



48th Assault Helicopter Company

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GREETINGS FELLOW BLUE STARS,

Are you ready for a party? This is the reunion you've been waiting for! Bring your bathing suits, sunscreen and join us in San Diego. As I put this Newsletter together, I figure that there are about 46 days and a wake-up until one of the biggest gatherings of Blue Stars gets underway since RVN....and I'm not exaggerating! We're gathering in sunny San Diego June 30th through July 5th. We'll have one of the best TOC's we've had for awhile, cold draft beer, terrific weather and one of the largest gatherings in years. The VHPA is expecting over 1,800 folks to attend this event. This year we are gathering in southern California at the beautiful San Diego Marriott Hotel & Marina in downtown San Diego. I have been to this Marriott several times for meetings and can say that this is one great venue. The hotel is located on the water and within walking distance of San Diego's historic Gaslamp Quarter, the Midway, water taxi to Coronado, the San Diego trolley line and a short ride to Petco Park, home of the San Diego Padres, who, by the way, will be in town during our reunion. Since you'll be in my part of the country this year, I can say without hesitation "welcome to the land of fruits & nuts"!

Unfortunately, this past year has once again taken a toll on several Blue Stars. 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 attend our gathering. I'm making this plea especially to those who are within driving distance to this year's reunion site on the "left" coast. 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. Within the past couple of months, we've lost Jess Moore (Joker 10) and Bill "the Broph" Brophy. The Broph had suffered from the depilating effects of diabetes for many years and fought a great battle against the disease. Over the years in my attempts to get him to join us at one of our reunions, he said he would get to one before he pulled pitch. Fortunately, Bill was able to make that reunion dream come true and he was with us this past July in Philly.

The Skinny on the Hotel

The San Diego Marriott Hotel & Marina is located at 333 West Harbor Drive, San Diego. The VHPA has negotiated one terrific room rate of \$125 a night. It'd be almost impossible to find a room in San Diego anywhere for that rate let alone in a resort hotel. To book a room, you must book it through PassKey. You can't book a room for that rate through the hotel. The PassKey number is 800-266-9432. When you make a PassKey reservation, you need to mention the key words such as "VHPA" or "VHPA reunion" so the agent can find the contract. If you plan to attend, book now - rooms won't last long at that rate.

Through the efforts of Craig Ogborn, or "Oggy" to most of us, he has secured an alternate to the Marriott. The Hyatt is located directly next to the Marriott and a short walk. Oggy has been able to secure a block of rooms for those who would like to stay at the Hyatt. He has gotten a rate of \$149/DbI/nite. Unfortunately, the hotel is booked for the 30th and 1st. If you are interested in the Hyatt, you can make reservations on-line at: https://resweb.passkey.com//Resweb.do?mode=welcome_ei_new&eventID+2546601. You can also make them by phone by calling Stephanie Baxter (the Ogmeisters daughter) at 619-358-6696. Let her know who you are (Blue Star) and she will get you the correct group reservations number. There is apparently another huge event going on in SD just prior to our reunion and thus the scarcity of rooms for the 30th & 1st.

The TOC & the Main Event - THE MINI

We have a great TOC lined up for this year. Our TOC will be the Del Mar Room located on the 3rd floor of the south tower. The Del Mar Room is located by the VHPA registration area and NOT in an area of sleeping rooms. Good news for us - no worry about the noise or comings and goings this year! The room is large enough to allow us to have our mini in the same room! We'll even have an ocean view from the TOC.

The mini reunion is scheduled for Thursday, July 1st beginning at 1300. Since we'll have the same room from the 30th through the 5th, there'll be no need to rush to wrap up our mini.

In an effort to reduce our TOC costs, one change this year is that we will have draft beer on tap. We will be asking for your donation for a beer. Right now, it looks like 3 bucks a draft will cover most of our costs. Basically, if we buy the draft beer from the hotel, we get the room for practically nothing. While the TOC operating costs have hopefully decreased this year, we still need to solicit your contributions to continue to make it happen and build our war chest for future reunion activities. Once again, we're hoping to have our hot dog machine going and some other late night snacks available and we're only able to do this with your contributions. Also, your contributions help us support our now annual Fall reunion, more on that later. In the past couple of years, we've been able to cover our TOC expenses and contribute \$500 to the Fall reunion event. We really need your support. Remember, any funds raised above our expenses remain in our Association treasury. If you cannot attend this year's festivities but would like to make a contribution or, if, you are attending and would like to make a contribution now, you can send your check to:

Bobby Schulze
PO Box 142
Baileytown, AL 35019-0142

PLEASE BE SURE TO MAKE YOUR CHECK PAYABLE TO BOBBY SCHULZE. Also, please mark your check as a TOC contribution.

The Reunion

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 is 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 \$125 per night! 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 VHPA is recognizing this and has opened registration to non-members (crewmembers & guests) this year. So to register for an event, I understand you don't even have to be sponsored this year.

Reunion Events & the Banquet

The VHPA has planned a full slate of events this year. These events can be viewed on the VHPA website at www.vhpa.org and clicking on the Reunion Information link. Typically, most who attend will manage to find their own way around San Diego but will plan to attend the banquet. The closing banquet is another significant event of our reunion. This year the banquet will be held on July 4th. Also, this year, banquet attendees will be able to view the fireworks from our own Terrace located high on the hotel. The banquet cost for a non-registered guest is \$100, \$80 for registered guests.

Something else new this year is that when you register for the reunion with the VHPA, you have the benefit of attending several "free" events (you can probably get in even if you don't register). These events are the Early Bird Reception on June 30th and the Welcome Reception on July 1st.

