

# 281<sup>st</sup> ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Volume 64

February 2017

## **From your President – Will McCollum**

Here in the heartland, we are already thinking spring, have not seen any robins yet but here on our farm, the snow has melted. It has been an unusually mild Iowa winter, on this 17th day of February, it is 68 degrees. Today my neighbor and farmer friend are having our first meeting of the year in the operation center... (our kitchen table). Things just don't happen on its own, lots of planning and work goes into our farm operation.

The same goes with this 281st AHC reunion planning. Our Vice President and Reunion Chairman Bain Black has been at this for well over a year and is doing a really great job. You will be impressed with what he and the reunion committee has all lined up for us in October 2017, in Washington, D.C.

Folks, make your reservations as soon as possible, the dates are **October 12, 13 & 14**, the Hyatt Regency hotel phone number is **703-418-7235**.

## **From Your Past President - Don Budlong** **Calling all Intruders and Wives**

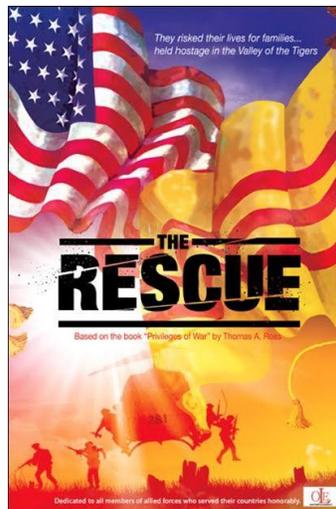
We had many First Timers at our Reunion in Fayetteville. First timers from that Reunion hopefully will become second timers in DC. Before you know it, boom it's your 15<sup>th</sup>; time sure does fly when you're having a good time.

The 281<sup>st</sup> AHC is a 501 (C)(19) non-profit organization. What does that mean to you? It means your Association runs on volunteer energy and it takes a lot of energy to keep things going. It means, we need a bunch of volunteers. This well oiled machine runs smoothly because we have good volunteers; and we always need more. A good place to start is on a Reunion Committee. We have one reunion every year and the location is changing from year to year. Get in on the ground floor to help plan where we will be in a year or two or three. For more information, contact Bain Black our 2017 Reunion Chairman and/or Denny Crowe our 2018 Reunion Chairman about how you might be able to help them with one of our reunions. See their stories below for their contact information.

Or, if you are an Association Member and would like to get more involved with the governance of your Association, then consider a position on the Executive Board (EB). The position of Junior Member at Large (JM@L) will become available this October. Lou Lerda our current JM@L will be in charge of finding his own replacement, which is the primary responsibility of the JM@L. It is a relatively easy job yet it allows you to get involved in the decision making process of how our Association runs itself. YOU CAN make a difference. Email Lou Lerda ([marlynlou@comcast.net](mailto:marlynlou@comcast.net)) or call him (717-267-6060) for more details on what you can expect. If more than one of you is interested in the JM@L position, there will be an election at our General Membership meeting at the Reunion in October. If it comes down to an election, Lou has guaranteed me that there will be NO foreign government interference in our election.

## **The Rescue - a Movie**

With regard to update on the movie "The Rescue" . . . the screen writer finished and presented the final draft of the script the second week in February. The 281st is mentioned very near the beginning and will play a prominent role in the film. It is very likely that during the opening mention, a unit sign similar to the one in Nha Trang will appear on screen. Then, huesys with your unit designation "281" will be on screen throughout the rescue scenes. Near the end of the film, Hollywood will work its magic for a very exciting closing sequence as the 281st . . . saves the day. I believe it will make everyone very proud of the things you did. Such recognition is well deserved and long overdue.



Tom Ross

## **From your Vice President & 2017 Reunion Chairman – Bain Black**

Hello again fellow Intruders families and friends. Here in the foothills of NC we have had an unusually mild winter. After only about 10 days of winter (we call that below freezing at night) our temps midday around Charlotte are in the 60's. Nice!

On May 4th a group from your Reunion Committee will meet with the Hyatt Regency/Crystal City management to coordinate details of our upcoming reunion this October. The entire reunion process goes something like this to select a suitable venue.

