November 2015

From The President
Rich Miller

As you know, Veterans Day was this month. Three pleasant events associated with this tribute to the military happened to me. First, I experienced the joy and pride in watching a Veterans Day parade in one of the small towns near where I live. Of special significance for me was one group of marchers who wore the uniforms of military service from past to present - to include a flight suit or two. Secondly, I had the pleasure of representing CHPA as President at a Marine Corps Ball that celebrated the 240th anniversary of the Corps. There were impressive ceremonial events and speeches, but the one that grabbed everyone’s attention was a surprise Skype video call to an attending wife from her deployed husband.

That conversation, in the public mist of hundreds of attendees like me, was sometimes humorous and sometime serious. But it was a genuine reminder that there are still young servicemen and women who will be away from home for the Christmas holiday. So I will segway into asking each of you who are reading this message to consider contributing to the annual CHPA Christmas box project. That project puts "care packages" together and ships them to deployed aviation troops as a reminder that we fellow aviators and crewmembers understand their sacrifices and service. You can do that by going to www.chpa-us.org and clicking on the Click Here link that is a part of the 2015 Christmas Boxes Project paragraph.

Any organization creates objectives based on its goals. The primary goal for the leadership of CHPA has always been to have longevity, to be the top legacy association available, and build our presence in the helicopter aviation community. In furthering that primary goal, we have put together projects and plans that can strengthen social media efforts, increase sponsorships and affiliations, promote regional area leadership and activities, and increase name brand recognition. All are achievable goals.

A successful organization relies on YOU - its membership - to help achieve goals and purpose. Providing input and suggestions, serving on a committee, or just getting the word out to help grow membership are all important contributions. No member’s commitment or contribution is too small. Each one is very important to the success of this remarkable fraternity. If you have any questions, ideas, or suggestions please do not
Please feel free to forward this issue of “The Swash Plate” to your colleagues, potential members and other interested parties!

Share the “Swash”

Please consider sponsoring CHPA’s programs. You may make tax deductible donations to support the Goldie Fund, CHPA’s Scholarship program, the Holiday Boxes for the Troops, T-shirts for Heroes or the Association. For further information please look at Sponsorship at the website, http://www.chpa-us.org.

Sponsorship
How Are We Doing?
Jay Brown

Every month we try to bring you articles and notices that interest all of our members. Of course that entails gathering news items and articles from various sources and varying topics, from the humorous to serious news of world events. We hope we’re meeting your needs and providing entertainment and we’d love to hear from you on whether we’re meeting those goals.

If you have a comment or suggestion on what we’ve done well, where we could improve or want to submit a story drop us an email at HQ@chpa-us.org or give us a call at 800-832-5144 and let us know. Always of particular interest are stories from our members and supporters. Anything from tales of woe in Flight School to genuine TINS TIW stories can be submitted. So drop us a line and tell your story.

Reunions and Gatherings

Are you planning a reunion or event that may be of interest to our members? Let us help you get the word out and support veterans groups of all sizes and locations. Just send a message with the information to HQ@chpa-us.org. If you have a logo, send that along as well. Be sure to include accurate contact and registration information and we’ll take care of the rest.

The Swash!

One of the things we all know, nobody tells a better story than a combat helicopter crewmember, whether it’s the truth or “enhanced truth.” Our most entertaining and informative stories come from you, our membership. We often receive responses from our members when an article is published that opens a memory or touches a nerve, in a good way.

So where are all the story tellers out there? All you veterans of the skies of OEF and OIF with an idea for an article, or a story to tell it’s as easy as sending it in. Take a moment to lay fingers on keyboard or just put pen to paper and send them in. You can email them to hq@chpa-us.org or through the US Post Office to: CHPA • PO Box 42 • Divide, CO 80814-0042

Help us help you tell the tales of your experiences and continue to preserve our shared legacy of combat under a rotor disc.
CHPA Present at the 240th USMC Birthday Bash

The Combat Helicopter Pilots Association was proud to be in attendance at a recent 240th Marine Corps birthday celebration which commemorates a time honored event that acknowledges past and current members of the corps and celebrates the Marine Corps around the world.

Shown here (left to right) are former Chairman of the Board Robert Frost, LTC (R), former Congressman Allen West and Richard Miller, President of CHPA.

