



48th Assault Helicopter Company

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★ BLUE STAR ★
FIRE SUPPORT BY THE
JOKERS

GREETINGS FELLOW BLUE STARS,

We're all getting short, in more ways than one! As I put this Newsletter together, I figure that there are about 35 days and a wake-up until one of the biggest gatherings of Blue Stars gets underway since RVN.....and I'm not exaggerating! Between who we know has registered to attend the reunion with the VHPA and those who have indicated that they will attend through the Reflector, we're well on our way to 70 attendees and counting (not including family members). Hopefully, this Newsletter will motivate many more to come and join in on the festivities. I really feel that we have a shot at having 100 Blue Stars attend the festivities.

Unfortunately, this past year has taken a toll on several Blue Stars; hence, the reference to getting short "in more ways than one". Several have been diagnosed or suffer from a myriad of ailments that could be attributed to our service in RVN. As we get on in years, fewer are physically able to participate in our reunion. Once again I make this plea to all to do all you can to make our gathering. I'm making this plea especially to those who are within driving distance to this year's reunion site - Washington, DC. No one knows what the future may hold so don't put off for another year what you can do this July - attend a terrific gathering of Blue Stars.

So now that I hopefully have your attention, what's the deal on the reunion you may ask? Well here's the skinny. The site of this year's gathering is the *Marriott Wardman Park Hotel, 2660 Woodley Road, NW, Washington, DC.*

As in the past, we have used the annual reunion of the VHPA to facilitate the Blue Star reunion. This has provided us with several advantages. The least of which being that with such a large number of reunion attendees, we benefit from some great negotiated hotel prices during the high season. This year the number is \$115 per night! The VHPA also provides us with our reunion facility and amenities at no cost to us. But I think the greatest benefit is the electric atmosphere it generates. We have the opportunity to gather with warriors who shared the same experiences as we did, and believe me, it does generate an atmosphere that you must experience to appreciate. As many of us know, the VHPA stands for the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association. Membership in the VHPA is limited to those who served in RVN as a helicopter pilot. Over the years, I have seen the participation of more and more crew members in the various reunion activities. As other units enlarge their data base of members, they are making great strides in searching for and finding crew members who most all of us can attribute our survival to in more ways than one. The Blue Stars have historically enjoyed one of the largest unit gatherings of the VHPA reunion, pilots and crew members. So many units expressed wonderment at the numbers who attend our reunion that they are imitating us in their efforts. I guess the greatest source of flattery is imitation. Without your support and attendance, we wouldn't be where we are today. This gathering is for everyone, VHPA aside. As far as we're concerned, there is no distinction between a pilot and a crew member. We are all Blue Stars and that's what it's about, the Blue Stars - PERIOD!

The Main Event – The Blue Star Reunion

The Blue Star reunion takes place on the 1st full day of the VHPA reunion this year. It offered the least conflict with other scheduled events. Once again, the VHPA has provided us with a large meeting facility to accommodate the anticipated masses. Here's the skinny:

WHEN: Saturday, July 1st from 1300 to 1700

WHERE: Marriott Wardman Park Hotel, Virginia A, B, and C

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.

The 2nd Main Event – The TOC and Sign-In

Once again we are planning to have a TOC up and running for the duration of the reunion. The VHPA reunion event runs from July 1st through July 5th. Accordingly, our TOC will be open for the same period, with the exception 1300 to 1700 on July 1st. The TOC operating costs have increased substantially during the past few years. Through the "buying" power of the VHPA, we will get a 50% discount off of the rack rate for a suite that we will utilize for the TOC. Even so, it will cost approximately \$600 per day, plus tax. By comparison, last year's TOC ran \$868 a night, plus tax! I ran this by those on the Reflector prior to making a commitment and the general consensus was that it was beneficial to all to have a central gathering place during the reunion activities. Many of those same individuals have already sent the Association contributions for the TOC. We fund the TOC and our reunion activities through the Blue Star Aviation Association and last year we took quite a hit on TOC costs. This year, we're going to approach it a little differently. In the past, your contribution for the TOC generally included beer, wine, etc. Due to the losses last year (now I'm not saying we drink too much...☺), 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, etc. to donate to the TOC. Additionally, we'll put a "donation" jar for drinks for say \$1 a beer, to help ensure we don't lose our shirts and to build a war chest for future reunion activities. Many have indicated their concurrence. In any event, that's the plan. We figured that we would request a \$50 (per Blue Star) contribution to cover the TOC costs and any beverages you can help with. Remember, any funds raised above our expenses will remain in our Association Treasury. If you wish, you can send your contribution now to:

Bobby Schulze
PO Box 142
Baileytown, AL 35019-0142

If you plan to attend the reunion, please don't send Bobby an advance contribution after June 19th or so. Bobby will be at the reunion for you to contribute there. If you don't plan to attend and would like to contribute anyway, you can send Bobby your contribution anytime. Please be sure to indicate on your check that it is for the "TOC contribution".