We start with a half dozen or more location suggestions and put them to a litmus test. First, is the location served by major airlines and are reasonable fares available? Does the city have plenty of interests to attract the membership? Then, can we find a hotel that has facilities to accommodate us; of course at reasonable costs. Meeting rooms, meals, room rates, plus rental equipment such as audio visual and stage are all considered. Price is always a high priority so that we will appeal to as many members as possible. Those that have chaired this Committee previously have done a great job of documenting the process in a Reunion Guide.

Here is how you can help. Go to the Hyatt website <https://aws.passkey.com/event/16117454/owner/10336/home> that is set up for us to reserve a hotel rooms for our Reunion. The more rooms reserved, the more leverage when we meet hotel management in May.

You may also go to our website [www.281st.com](http://www.281st.com) and click on the Reunion tab at the top of the home page. You will find the same link as above for the Hyatt Regency reservations as well as photos of the hotel.

Thanks to our "boots on the ground", Jack Mayhew, we have once in a lifetime experiences planned. A trip to the Vietnam Memorial (the Wall) and laying of a wreath at the tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery. For anyone who has not been to DC previously, try to stay an extra few days. There is so much to see and do. At this ripe old age, we don't know how many more chances we will have to visit our nation's capitol and spend quality time with fellow Intruders.

To finish the process, in May we will negotiate the best prices for meals, bar service and all expenses. We already have a great room rate of \$109 / night! Once

we are sure of our expected cost, we will determine the 2017 Reunion Registration fee and send you an invitation to sign up.

Call (704-947-0602) or email ([bainb@adelphia.net](mailto:bainb@adelphia.net)) me if you have any questions or would like to volunteer to assist with the Reunion.

### **Are you 70 years old and have a traditional IRA?**

A number of our Intruders have recently turned 70 years old and for sure there will be many more to follow. Last month on the 281<sup>st</sup> CHAT Net a discussion ensued regarding IRA Required Minimum Distributions (RMD). As with most everything else you see or hear on the internet you must take it with a grain of salt. That is especially true of financial advice. If you are turning 70 years old anytime in the near future and have a retirement plan, you should consult with your financial adviser or accountant sooner than later. Before that consultation, you may want to visit the IRS website regarding retirement plans [www.irs.gov/retirement-plans](http://www.irs.gov/retirement-plans). You will find on the IRS site that generally, if you have a Traditional IRA, the year in which you turn 70 ½ years old, you must withdraw a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) by April 1<sup>st</sup> of the following year. The RMD is about 4% of the total value of all of your traditional IRA accounts. For each year following, you will also be required to withdraw the RMD by December 31<sup>st</sup> of those years. Failure to make the RMD by the deadline will cost you a whopping 50% excise tax on your IRA account(s). Don't forget that Traditional IRA distributions are taxable events for which income taxes may have to be paid. See why it is important to consult with your financial advisor, accountant or tax person?

### **Intruder of the Year Award (IOYA) - Frank Becker Awards Chairman**

It's starting to look like spring here in Missouri. We've had a good winter with not much snow like our brothers in the North and East and rain in the West. As Awards Chairman, I ask you to start thinking about the Intruder of the Year Award (IOYA) for 2017. When I was appointed to this position I thought it would be relatively easy, not realizing how many people do so much to make this Association as great as it is. Article VIII, Section 2(a)(1) of the Association By-Laws establishes the criteria: "The IOYA shall be given to the Association member who has set himself apart from his peers by demonstrating actions that best exemplify the ideals and traditions of the stated goals of the Association. The nominee's meritorious service to the

Association shall not be limited to the year of the award”.

That being said the Awards Committee needs nominations for IOYA. The Awards Committee consists of myself, the Committee Chair, the current President, Will McCollum and the previous year’s IOYA who is also Will McCollum. If you would like to nominate any member to be IOYA, please submit those names to either Will McCollum ([wildanmac@yahoo.com](mailto:wildanmac@yahoo.com)) or myself ([febeck2002@yahoo.com](mailto:febeck2002@yahoo.com)) along with the appropriate justification as to why your nominee deserves the award. We have already received a couple of deserving names and the choice will be very hard again this year. All the Intruders and families keep up the good work and make the Awards Chairman's job a hard one.

### **Scholarship News by Dr. Karen Heintz Forcht, Secretary, Scholarship Committee**

We currently have four students who are in college and receiving funding from the 281st AHC Scholarship Fund. They all achieved well above the 3.0 GPA minimum for the Fall, 2016 semester. These are really some very fine young people who will surely accomplish many good things when they graduate from college.