Calling all HA(L)-3, HC-1, FASU Seawolves

The Seawolf Association is looking for any personnel who were attached to HA(L)-3, HC-1, or FASU Binh Thuy. If you were, or know anyone who was, please contact us at (501) 960-7248. We do not have access to the official Navy records as they remain classified in the National Archives due to the covert nature of many of the operations, therefore, the only way we can locate fellow Seawolves is with your help.

On 3 January 1997, the Bureau of Naval Personnel authorized, retroactively, the awarding of the Combat Aircrew Insignia to Combat Aircrewmen who served in HA(L)-3. With this approval, we need to locate our doorgunners so they can be awarded these devices and accompanying certificate. To request the insignia, fill out and send in the attached affidavit.

American Heroes Air Show

CHPA was a participant at the recent American Heroes Air Show in Oviedo, Florida. Alex and Edna Horony represented our organization. There was a large crowd present and lots of visitors to the CHPA booth. There are more airshows and trade show events scheduled in 2016. If anyone is interested in helping represent CHPA at these, please contact Alex, the Events Coordinator at AHorony@chpa-us.org.
GOT PATCHES?

CHPA continues to receive quite an assortment of patches from our members. These patches are displayed at our booth at HAI, Quad A, and VHPA. Several of you have donated patches, but we’re always looking for more. They are very eye catching and help us garner attention. So please dig through your old patches and if you have some you’d like to share, send them to us at:

CHPA • PO Box 42 • Divide, CO 80814-0042
2015 Christmas Boxes Update
Jay Brown

The Christmas Boxes for the Troops project for 2015 is coming down to the wire. The cut off date for sponsoring boxes is November 30. That may seem early but ending the project at the end of November gives us the time we need to purchase the contents, get the boxes packed and on the way to the Post Office by early December to make the mailing deadline.

This year we’re trying something different. Through the local ACS at Ft. Carson we got a solid mailing address for the Chaplain who has gratiously agreed to receive any and all care packages we mail this year and distribute them to soldiers who will be deployed this Christmas. To date we’ve got 124 boxes sponsored with only one outstanding check, which I expect to receive in the next few days.

Last year we sent 189 boxes to troops deployed to southwest Asia who would miss spending the Christmas holidays with family at home. That was our banner year. These men and women deserve our support. We’ve all “been there” and know what it’s like to be away from home. To those of you who’ve already sponsored boxes we sincerely thank you.

I urge you now to take a moment and sponsor a box for our brothers and sisters in arms. Sponsor more if you can but at least sponsor one box. The process could not be more simple. Go to www.chpa-us.org and click on the link in the Christmas Boxes article on the front page. If you’ve logged into the web site the form will pre-populate. Complete the form and select a number of boxes to sponsor at the bottom, then select a method of payment. You can sponsor boxes using a credit card over our secure server or you can select to send a check. You do not have to be a CHPA member to sponsor boxes so let your friends know about the project. I look forward to having another banner year supporting our troops.

Recipe Request
Sue Prescott

CHPA is still hard at work, trying to pull together enough recipes for a cookbook worthy of our audience. We would still like your stories and recipes. We need MORE. Recipes with a story about learning/cooking it when overseas or when a service member returned from a deployment are even better. Submit recipes to RecipesCHPA@yahoo.com.

I love to cook and my friends and neighbors all benefit from it. I collect recipes and love to try new ones. When I started this project, it was my intent to put the recipes in a common format with common words for the methods to make the recipes consistent; my engineering background coming through. That format is ingredients first, in the order used, then instructions. That’s not absolutely true anymore. I’ve received a couple of recipes that are so engaging, though not in my format and words, that I will be including them as written.

Also, please remember, if you want to submit a recipe you copied from a website or book, change up the directions (they’re the copyrightable content). Or let us know that they need to be changed; and please give attribution to the author. (This just keeps us safe.)
WO-1 Curtis Goes to ‘Nam
Robert Curtis

In life, it is often critical to make a good first impression even if you don’t have any idea your next encounter might be “a first impression.” Take, for example, the start of my deployment to Vietnam back in 1970: I was a Warrant Officer - 1 coming off the best deal possible. Out of the blue, my whole Flight School class (69-25, Tan Hats) was sent State-Side upon graduation in August 1969, instead of going directly to Vietnam. We were all floored, very happy, but completely floored. I drew Ft. Campbell, based on my “dream sheet” listing of Ft. Campbell and Ft. Knox as my first two choices. Being a Kentucky boy, I figured it would be nice to be near home.