There will be a Blue Star sign-in sheet posted in the VHPA registration area. Please take the time to sign-in so we have an idea who's here, so you can see who is there. Even if you only plan to come for the Blue Star reunion, please let us know you're here.

The location of the TOC will be posted in the VHPA registration area.

Other Reunion Events

The VHPA has planned numerous reunion events. These events can be viewed on the VHPA website at www.vhpa.org and click on Reunion Information. 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.

The Banquet

Another significant major event of our reunion is the banquet. This year the banquet will be held on July 3rd. The banquet is the largest event of the VHPA reunion. You can typically expect over 2,000 attendees (probably many more this year). The food is usually pretty good for banquet food and the entertainment is terrific. 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. 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. Again, please contact me for further information.

Banquet Seating

We usually get screwed on this one guys so if you are planning to attend the banquet, please CALL the VHPA and let them know your banquet seating preference. i.e. with the Blue Stars. Hopefully this will ensure we get enough tables together. If you indicated your preference on your registration form, you shouldn't have to call them again. Also, visit please banquet seating table for seating confirmation as soon as you get to the Marriott.

Hotel Reservations

As this Newsletter is being prepared, I understand that the Wardman Park Hotel has released an additional block of rooms to the VHPA. If you haven't done so, now is the time to make your reservations. To make a reservation, you can call PassKey at (800) 266-9432. They will probably ask you if you have registered with the VHPA. If so, indicate that you have and make your reservation. The VHPA also has an overflow hotel located across the street from the Wardman Park – the Omni. They offer the same discounted rates as the Marriott in the event the Marriott is sold out. PassKey should be able to provide you with contact information for the Omni if necessary.

Website

Our new website is up and running. Many thanks to Logan Weiler for all of the hard work he's put in to getting it up and the constant updates. Visit us at www.48ahc.org. Your Association dues pay for our website.

Our website also has a link to subscribe to our Reflector List. You have several options for receiving email when you join the list. I know the volume of email can be overwhelming, but you can control the volume by receiving email as Daily Digest (1 email daily or 1 for every 25 individual emails posted).

Raffle

Once again we will have a raffle this year to help raise funds for the Association. In addition to various other raffle items, we will once again have a leather flight jacket to raffle-off, courtesy of Cooper Flight Jackets, through the efforts of Rick Lester. Again, the proceeds of the raffle go to support our reunion activities so please support us by buying raffle tickets.

Blue Stars Return From Afghanistan

The current Blue stars, 3-158 AVN, have just returned home from their year-long deployment to Afghanistan. This was their 2nd deployment to the Middle East in 3 years. They have returned to their base in Germany and await further news on future deployments. Their current website is www.3-158avn.12avnbdde.army.mil.

Blue Star Aviation Association

Our Association continues to grow and remain strong and solvent. The efforts of many make this possible. We will conduct our annual elections during our Association business meeting that will be held during our reunion. Up for grabs will be the post of Junior Member-at-Large and Vice President. I'm pleased to announce that Logan Weiler has thrown his hat in the ring and is running for Vice President. Thanks for volunteering Logan! If anyone is interested in running for office, please let us know ASAP.

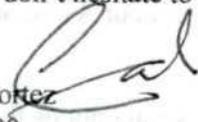
Many thanks to Ron Turner, the outgoing Association President, for all of his hard work and support through the years. I'd like to welcome Stoney Stitzle as our incoming Association President.

If you aren't a member of the Blue Star Aviation Association, please take the time to consider joining. You're supporting a worthy cause – the Blue Stars! Please visit our website for an application. It's only \$25 a year to support such a great group of guys!And, if you're already a member, it's time to send your annual dues in. Please remit them to Bobby Schulze (PO Box 142, Baileytown, AL 35019-0142) ASAP. Please mark your check "Annual Dues").

In Closing

A big thanks to all for your continued support of the Blue Star Aviation Association. Every year we add new names to our data base and hope to see those new faces at our reunion. As we continue to grow, we continue to have one of the largest participations, by unit, in the reunion activities than any other RVN unit. That's saying a whole heck of a lot! And don't even mention the CAV. While there are a lot of CAV hats to be seen, the CAV was made up of many individual units as the 48th was a part of the 1st Aviation Brigade. So there are the CAV hats and then there are the distinctive Blue Star and Joker shirts and hats everywhere. You can't miss us either! So join us – have a beer with some old friends again!

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.


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Joker 90

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