



48th Assault Helicopter Company

APO San Francisco 96240; 96321; 96349



Greetings One and All,

Attention all of you Folks in the Southeast and Mardi Gras rabble rousers! We're returning to New Orleans! That's right, we're coming to the land of hurricanes (drinks that is), beignets and dueling piano's! I missed the last reunion in New Orleans many years ago but I'm not going to miss this one and neither should you so get your beer goggles on and let's go! As usual, I'm getting this out at the 11th hour but I've found that if I send the Newsletter out too early, folks just seem to throw it away, file it away or just plain forget about it.

Now the Rest of the Story.....

This year we are once again holding our summer gathering off the 4th of July holiday. Hopefully this will allow those who have had standing commitments over the 4th to attend. Our summer gathering this year is July 31st – August 5th.

Time is just flying by. It seems the older you get, the faster it goes by and things become a blur of activity. I always thought that as I got older, I would slow down and everything else would too but it is actually the opposite. Of course it doesn't help still chasing a 14 year old around and trying to keep up with him and still working but it just seems there is more and more to do and more and more I want to do while still I can. Unfortunately a time will come all too soon that this will no longer be the case so I want to do it all while I can. This year we lost several Blue Stars. Bob McKelvey passed away on Christmas Day. Karl Osterloh and Bob Regester recently pulled pitch. Our numbers are shrinking with both passings and those who are no longer able to physically participate. In addition to our summer gathering, we are also planning a *Fall Reunion*. We will be returning to Savannah November 7th – 11th. As I always do, I want to encourage all who are able to attend. New Orleans is going to be a hoot and probably the last time we will gather in this great city. Make a decision, make a commitment, do something! Don't just sit there thinking about it until it's too late or you're not able to do it anymore. Believe it or not, there are probably some old friends out there who are looking for you and would love to see you again. Right now, we have 30 registered to attend (from the VHPA Morning Report). I'd like to see that at least doubled. We can't do that without you! Let's continue to be the largest unit in attendance!

And the Activities.....

Once again we will have a TOC; a central meeting place where we can gather, sit back and relax while enjoying the Class VI activities. I have been informed that the VHPA will once again provide a TOC for us. I haven't received the actual location yet but it will be posted in the VHPA registration area. We typically have one of the larger unit turn-outs and our TOC has become very popular with even those who weren't in the 48th. It seems everyone comes by at some time or another during the reunion to see what we're up to or just to enjoy a cold brew. One of the TOC highlights in the past has been our hot dog stand. It's been absent the past few years but we're bringing it back this year. During past reunions we've had hot dogs going 24 hours a day

and I can tell you that we typically go through more than 100 pounds of dogs. Hopefully, we will be able to do this again and perhaps expand the menu to include the ever popular polish sausage. As in the past, we count on your contributions to the TOC fund to cover our expenses for food and drinks. Once again, I'm asking for your support and appreciate any contribution you can send to help out. Our TOC remains free to everyone and is only supported by your contributions. Help us make it a success once again. We're planning to have our TOC open from August 1st through the wee hours of August 4th, with the exception 1300 to 1700 on August 3rd – during our mini reunion.

A couple of requests: We will need coolers for beverages and hot dogs. If anyone is driving and can bring along a cooler or two, it would be greatly appreciated. Also, I usually send a couple of boxes out containing some reunion supplies and this year, the hot dog machine. If there is anyone close by or who is driving and will arrive NLT the 1st and you care to volunteer some room, please let me know. I'd like to ship directly to you and if you can transport them to the reunion hotel, it'd be a great help. Please let me know.