With the 101st in Vietnam, Fort Campbell was mostly empty, except for some basic training companies. The only helicopters left were six Korean War vet OH-13Es. I was told to get 100 hours in them as quickly as I could, whereupon they would make me a flight instructor, so that I could help transition the flood of new Warrants hitting the base from Ft. Rucker. Oh, joy. Free to fly as much as I wanted, even if it was in a “Sioux.” But from the beginning, we knew it wouldn’t be long before our turn in Vietnam came. I figured about a year, so I called Warrant Officer Branch and made a deal for Chinook transition. I finished just in time for the birth of my son right in the middle of my leave period and before deployment.

At that time, my Uncle, Gunnery Sergeant Don Curtis, was in the Marine Corps air wing. He was fresh off a tour in Vietnam and was assigned as Operations Chief at the VIP flight detachment, NAS Norfolk, VA. About two weeks before I was due to leave for McGuire AFB and the flight to Vietnam, I gave him a call on AUTOVON just to chat and see if he had any tips about what I needed to take with me that weren’t obvious.

He asked, “How are you getting up to McGuire AFB?”

“Commercial flight, of course,” I replied.

“Boring,” he said. “I’ll send a T-28 to pick you up. You can spend the night with me and the next day I’ll send you on to New Jersey.”

I knew he could do it, because all my life he had been impressing me with his arrival at various family functions by Marine Corps jet, including one time when he arrived at the Greater Cincinnati Airport in an attack jet trailing fire as it came in. All in a day’s work in the 1950s, maybe. The T-28s were proficiency aircraft, kept operational because all pilots were required to get at least four flight hours a month to keep earning their flight pay. The staff officers would be only too happy to take a short cross-country flight to get their flight time, since it was better than four hours of instrument approaches and touch-and-goes.

I didn’t even go by the Travel Office. Instead, on the appointed day, I was standing with my duffle bag on the ramp at Ft. Campbell when, just as Uncle Don had told me it would, a T-28 flown by a Marine Corps lieutenant colonel (LTC) landed and taxied in.

When the engine stopped and the canopy slid back, the LTC asked, “You Warrant Officer Curtis?” When I nodded yes, he climbed down from the wing and gave me the shortest flight briefing I have ever had.

“If I say jump, don’t ask me to “Say Again,” because you will be talking to a swinging mic cord. When you jump, aim for the trailing edge of the wing and you should miss the tail. Oh, yeah, rip cord’s right here. Don’t forget to pull it.”

With that he took my duffle bag, stowed it in the belly of the aircraft, and got me settled in the back seat. Five minutes later we were taxing and ten minutes after that we were climbing out to the east, headed
for NAS Norfolk. We had no more than leveled off at 9,000 feet when the LTC said, “See that MIG down there?” As he spoke, he helpfully rolled the aircraft into a 60 degree angle of bank.

Looking down I didn’t see a MIG. What I saw was a Cessna 172, cruising along on a reciprocal course, six or seven thousand feet below us. When I pointed that out to the LTC, he just said, “That’s no Cessna, that’s a MIG. Commies are always tricky,” and rolled the T-28 inverted, pulled it through and started an attack dive on it. He pulled out of the dive before the Cessna even knew we were there and started on a series of aerobatic maneuvers designed to test one’s ability to hold lunch down.

It seems my Uncle, the Gunny, had briefed the LTC that the “kid” was a helicopter pilot and had no experience at all with fixed-wing, so the LTC should show the “kid” a thing or two on the way over to Norfolk. The remainder of the flight was aileron roll, followed by loop, followed by spin. At one point I saw 3.5 on the “G” meter. What neither my Uncle nor the LTC knew was that I would enjoy the ride, neither getting sick, nor even vaguely upset. It was fun, seeing someone who knew how to handle an aircraft put it through its paces. Finally, he rolled level and offered to let me fly, but I declined. Helicopters were my machines, not T-28s.

