Carolina State University, Director, Rotary Wing Priority Air Transport and Aviation Officer, Office of the Chief of Staff of the Army. He retired from the Army in 1994 as a Major with 26 years of service. Mike began his civilian career as a self-taught Information Technology professional and worked many diverse jobs including Intuit Turbo Tax, Army Air Force Mutual Aid Association, Department of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms Tax and Trade Bureau and U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development Agency. Mike was an ordinary man who did extraordinary things. He was an outstanding husband, father, and leader. He is deeply missed by his family and friends. Mike is survived by his loving wife of 48 years, Julie; son Sean (Sheila); daughter Sallie (Cristian); grandchildren, Hannah, Becca, Cristian, and Bella; and mother Eva. A service was held at 10 a.m. on Friday, May 11 at the Semper Fidelis Memorial Chapel. The family received friends one hour prior to the service at the memorial chapel. Interment followed at Quantico National Cemetery.



Bob Hinton



LTC Robert Richey Hinton (USA Ret), who served in A/2/20 ARA 1st Cav Div with the all sign Blue Max, died on Saturday, August 6, 2016 at the Baptist Reynolds Hospice House after a battle with cancer.

He left his wife Sigrid Hinton; his son, Jens Hinton and his wife, Terri Hinton; his daughter, Silke Hinton Cook and her husband Chance Cook; his son, Robin Hinton and his wife Nicole Hinton; his grandchildren Alex Hinton, Kristen Colindres, Cameron Hinton, and Katherine Hinton; and his great grandchildren Sofia Colindres and Kai Hinton. Born and raised in Collierville TN, the son of James Karr and Catharine Richey Hinton, Mr. Hinton graduated from Collierville High School in 1958. He attended Duke University, graduating with a degree in History in 1962. Mr. Hinton joined the US Army in 1963 where he had a distinguished career as an aviator in the 101st Airborne Cavalry, rising to the rank of LTC. He was stationed in Wagenfeld, Germany where he met his wife, Sigrid Hinton. Richey and Sigrid were married in 1968 in Collierville, TN. He served two tours in Vietnam where he earned two distinguished flying crosses, a bronze star and multiple other commendations. Richey was stationed on various military bases during his military

career including those in Oklahoma, Texas, Iceland, and Germany. After retiring from the Army in 1985, Mr. Hinton was a commercial airline pilot based in both Memphis and Switzerland. He retired from flying in 1998. Mr. Hinton was an avid dog lover and follower of Duke basketball. A Memorial Service was held for family and friends on Wednesday, August 10 at 2pm at Collierville Funeral Home.

Vietnam Pilot's Reunion by Jack Baumgarten

A gathering of Eagles who long ago flew in harmonious synch together in carefully arranged formations as they performed their noisily ballet over the trees.

Now grey or defoliated, larger and weathered, wrinkles and folds now abound, all sadly closer to the ground.

Come together in one place, these remain—not gone to the Father—still here to live each long day among those blue, cloudy skies, recalling those dances with white puffs of moisture along the way to battle.

Memories good and bad now buried or

twisted come rising to the surface as barely recognized faces, all changed except for eyes or smiles, awaken to recollections long since buried.

Joy abounds, old friendships renew. Excitement captivates as thrilling recollections return to life from places no one ever gets to see anymore.

Sadness consumes on learning of early departures or bad tidings befallen. Fear rises and is pushed back hard avoiding ugly memories buried way back when. Can those feelings be shared? Camaraderie, isolation, fear, bravery, bad luck, good luck, quick

thinking, poor judgement, God's mercy.

Bear them alone my friends. You own them completely forever. Heavy or light, you carry them yourself—only to be shared with God.

Reunion yields a great gift. A common destiny is shared as we volunteer once again, facing truth at long last with no lies possible.

Eagles we were—Eagles we remain—standing tall within our lives, raising those memories of doing the best that we could.

Contributed by Rodger McAlister

Ladies of the Association

Dear Ladies of the ARA,

Hope you have all had a great beginning of a new year! Been chilly and damp here in California but we are enjoying the change.

As noted in Dave's report, he and I have been working on the upcoming reunion in San Diego in Sept. and it has been a very enjoyable experience working with lovely people at the hotel, restaurants as well as our tour "advisor". They are all thrilled to be able to host the ARA!

The hotel has a free shuttle that will take you to Old Town (Mexican flavor area with restaurants and shopping), Sea World and the San Diego Zoo (recognized as the best in the country) and the Fashion Valley outdoor Mall (restaurants and shopping with everything from Forever 21 to Neiman Marcus, Macys, Bloomies and Nordstrom's).

There is a trolley (\$2.25 each way or \$5.00 day pass) that goes to many areas and sites --- Gaslamp, Mission Valley Center, Mission San Diego and San Ysidro Outlet shopping.

And of course there is also UBER and Lyft!

I will include a copy of the Trolley Map and a directory of the outlet stores in the Gift Bag .

We are hoping that we will have our beautiful Sept. weather here in Southern California and that we have a record turnout to enjoy the West Coast of our great country!

If any of you have any questions or suggestions please do not hesitate to contact either Dave or me.

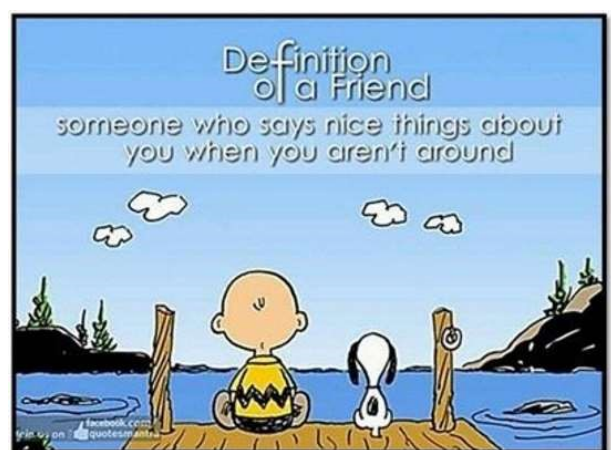
Dborgeson41@gmail.com or pborg12@yahoo.com

Cheers

Pat

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

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

Print name as you want it to appear: _____

Print call sign as you want it to appear: _____

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

Print name as you want it to appear: _____

Print call sign as you want it to appear: _____

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

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

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

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

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

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

Total for order - _____

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

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



AERIAL ROCKET ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION

Membership Application/Renewal Form

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

Name _____ Wife's Name _____

Rank _____ Membership Number _____

(At time of service in ARA)

(If known)

Retired Rank (if applicable) _____ Service Number _____

List all ARA Units that you served in.

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

Current Address: _____

Street or PO Box

City	State	Zip Code
------	-------	----------

Phone: _____

Home

Work (if okay)

Cell

E-Mail Address: _____

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

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

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

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

Mail completed application to: Aerial Rocket Artillery Association

C/O Herbert L. Hirst

For Office Use Only

P.O. Box 220

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North Plains, OR 97133-0220

Check Date _____

Amount _____

Web address – www.araassociation.com

Date Rcvd _____