

From *May 2021 Firing Circle*  
**Association President's Message – May 2021**

Greetings fellow AC-119ers, Family, & Friends,

Wow, this year is flying quickly past, it seems to me. Good news is that the Association is doing well & on track, especially towards our Reunion XXI in October. We already have about 135 committed to attend, with many “first timers” registered. The June *Firing Circle* has the list of “Who’s Coming”, & the reunion information flyer – please check it out for names of your friends & fellow crew members. Our Web site has become a huge resource now holding much of our history – including Oral History Videos, our biographies, & stories. Next time you are browsing the internet, go visit [www.ac119gunships.com](http://www.ac119gunships.com).

It is already May, & we are heading to a better Memorial Day than we experienced last year during the pandemic lock-down. As more & more States are relaxing the pandemic restrictions, we will have Memorial Day gatherings to honor those brave Americans we lost in “all wars”. Here in northern NJ, American Legion Post 423 will have a small but energetic event, & I’ll be proudly flipping cheese burgers on the grill for those in attendance. It feels like we are slowly getting back to normal. And I trust things will improve as we pass into summer. Please get out & enjoy the ceremonies.

I communicate often with other Association Board members & those who help run the Association, beyond our monthly Board-Plus Meetings. We have developed friendships & great working relationships. It is sad that we see an increasing rate of loss of our most senior members. In fact, member loss is greater than our gaining of new members. Nevertheless, I am very happy to see that our Facebook community is growing, & that we have many younger family members joining the Association. I am hopeful that the younger members attending the reunion feel & see our comradery, & develop an interest in helping continue the Association’s activities. One of the busiest Associates is Ev Sprou – he does outreach, helps with Facebook, is our media manager, & handles membership. Ev can use help with the monthly task of communicating with “annual members” for membership renewal. If you are OK with Excel spreadsheets & Word documents on a Personal Computer, & you have about 1 hr. a month to donate to the Association, we can sure use your help. Please contact me more details & encouragement.

Thinking ahead: We have made preliminary plans for our 2022 reunion in Branson MO. Coordinator Jerry McDonald has firm plans to return us to Branson. I’m already looking forward to it. But, it is NOT too soon to think about what’s next – 2023. If you all want to have our Association continue with our annual reunions, then we will need someone to take the lead for 2023. Past reunion coordinators have written a “guide book” that outlines what needs to be done, & the leader will be part of a committee that includes past coordinators. If available, we intend to use a professional “event coordinator” that will make the reunion coordinator’s task much easier. We have lots of time, so please THINK ABOUT IT!

NKP Reunion #2 For those of us Stingers that served out of Nakhon Phanom (NKP) RTAFB, there is a well-planned reunion in Destin, FL, November 11, 2021. For more info, go to this link:  
[2021 NKP Reunion Weblink](#)

See you in Ft. Walton Beach. Please stay safe & stay well

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