Onnie (JR) Watson, one of our current recipients (Fairmont State University in West Virginia), gave a very moving and heart-felt speech at our reunion in Fayetteville just before the lights went out. He is the grandson of Rose and Joe Boarman. Keep up the good work, JR.

Other students receiving scholarships are:

J. R. Little, Nephew of Jim Baker, North Carolina State University; Kelsey Lang, Great Niece of Ed Hass, West Virginia University; Morgan Torbert, Niece of Jim Torbert, Rice University, Houston

Dr. Jessica Barker, Daughter of Donald Barker, graduated with a Degree in Pharmacy from Concordia University in Wisconsin in May, 2016.

All of these students receive a check from Walt Pikul, Treasurer, for \$1,250 each semester as long as they maintain the required 3.0 GPA.

Please consider making a regular donation to this most vital fund which was founded as a tribute to Jack Mayhew. He still serves on the Scholarship Committee as an Advisor and adds a lot of historical perspective.

As trite as it may sound, these students are our future. They will do well and make all of us very proud.

If you are interested in serving on this committee, please contact Jack Mayhew, Jim Torbert, Walt Pikul, or me. No special qualifications necessary other than an interest in seeing that this Scholarship Fund continues in the future.

All of necessary forms are on the 281st AHC website <http://www.281st.com/281MemberArea/index.html> and must be completed and mailed to me by **July 15, 2017** so that they can be copied and reviewed by committee members. Recent high school graduates and college students are eligible to apply. We will give first priority to undergraduates but also fund graduate students.

Mail completed forms to: Dr. Karen A. Forcht, Secretary, 1715 Dunleith Way, Greensboro, NC 27455; Email: [kforcht@elon.edu](mailto:kforcht@elon.edu); Phone: 336-638-7544

### **From Jay Hays, the PX Grunt**

The 145<sup>th</sup> Iroquois pins have been ordered and paid for by donations. The driving force behind these pins was Al Serafin (145<sup>th</sup>/281<sup>st</sup>). Thanks Al. The pins will be shipped to the PX in about 2 weeks. Book (*Above the Best*) and PX sales have slowed dramatically this past month. Dick Lubic stopped by my office this week to pick up a case of books and a couple of movie posters for a show he will be attending in Michigan. Dick thanks for spreading the long overdue exposure of the 281<sup>st</sup> and the movie *The Rescue*.

### **T-Shirts and Stairway to Heaven**

Brian and Marilyn Paine were unable to attend our Reunion in October due to Hurricane Matthew. When they turned around to head back to Texas, their motor home was full of 281<sup>st</sup> t-shirts that they had planned to



sell at the Reunion to raise money for the Scholarship Fund. Brian is now offering the shirts in the following sizes: LT, XLT, 2XLT & 3XLT (“T” denotes long). The cost is \$20 each which includes shipping to anywhere in the

US. There is a limited number of shirts available in each size so place your order now. 100% of the proceeds will go to the Scholarship fund.

Brian also commissioned Joe Kline to paint "Stairway to Heaven" which is available in a print (see photo below).



The base cost for the print is \$80.00 including shipping. The prints will be mailed to you with an order form for Joe Kline to personalize the print for you. He

can do nose art, door numbers, tail number, or platoon patch in the lower corners. He will also put your name, rank, platoon and dates in pencil at the bottom. There is an additional charge by Kline of \$55.00 for the personalization. Print numbered 100 – 300 are reserved for the 281<sup>st</sup>. \$30.00 per print will be donated to the scholarship fund.

Please send payments to: Brian Paine, 22407 Rippling Shore Court, Katy, TX 77494. Include your return mail address. Call me with any questions **281-693-3210**.