My Uncle was waiting on the ramp when we landed at Norfolk. The LTC looked back at me and gave my Uncle a thumb’s up. Both men were wearing wide smiles. After I changed out of my flight suit into civvies my Uncle and I were off to the Fleet Reserve Club. “Hey, everyone. This is my nephew and he’s off to Vietnam tomorrow!” The drinks flowed and so did the back slaps from the veterans and active duty Marines and Sailors. At some hour the evening ended, can’t really say when that was. The next morning another T-28 flown by another LTC was waiting to take me to McGuire.

This flight was straight forward with no aerobatics, and I did fly the T-28 some. Much easier than flying a helicopter, I thought. When we landed at McGuire, the LTC taxied over to Base Operations and kept the aircraft running while I pulled my duffle bag from its belly. When I was clear he gave me a salute and taxied away to head back to Norfolk.

Back to first impressions - Duffle bag over my shoulder, I marched directly into the office and announced, “Name’s Curtis and I’m here to go to ‘Nam.” The Air Force personnel were so impressed by the Marine Corps T-28 taxi service for a WO-1 that they assigned me a suite in the BOQ for the night instead of the barracks that everyone else got. The next day I was on the Stretch Eight and on my way to the war. Nothing like arriving in style.

I remembered those flights fondly when I was a flight student again, this time in Pensacola, not Mother Rucker. It only took me a few flights in a T-28 to convince me that my initial impression was right: helicopter flying beats fixed-wing flying any day, so I requested and received permission to return to my first love, fling-wings.
HAI Job Opportunity

HAI is seeking to fill the full-time position of Sales Representative. This position is responsible for the direct selling of HAI’s advertising, membership, exhibit, and sponsorship programs.

**Essential Functions of the Position Include, but Are Not Limited To:**

- Directly selling and making cold calls for all of HAI’s advertising, exhibiting, and sponsorship programs including, but not limited to: printed publications, online and electronic media, annual trade show and exposition, and sponsorships
- Tracking sales to make sure deadlines are met and materials and deliverables are received
- Researching and identifying new prospects and industry markets
- Maintaining sales database of prospects, customers, etc.
- Preparing e-blasts for advertising sales
- Collaborating with various HAI departments to ascertain their advertising and sponsorship needs and selling space or opportunities as appropriate using all available forms of media
- Staying up-to-date on all advertising changes, trends, habits, and new developments with competitors in the industry
- Assisting the Manager of Sales as directed
- Other duties as assigned

**Desired Qualifications and Requirements for the Position Include:**

- Bachelor’s degree in related field
- Minimum of two years prior experience in direct selling and cold calling of advertising, membership, exhibits, and sponsorships
- Expert knowledge of advertising and sales practices and industry trends
- Full understanding of print, digital media, and social media
- Full understanding of convention sales, including exhibit space and sponsorships
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills with the ability to communicate professionally and provide a high level of customer service
- Advanced computer skills and proficiency with the Microsoft Office Suite
- Detail oriented with strong organizational skills
- Self-motivated; able to work independently and in a team environment
- Ability to travel if necessary

Submit cover letter, resume, and salary requirements online at rotor.org/employment or by email to resumes@Rotor.org. Incomplete submissions will not be considered. All positions are located in Alexandria, VA; flextime and telecommuting are not available. All candidates are subject to background screening and drug testing.

This posting is an announcement of a vacant position under recruitment. It is not intended to replace the official job description. Job descriptions are available upon confirmation of an interview.

*Helicopter Association International is an Equal Opportunity Employer.*
50 Years Ago in Vietnam
Terry Garlock

There are many events springing up to celebrate Vietnam veterans since the war was generally 50 years ago, when the political climate gave too many of us insults instead of parades when we came home. As a certified grump, I will have to beg your forgiveness for my lack of enthusiasm for these events despite the good intentions. It’s nice to see the reversal of sentiment at long last, but for me too much time has passed. No sour grapes here, I am just focused on things other than myself. I would say if you want to do something for Vietnam vets, join us to make sure the troops of today and tomorrow feel America’s love.

In fact, I will invite you right now to www.chpa-us.org, website of the Combat Helicopter Pilots Association, where for a few clicks and $30 on your credit card, you as a visitor can send a Christmas Box of goodies to a deployed man or woman. You will brighten their holidays with your unexpected gift, and as always they will share with their buddies.

