

November 2015 News Flash

Association President's Message:

Oct.2, 2015

President's Reunion Recap

Our 2015 Reunion in St. Louis was blessed with good attendance (181), hotel, food, beautiful weather, and fun-filled activities. This reunion was the first for eight of our brothers. The party hooch opened as scheduled on Wednesday. Thursday was very busy with people starting to arrive. Friday started with the Tour of St. Louis that ended with "Happy Time" at Anheuser-Busch Brewery. Meet & Greet festivities followed that evening at which Lee Jordan (daughter of Shadow 78 Navigator Meredith "Andy" Anderson) was presented with an Honorary Life Membership Certificate.

Saturday morning started at 9:00 a.m. for the men's Association Business Meeting in Gateway 4 and the Association Ladies Meeting in the party hooch. Seven-one (71) members attended the men's meeting. FNG's were recognized. Reports were made by Association Secretary Dryzyga, Treasurer Wohlgamuth, and Quartermaster Sininger. Wayne Laessig reported on progress of our new website which will be online sometime in 2016. Reports were made by Legacy Squadrons POC's and other Association POC's plus an update on Stinger 850 by Bruce Byrd. The 2015 Board of Directors was re-elected to serve again in 2016. Sue Fletcher presided at the Ladies Meeting. Peggy Craig and Cindy Posey headed the first-time Blind Auction effort to raise funds for the Association. Lessons learned in the Blind Auction process will be reported to the Association. Looking ahead to the Fort Walton Beach, FL Reunion, Carol Hinton agreed to coordinate potential women's activities. Cindy Posey and Andrea Dryzyga will coordinate the Blind Auction for the 2016 Reunion. FYI guys (men), the ladies (gals) did not drink any beer or wine during their meeting.

At the Saturday banquet, AC-119 Association Chaplain, Larry "Baby Huey" Hunter was awarded the Terence F. Courtney Above & Beyond Award for 2015. Cindy Posey announced the winners in the Blind Auction, followed by the open auction in which Auctioneer Gus squeezed every living dollar from bidders. Overall, both auctions were very financially successful.

The 2016 Board of Directors met Sunday morning and the following actions were taken:

1. A motion was made and seconded to discontinue efforts to obtain the AC-119K Stinger 850 gunship located at Tan Son Nhut Air Base (Ho Chi Minh City Airport), Vietnam. The motion carried unanimously. A big thank you goes to Bryce Bird for his efforts in tracking the aircraft.

2. Terry Sarul was designated by the Board as point-man to collect more biographies of gunship personnel who were not included in the Association's AC-119 Gunships History Book. More information will be forthcoming.

3. Jim Rash was designated to spearhead efforts for an AC-119 Gunship Memorial Bench at the National Museum of the USAF at Wright-Patterson AFB; Dayton, Ohio to be installed on museum grounds in time for the 2017 AC-119 Reunion. Association members wanting to contribute to the bench cost of approximately \$5,000.00 may send their tax deductible donation earmarked for the memorial bench **after the 2016 Reunion** to Treasurer Doug Wohlgamuth. Al Heuss and Larry Fletcher are advisors for the project at this time.

Sunday saw eight dedicated golfers take to the links. Larry Alderson proved to be the best golfer. While golfers were hunting for their balls, ninety-one reunion attendees were cruising up and down the Mighty Mississippi River on the Riverboat Becky Thatcher, while enjoying delicious buffet food including prime rib. The Farewell Bar-B-Q was well attended (115).

A great big **THANK YOU** goes to all who volunteered to help make our St. Louis Reunion special. Now, let's look forward to the 2016 Ft. Walton Beach, which will be great with Gus Sininger and Larry Hunter as reunion coordinators.

v/r

Larry Fletcher