### **Senior Member at Large (SM@L) and 2018 Reunion Chairman Denny Crowe**

Last fall in Fayetteville the Executive Board decided that the 2018 Reunion would be somewhat of a mini-reunion; not as formal and more social. Having done some preliminary research, the most suitable venues for our 2018 reunion are the following locations: Charleston, SC; Savannah, GA; Chattanooga, TN; and New Orleans, LA. I have made inquiries to the several visitor's bureaus and all (except New Orleans) have graciously sent information packages to me. My cursory analysis is presented alphabetically below:

#### **Charleston:**

Charleston is served by a number of airlines and the visitors guide claims over 80 hotels in the local area. There are several culinary and water tours including a paddle wheel river boat. Charleston is where the war of Northern Aggression began. We can visit Fort Sumter, the Yorktown, a WWII Aircraft carrier in the harbor and the Charleston Aquarium. The Charleston Navy Base is also on the harbor. <http://www.charlestoncvb.com/>

#### **Chattanooga:**

Chattanooga is a picturesque southern city with a lot to do and is served by a number of airlines. There are

plenty of hotels, restaurants and many activities to entertain us such as: Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Parks; the Hunter Museum of American Art; Rock City; Ruby Falls; and the Tennessee Aquarium. <http://www.chattanooga.fun.com>.

#### **New Orleans:**

The airport serving NO is located about 15 miles west of the city and is served by many airlines. Shuttle service is available to various hotels. Interstate 10 goes very close to downtown. There are about a dozen hotels in the downtown area. Numerous restaurants are located in New Orleans. Attractions include the French Quarter and Algiers Point. The World War II Museum is located in the downtown business district. <http://www.experienceneworleans.com.html>

#### **Savannah:**

The Savannah/Hilton Head airport is serviced by American, Delta and United Airlines primarily through their express airlines. Interstate 95 crosses the Savannah River close to downtown. There are numerous hotels near the center of town and a number of nice restaurants in Savannah. Attractions include river cruises, ghost tours, pub crawls, Bonaventure Cemetery (made famous by the movie "Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil"), numerous historical sites, Ft. Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield where some of us completed Flight School. [www.visitsavannah.com](http://www.visitsavannah.com)

I would like to have input from the membership concerning which of these locations you would prefer for our 2018 Reunion. Please contact me by email ([denny@oldcrowe.com](mailto:denny@oldcrowe.com)) or phone (**334-397-2021**).

### **Jim Baker in President Trump's Inaugural Parade – Did you see him on TV?**

As part of the NCVHPA contingent, Jim appeared around 6:30pm on TV. As you can see from the "not so clear" photo below Jim (on the right) is hanging on for dear life as the helicopter flies by President Trump. Actually they were not flying but being towed.



## Intruder Aircraft Down – We Need Help

On May 14, 1967, 281<sup>st</sup> AHC helicopter 65-10039 crashed. Below is an account of the action that day as recalled by Brent Gourley. After Brent's story, you will see what help we need.

On May 14, 1967, John "Buddha" Hood and Leroy Schuchow flew the hole-ship on the mission. Don Jutz (Zorro) and I flew Recovery 2. The hole-ship announced that they had taken hits on approach to the first of three LZs and would remain on the ground as they had lost oil pressure. Recovery 1, met the same fate trying to follow them down. Neither Zorro, nor I saw where they landed. In a left turn, I saw both aircraft on the ground, in the same hole. I was on the controls and made a steep high overhead approach. However, I took too much time looking for a landing spot and clipped a few trees. During the approach the right gun jammed, but the gunner on that side of the aircraft, had an M14 that worked and he took care of an individual at the right front. I put the helicopter down in a flat spot with the tail rotor between trees behind us; several individuals quickly jumped on the aircraft. I tried picking the helicopter up, but there was not sufficient RPM to clear the trees. An SF guy jumped off, and with very low RPM we got over most of the trees, but could not go around a very large tree in front of us; so we went thru it; with leaves flying everywhere. We had hit the top of the tallest tree in sight. We returned to base and refueled and also tried taping up the holes in the end of the blades as they were whistling badly. However, the tape did not help so we shut down, removed the tape, cranked up and headed back to the LZ. Our CE was Dwight Smith, Jr and DG Willie Kersh.

Fellow Intruders, Sonny Alicie was the Crew Chief (CE) on 65-10039 when the ship went down. Sonny is experiencing difficulty getting the VA to accept his version of the crash. He needs "Buddy Reports" from other crews that will clearly establish his position as the CE of the downed helicopter. We also have some evidence that Anthony (Tony) Alipo was Sonny's Door Gunner on 65-10039. If you can help identify the gunner or have contact with him, John Hood or Leroy Schuchow, please contact Jack Mayhew by email ([intruder06@me.com](mailto:intruder06@me.com)) or phone **410-721-1675**.