Banquet Seating

When banquet tickets are purchased, you have the opportunity to indicate with whom or with what group you'd like to sit with. All you have to do is indicate "Blue Stars". If you purchased tickets and haven't indicated this, you might want to give the VHPA a call and let them know. If you're planning to purchase tickets, don't forget this little "detail". Again, they are expecting a very large turnout this year so plan ahead and make your reservations NOW!

Website

Logan continues to do a great job keeping our website up and running and updated. Stop in and see what's new. We still at: www.48ahc.org

The Blue Star Aviation Association

Our Association was formed to provide a vehicle to facilitate our reunions and provide us with a means of communicating and staying in touch with each other. We've done this by providing funds for our website, funding various reunion activities, and most importantly, recognizing those of us who pull pitch. In the past, we've been fortunate to continue to remain solvent by members renewing their annual membership. I'm the first to recognize that the present state of the economy has impacted everyone. I'd like to ask that everyone who can possibly find a way to renew your membership, take a few minutes to do so. We really need and count on your support. While the reunion activities are somewhat self supporting, our Fire Mission Fund and membership fund rely on all of us for replenishment. Please, if you possibly can, take the time to renew now and send Bobby Schulze a check for \$25 (at the address above). If you aren't a member, please consider joining. We need your help to support a great organization and a great group of guys - us and our Association! Please remember to make your check payable to Bobby Schulze (again a banking thing) and mark your check "Association Dues". Once again we will hold elections for Association VP & Junior Member at Large during our mini.

Raffle

Last year we had a great raffle. An unbelievable number of prizes were donated by Becky Fry, John-Al, Ernie Zeitler and many others. Once again, we will have a raffle during our mini reunion on July 1st. If anyone would like to donate an item or items for the raffle, you can either bring them along with you to the reunion or send them to me. Again, the proceeds of the raffle go to support our reunion activities and our Association. You can also support us by buying raffle tickets at the mini reunion.

The Blue Star Quilt

So what do you do with those Blue Star t-shirts or other shirts that have shrunk and don't quit fit anymore or those t-shirts you don't wear at all or might be a little unserviceable? Well, we have a place for them. Patty Williams (Steve's much better half) came up with a great idea and has generously offered to make a quilt for the raffle for our Fall reunion this year. There is such a variety of different t-shirts out there that this would make one heckofa quilt. I, for one, will be going through my stash and getting them to Patty. If you have a t-shirt or two you'd like to donate to the cause, please send them to:

Patty Williams
PO Box 122
Deer Park, WA 99006

Fall Reunion

Rick Lester has generously volunteered his time to put together the annual Fall Reunion this year. The 2010 Fall Reunion will be held in Savannah, GA. I'm still waiting for details from Rick but the event is being planned for the 1st weekend of November - around the 5th thru the 8th. Rick should have the details nailed down by the San Diego reunion.

Speaking of the Fall Reunion, if you weren't there this past year, you missed a great one. Ben & Janet Gay did a heck of a job putting this one together. The hotel was great and the events well planned. We gathered in historic Williamsburg, VA and had a great turnout. We drew quite a crowd at the hotel thanks to Brock Nicholson. Brock trailered one of the North Carolina Huey's to the reunion and parked it in front of the hotel. Of course the Huey was decked out in the 48th's livery and attracted quite a crowd. Thanks again Brock.

And Speaking of Tijuana.....

Yes, Tijuana is a mere stone's throw away from San Diego. Anyone who reads the paper knows that the drug war violence has been quite a problem there. Depending on what reports you listen to, daytime visits to TJ might be OK but nighttime visits should be avoided. TJ is easily accessible by trolley to the border, and Tijuana taxi into downtown. The trolley stop is located in front of the Marriott but know the risks. You will need a Passport to return from TJ if you go. Drivers licenses are no longer acceptable as proof of citizenship so, if you plan to go, be prepared.

In Closing

The SoCal Chapter is taking a lead role in the San Diego reunion events this year. The VHPA has once again realized that a local Chapter can provide a great deal of local insight and help with organizational matters. There is a great deal of additional information on reunion events and things you can do on your own for very little cost in San Diego. Please take some time and visit our website and you'll be able to get a good handle on how you can have a great time and keep your expenses down. Our website address is: www.vhpasocal.org

We are looking forward to several 1st time attendees again this year. San Diego should be a slam dunk for the "left coasters". There's quite a few that I'm hoping will take advantage of being in San Diego at a great hotel for a great price and join us. Once again we'll have the pleasure of a long distance traveler joining us all the way from Australia. Ernie Zeitler is going to make it to his 2nd reunion. After having such a good time in Philly Ernie just couldn't stay away. Now if we could only get Jerry Steinle to join us ??????

I hope to see all of you in San Diego. If I can help or answer any questions, please feel free to give me a call. Once again, our success depends on you and your participation. I've been doing this for quite awhile now and have seen our numbers grow every year. The only reason I continue to do this is because I really want to have the opportunity to meet old friends

and make new friends who share a common bond. Whether or not you were there during the same time frame or not, we all speak the same language. The TOC should be a great venue this year with its location being virtually right in the middle of everything and the fact that we won't have to keep apologizing for waking folks up.

One last plea for your support; please join the Blue Star Aviation Association if you aren't a member or renew your membership and send your check to Bobby. Any TOC contributions towards our San Diego and Savannah reunions will be greatly appreciated. And..... dig those old t-shirts out and send them to Patty!

Best Regards,

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