As always, this year we are going to rely on the generosity of those attending to bring a case or two of beer, some wine, soft drinks, snacks, etc. to donate to the TOC. We're not sure if we will be required to buy keg beer from the hotel. If so, we will indicate the cost per beer that we will need to cover the cost in the TOC. We'll have a "donation" jar for drinks to help ensure we don't lose our shirts and to build a war chest for future reunion activities. Something we started last year is the "*buy your buddy a beer*" fund. If you can't make the reunion and want to buy your buddies a beer or two, this is the way to do it. It worked well and we hoisted a beer in honor of the many that contributed and couldn't make it. Remember, any funds raised above our expenses will remain in our Association Treasury and will be used in future reunion activities. It's worked out well in the past and hopefully the same formula will continue to work. If you cannot attend this year's festivities but wish make a contribution, "buy your buddy a beer" or if you are attending and would like to send your contribution now, you can send your contribution to:

Bobby Schulze
PO Box 142
Baileytown, AL 35019-0142

Please be sure to indicate on your check that it is for the "TOC contribution" or "buy your buddy a beer". Time is short so the sooner you can send something out, you can be certain it'll get to us in time.

The Blue Star Reunion....

Our "formal" get together is scheduled for August 3rd from 1300 to 1700 with activities moving from the mini reunion room back to the TOC after 1700. The location of our "formal" gathering will be in *Room 7, which is part of the Grand Ballroom*. This is located directly across from the Registration desk on the 1st level (street level) of the hotel. As always, it doesn't cost a cent to attend our reunion. Our reunion is independent of the VHPA activities. As I've said, they provide us with the reunion facilities at no cost. We will also have a slide projector & screen available along with a TV/VCR combo. If you have slides, movies, VHS tapes you'd like to share, please bring them. I'd really like to encourage all to bring pictures, movies, slides, etc. to share with all.

Other Reunion Events.....

If you are interested, these events can be viewed on the VHPA website at www.vhpa.org and follow the links for the reunion Reunion Information. Many of the events have been sold out already. In order to attend any of these events, you must register with the VHPA, pay the registration fee and pay for the event ticket. If you are not a VHPA member, you must be sponsored by a VHPA member to do this. We have many Blue Star's who are willing to sponsor you if you need a sponsor. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you wish to attend any other event and need a sponsor. **HOWEVER**, you do not need a sponsor to purchase a ticket to the banquet on August 4th. You can purchase a ticket as a "guest".

An Important Point.....

Not to be confused with the above comment about "VHPA registration"; our (the 48th's) reunion activities are **FREE!** no dinero required. Nada! If you WANT to participate in a VHPA sponsored activity, you have to register. You don't for the Blue Star reunion on the 3rd! You have full access to the HQ hotel, our TOC, the VHPA vendor area and anything that is not a "ticketed" event.

Banquet....

Another significant major event of our reunion is the banquet and dance. This year the banquet will be held on August 4th even though the reunion continues on through the 5th and wraps up with check-out on the 5th. The banquet is the largest event of the VHPA reunion. The food is usually pretty decent for banquet food. The VHPA has recognized that many folks would like to attend the banquet but didn't feel that it should be necessary to register and pay the registration fee to do so. Once again this year you can purchase a ticket for the banquet *without* having to register or pay the registration fee. That means it is open to all – VHPA member or not. This year a banquet ticket for a non-registered guest is \$90. You may be able to purchase a banquet ticket at the reunion but I strongly suggest that you purchase one now and this can be done through the VHPA website and clicking on the "reunion" link. When you purchase a banquet ticket, you will be asked for a seating preference. Please be sure to put down the 48th or Blue Stars. This will ensure we have enough tables allocated to our group. **VERY IMPORTANT!**

New Orleans Hotel and Reservations in a Nutshell....

What can be said about New Orleans that everyone doesn't know already? The reunion hotel is the Hilton New Orleans Riverside, Two Poydras Street, (1-800-445-8667) located adjacent to the French Quarter. The VHPA room rate is \$119 per night. Reservations **MUST** be made by July 11th for this rate. Allocated rooms have been going fast. If they say there are no rooms available at this rate, be insistent! Additionally, you may be able to obtain a room at a "military rate" that is also a highly reduced rate. There is also a special VHPA parking rate of \$15 a day which is a considerable discount. Additionally, you can make your hotel reservations on line by going to the VHPA website, www.vhpa.org and following the links.

Raffle....

Once again we hope to have a raffle to help with expenses and the like. I say "hope" because we always depend on you for the raffle items. Anything will help and anything you can beg, borrow or steal will be appreciated. Please bring anything you can to help us out!

...THE ANNUAL FALL REUNION ...