I’ll tell you about one American woman who made her mark in Vietnam, but first I will set the background.

For the past dozen years I have been a guest lecturer at local high school history classes on the Myths and Truths of the Vietnam War, now joined by Mike King. As I tell students using a detailed slideshow, even though it had a noble purpose, the truth about the war was bad enough, but the truth was lost in myths, half-truths and political struggles. America never did and likely never will understand what happened in Vietnam. If students realize how a false history took root, they will be better prepared to be skeptical of TV news and be better informed by reading two good newspapers, one that leans right and one that leans left.

The skewing of history had a lot to do with John Kerry and his ilk in the anti-war movement trying to end the war by selling the false narrative that our troops were monsters raping, murdering and ravaging the country. Meanwhile, we will never know how many of our own troops died needlessly from the stupidity applied by Lyndon Johnson’s White House, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara’s idiotic “proportional response” policies and the go-along Pentagon. The one party in that war deserving attaboys was our troops, who fought with honor and never lost a major battle, the same party most maligned. It’s a good illustration to students of the concept of “scapegoat” for a miserable war everyone hated since there seemed to be no end in sight.

And of course we can’t forget the new Democrat Congress, winning in a landslide in the aftermath of Watergate. Those Democrats in 1974 broke America’s pledge in the peace agreement, that we would fund the defense of South Vietnam if the enemy in the North ever violated their pledge by attacking after our withdrawal in 1973.

And so, when America abandoned its ally, South Vietnam fell to the Communists in 1975. Leftists might say the re-uniting of that country was a good thing, but maybe they don’t know or care what really happened. More than 60,000 were executed by Communists for their crime of working with Americans. Countless refugees fled in vastly overloaded rickety boats and perished by the tens of thousands. More than 800,000 were sent to re-education camps, more like torture camps where a considerable number died of starvation, brutality or loss of the will to live. All the good jobs and houses and businesses were confiscated for Communists from the North. Even today, South Vietnamese veterans and their children and grandchildren are treated as the lowest priority for housing, jobs, etc.
A Marine combat photographer in North Carolina, R. J. Del Vecchio, operates a charitable organization to raise funds for our surviving veteran allies in Vietnam, www.thevhf.org. When he travels there to spread a little money around to them, it isn’t much but they are grateful for the recognition, especially since they live in abject poverty and are treated badly by their own country. Del told me about one vet eternally grateful for the luxury of being able to buy a cup of coffee once a week.

I want to tell you about a woman living in Marietta, GA named Donna Rowe. In Vietnam Donna was a nurse Captain in charge of the Triage unit of the Third Field Hospital near Saigon, the capital city of South Vietnam. While these hospitals dealt with a flood of casualties, Donna and her team earned this remarkable record – they never lost a patient in Triage during her 12 month tour. They might have died before arriving on the helicopter, they might have died after going to surgery or later from complications, but while in the care of Triage, Donna and her team moved heaven and earth to keep them alive, and never lost a single one.

The false narrative of our troops as “demons in Vietnam” bothers Donna a lot, and she tells a story to illustrate the opposite is true. In a book I wrote about Vietnam vets, the chapter titled “Just One Life” is about Donna and this story.

One day Donna had a radio request from a Dustoff (medevac helicopter) pilot named David Alderson. He said he had a severely wounded civilian baby on board and wanted permission to land on the hospital pad. Donna had never heard his call sign before, which told her he had been passed on by other hospitals further away who had told him no. The hospital priorities were: (1) US armed forces, (2) US civilians, (3) Allied forces, (4) host country military forces and lastly, (5) Vietnamese civilians. They had been struggling to keep up with the stream of combat casualties, and had several Dustoffs on the way with more wounded. But since it was a baby, and what she had learned from her parents about standing up for the right thing, Donna said yes and knew she would take some heat.

She didn’t know that in the mountains near Cambodia, American troops from the 1st Infantry Division came upon a Montagnard village which had been annihilated by the enemy. Montagnards are a small, dark, peaceful people who live in mountain villages, persecuted for centuries by the Vietnamese and Cambodians. Montagnards, or “Yards,” were an ally, their small but very tough men frequently working with our troops and Special Ops units, applying their unique jungle skills to stop an invading enemy. And so our unprincipled enemy slaughtered the civilian villagers, even the elderly and children.