Sandy Darnell, widow of Wolf Pack CE Rod Darnell (1969), has relocated from Alaska to Grapevine, WA since Rod passed away in 2015. If you would like to chat with her about your time in the 281<sup>st</sup> with Rod, contact her at **360-427-0612** or by email at [brdwlkbight@live.com](mailto:brdwlkbight@live.com)

## The Missing Man

Every Reunion at our Saturday banquet a small table is set up near the front of the room. It's a small table with just one empty chair; I know you have seen the table, set up the same way every time. The table honors those fellow Intruders who are unable to celebrate the banquet with us. Jim Baker has been reading the missing man tribute for many years now and will probably read it again in October at our reunion. Each branch of service is just a little different from the other in the way they honor their "missing man".

At Ohio Stadium, home of the Ohio State Buckeyes, they remember POW's and MIA's in their own way. In the closed end of the stadium, in the front row of the section where the ROTC and other military folks sit, they have an unoccupied seat. The empty seat reminds all that pass by that we must never forget our missing in action.



The photograph above was taken by Ginny Johnson, niece of Jim Baker. Ginny and her husband are both Ohio State grads and very proud of what their school has done to honor those missing in action.

In the past few years we had our hopes high that some of our 281<sup>st</sup> MIA's remains had finally been discovered. Late last year we found that not to be the case. We are now back to square one with regard to locating any our missing Intruders. We will never forget them.

**From our IT Guru – Brent Gourley**  
**Webmaster and HQ Net Moderator**

Website update continues. The KIA/MIA files have been updated thru 1967. I'm working on the only 1968 KIA, Don McCoig, with whom I flew a few times. I suspect I will never consider the website complete; I keep learning new ways to do things you can see on the page. I have started over on this section at least twice! Some of them I have found are very hard to read.

At some near point in the future, the HQ list will move from "Yahoo! Groups" to "Groups.io, Inc.", a business service provider that charges nothing for basic list service, and only \$10 per month for service to accommodate our wildest commo desires, including live video service. If you are on the HQ list now, you will be on the new HQ list after the automatic switchover which will occur without any action required by our members. Establishing a membership is much easier to do than with Yahoo! And Groups.io grants access to the file areas and other services. You will get warning on the HQ net from me a day or so prior; and a welcome letter from Groups.io.

**In Memoriam**

**Our Intruder family will always remember them**



**Thomas Claiborne Land**

Tom Land served in the 281<sup>st</sup> in 1969-70 as a pilot. He passed away on August 30, 2016 in Madison, MS at the age of 69. Tom is survived by his loving wife of 47 years, Melanie, his two sons Van and Clay. Tom was a member of the United Association of Pipefitters local 619 and the Mississippi Wing of the Commemorative Air Force.

**Edward W. Baker**

Edward (Ed) Baker who served with the 145<sup>th</sup> ALP as a pilot and maintenance officer (1965-66) passed away on December 31, 2015 at his home in Midland City, AL. Ed was 75 years old. After his military service Ed flew helicopters transporting oil rig crews for 10 years until he returned to Ft. Rucker as an instructor pilot and test pilot. He retired from Ft. Rucker in

1993. Ed was survived by his wife Lenora, son Reggie and daughter Belinda.

**Sick Call**

**Ed Duke** (Rat Pack 11/66-9-67), who has a history of heart issues which included a heart attack and by-pass surgery, recently had stint #10 installed. He is going for some kind of record. Please remember Ed in your prayers. His email is: [anitaed62@suddenlink.net](mailto:anitaed62@suddenlink.net) .

**Don Jutz**, a/k/a Zorro suffered a stroke last year and is now recuperating in Wisconsin. Don was a pilot in the 281<sup>st</sup> from 11/66 to 9/67. A card or call would certainly lift his spirits. His contact information is:

Room 112 Saint Andrews  
3800 North 92nd Street, Milwaukee, WI 53222  
Phone: 414-935-4941 / Cell: 850-387-4610

**God Bless America**

Since the election in November our country has been in a state a chaos and discontent. Washington is "slow walking" cabinet nominations. People are demonstrating throughout the country for anything and



everything. The Press and the President are at odds with each other. Elected officials are holding traditional town hall meeting that are erupting into shouting matches and fist fights.

This is NOT what the United States of America is all about.

United we stand, divided we fall. Pray that our country can stand together and move forward as one strong nation. - Editor