We're headed back to Savannah this year! Rick Lester has taken the bull by the horns and once again put the Savannah reunion on the map. Here's the skinny:

48TH AHC REUNION
SAVANNAH, GA
NOVEMBER 7TH – 11TH, 2009
(Wednesday – Sunday)

SAVANNAH HOTEL

The Inn at Ellis Square, 201 West Bay Street, Savannah, GA

Reservations can be made by contacting the hotel at (877-542-7666 ext 147 or 912-236-4440 ext 147; use **Booking Code Name "Blue Star, 48th Assault Helicopter Company"**. Reservations must be made prior to Wednesday, September 5, 2012. Reservations made after this date will be based on space and rate available. The Room Rate for a standard guest room (two double beds) for single or double occupancy is \$97 per night; King Beds \$97 – all plus tax. This includes a complimentary continental breakfast daily. The special guest rates will apply two days before and after the dates of the event. Rick has requested that he be notified at JOKER94INBOUND@YAHOO.COM after making your reservation with the names of attendees', dates of stay, home address, phone contact numbers and email addresses. For those without internet access, Rick's number is 770-424-4227.

Our last visit to Savannah was a blast. The weather was perfect and the hotel is adjacent to the riverfront and all the great activities. Hope to see everyone there!

News from the "Front": A/3-158th Blue Stars

Once again the "New Stars" have been deployed to Southwest Asia. They were deployed to Shindand, Afghanistan this past May and have become 100% operational this month. They have been assigned a primary mission of Med-Evac for northwest Afghanistan. The BIG news is that the Blue Stars have recently added a platoon of CH-47F's to the unit. They have integrated a platoon of 4 Chinooks from the 180th, "Big Windy". The Blue Star's TO&E now consists of 10 UH 60 Blackhawks and 4 CH-47F Chinooks. I let their current CO, CPT Sean Stapler, know that the 48th and 180th shared a close relationship while in RVN and we worked with them on many missions. Due to military restrictions, the "New Stars" are unable to share their experiences with us on our Reflector List or access it. CPT Stapler has promised to keep us in the loop through their Newsletters and pictures. He has stated that he'd like to maintain a close relationship with us "Old Stars" so the "New Stars" always remember their proud heritage. In my email exchanges with him, he seems to be really sincere and extremely proud to be the CO of the Blue Stars. Logan is putting together a section on our website for this. We have already received the 1st Newsletter from them and several pics. Visit our website often to keep up with them. CPT Stapler has also requested our support. As we know, some small luxuries are hard to come by when you're deployed. Additionally, he has stated that there are many "single" guys deployed with them who may not receive much mail. If anyone, or group, would like to send a care package, letter or card to someone with the Blue Stars (or perhaps a school class "adopting" the unit) it would be greatly appreciated. Anything sent should be addressed to the 1st Sgt for distribution:

Gregory Taets
A/3-158 "Blue Stars" TF Storm
Shindand Airbase
APO, AE 09382

In Closing....

If you haven't been to a reunion in awhile or never at all, come on out and renew a friendship with an old friend or meet a new one. One thing I can guarantee is that we know who the last men standing in the TOC will be. Make no mistake that if anyone thinks they can outlast John-Al or Rick Lester, it'll be a memorable challenge and photo worthy!

I'm sure that the miserable economy is still hurting many of us. The economy will make it difficult, if not impossible, for many of us to attend. I can only speak for myself in saying that if I wasn't still working, I wouldn't be able to fund a trip like this out of any retirement funds. I'm hoping that the many members we have in the southeast (yeah, Ft Rucker is in the area I'm talking about) area are able to make it to New Orleans to join us. There are many of us who have attended a reunion and felt that it was a waste of time. The reasons are many, from someone having pissed us off for whatever reason to the feeling that it just wasn't for me anymore. Whatever the reason may be, we miss you and we hope to see you again. Reunions can be lousy or great. It just depends on us. We do everything we possibly can to ensure that all who attends from the 48th or a supporting unit are welcomed and have a good time.

Hope to see everyone in New Orleans or wandering aimlessly around Bourbon St. If I can answer any questions, please feel free to contact me.



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