Amidst a pile of bodies our troops heard the weak whimpering cries of a baby. They dug through the pile of dead to find a baby girl, still barely alive, clutched tight in the arms of her dead mother. The mother’s body was in rigor, they couldn’t move her arms, and so they called for a Dustoff and carried the baby and her dead mother, and loaded them onto the helicopter which received enemy fire despite the big red cross on all sides.

At the hospital landing pad, they had to break the arms of the dead mother to extract the baby, dehydrated and malnourished with fragmentation wounds in her abdomen and lower chest, causing her abdomen to fill with blood and hampering her little body’s ability to breathe.

Recognizing the baby would die very soon, Donna was rushing her to surgery when she spotted Father Sullivan, their Catholic Chaplain, and told him, "Father, come with us, you have to baptize this baby!" He said he didn’t have any holy water with him so Donna pointed to a wash-off sink and said, “Father, any water you touch right now will be holy, God is watching, let’s get this baby baptized!”
So Father Sullivan used water from the sink to sprinkle on her tiny little head and said, “I baptize thee . . .” When he stopped for a name, Donna scrambled in her head and said, “Name her Kathleen Fields!” Kathleen was from the Irish ballad her Dad sang to her and Fields was from the 3rd Field Hospital. Father Sullivan’s hand touched her little forehead while he stated the baptismal rights then he looked around this fast moving gurney and said “. . . and your Godparents are Specialist Medic Darrell Warren (a Mormon), Specialist Richard Hock (a Catholic), and Captain Donna Rowe (a Methodist). They became Godparents on that day, joining with a Catholic Priest to do a tiny bit of God’s work all while rushing the baby to life-saving surgery.

Kathleen lived, and became the secret darling of the hospital since keeping a baby broke rules, but the staff stole time to feed her, make clothes and a bed for her, and the big boss gave Donna an approving wink.

To shorten the story, an American soldier wanted to adopt Kathleen and take her back to America. Much red tape was cut through, and even the President of South Vietnam had to sign off, but she was adopted and did go to America.

For Donna, 33 years passed before she told this story to Bill Osinski, a reporter for the Atlanta Journal Constitution. You could have knocked her over with a feather when that newspaper story ultimately led to a phone call saying Kathleen had been found in California.

I’ll let you imagine the thrills when Donna and the other Godparents were reunited with Kathleen and met her husband and three children.

When I talk to students I tell them when we were sent to war we were just a few years older than them, and we did the kind of things with civilians in Vietnam that would make Americans proud. We were fighting to stop an invading enemy and we defended South Vietnam’s cities from Communist attacks. But we also built roads and schools, taught improved farming methods, brought medical care where it had never been seen, and did things like my extra duty of raising money to buy food and clothes for the local orphanage in Bien Hoa. The story of baby Kathleen is just one among so many. But still, the false narrative of evil American troops and dysfunctional veterans lives on, and has been recouted in a number of absurd Hollywood movies.

When I think of how divided our country was over the war, and America’s shameful chapter in history as we abandoned our ally to the merciless Communists, I am reminded of Senator William Fullbright, who brought to his Senate Foreign Relations Committee a former Naval officer named John Kerry to tell his fantastic lies that American troops were committing daily, widespread atrocities in Vietnam. That is the same Senator Fullbright who commented when South Vietnam fell to the Communists and innocent blood was still running in the streets that he was no more distressed than if Arkansas had lost a football game to Texas. That Senator would not want to know what I, and millions like me, think of him.

In Vietnam today, genocide against the peaceful Montagnard people...
continues. But just like the executions by Communist victors, brutal re-education camps, boat people deaths, Congress’ shameful betrayal of our ally and the Communists’ murder of two million of their own people in neighboring Cambodia, America had finally dis-entangled from Vietnam, had its back firmly turned, and was and still is determined not to see.

The media and the man on the street drank the Koolaid and know things for sure about the Vietnam War that have never been true, while the real lessons from that war are unknown to them. And I doubt that will ever change.

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Terry Garlock of Peachtree City GA was a Cobra helicopter gunship pilot in the Vietnam War. terry@garlock1.com