

President's Message (04-12-2017)

This FLASH newsletter is intended to provide information about the upcoming reunion, and most importantly, about the status of the AC-119 Gunship Association's new Web Site. This is the second Firing Circle since the successful reunion in Ft. Walton Beach last October. Wow, time flies when you are having fun, AND hard at work.

Web Site: The Association's IT Committee has been working with extreme energy to enable the new Web Site and associated database for a smooth and successful launch. They are tweaking a few last minute bugs that are being difficult to resolve. The new Web site is comprehensive and well-crafted. It is way more than a great place to get current news and information; it is becoming The Place to find an ever-increasing amount of history about our Association. Further, it will simplify and automate: Reunion registrations (event module); buying Association paraphernalia from the Quartermasters site (eCommerce); and communicating within the Associations membership. The result is reducing a lot of background labor, paperwork, and Board members keyboard time.

Reunion: I know many of you are anxious to register for the reunion. We ask for your patience, so that we can get the new Web Site launched smoothly. In the meantime, do not hesitate to MAKE YOUR Hotel reservations, and sign up for the Fri. tour of the restoration hangar, and the Sunday social tour. Please visit our existing site for the reunion information, hotel registration numbers, and the tour registration forms: <http://www.ac-119gunships.com/welcome.htm>

Our journey to date has had its share of "bumps-in-the-road". For example, we were happy to have a guest speaker at our Banquet dinner for Dayton --- one of our own, Lt.Col Alan D. Milacek, (Ret.) . He piloted Stinger 883, which was so badly shot-up, that many guys did not believe it was flyable. Sadly, Al passed away on his 77th birthday on Feb. 27, 2017. Unfortunately, there are already "out-there" reunion advertisements getting in-line for publication in magazines/newsletters from organizations such as DAV, American Legion, VFW, USAF Museum, and others so related. Therefore, please remember that Gunship Brother Alan Milacek will be with us in spirit in Dayton, but not as our guest speaker.

Fortunately, the reunion planning team accepted an offer from Jim Russell to speak for us. Jim was a FLIR on Al's crew.

Important deviation from recent reunion banquets: The Association is very fortunate to secure the USAF Museum to host us. Nevertheless, due to time restrictions, we WILL NOT have the OPEN AUCTION this year. But, yes, we will do the Silent Auction as we have in recent years.

My closing thoughts are a GIANT kudo to two very dedicated and hard-working teams. When the opportunity arises for you, please acknowledge their special efforts:

Information Technology (IT) Committee: Wayne Laessig, Ron Julian, Jim Mattison

Dayton Reunion XVIII: Ron Julian, Rogers Stevens, Al Heuss, Vern Hansen, Jim Alvis