

The Ugly Angel's

Reunion Newsletter

Vol III, Issue 1 April 1998

Off & Running

This edition kicks off our drive toward reunion 1998 which, from early indications, may equal or surpass our showing in Las Vegas. Thus far 83 of 128 Angels have answered the mail in one way or another, with 55 indicating they will attend, 18 saying maybe, and only 10 sorry to report they can't make it. Now if the other 45 of you who have yet to respond would get off your butts and reply, we would have an even better idea of where we stand. The Status Board listing the names of all those (including camp followers) who are either planning to attend or may attend the reunion can be found on the last page.

We're Going Uptown

The Ugly Angels are going formal. We have incorporated this gaggle as the Ugly Angel Memorial Foundation, a non-profit organization "...to support and create educational programs and events focusing on the United States military involvement in Vietnam ...". The benefits of incorporation will come down the road when we apply to other organizations for funds to support the erection of a permanent memorial and other activities. As soon as we gain tax free status with the IRS (about November), all your contributions will be tax deductible. Sachs, Skinder, and Hewes will form your initial unpaid board of directors, but in the future the election of board members will be open to all participating Angels. The books will be open and an annual financial statement published. The legal work was a freebie from Gunny Sachs, but we are on the hook for the Vermont filing fee of \$75 and for a future fee of about \$270 to the IRS to apply for tax-free status.

True account of a lawyer examining a coroner in court (from the Mass Bar Journal)

"Doctor, before you performed the autopsy, did you check for a pulse?" "No." "Did you check for blood pressure?" "No." "Did you check for breathing?" "No." "So, then it is possible that the patient was alive when you began the autopsy?" "No." "How can you be so sure, Doctor?" "Because his brain was sitting on my desk in a jar." "But could the patient have still been alive nevertheless?" "It is possible that he could have been alive and practicing law some where."

Be careful what you wish for...

This all got started because Bob Case contacted Bob Skinder who then contacted me about the UH-34D on display at National Museum of Naval Aviation in Pensacola. Turns out the damned thing is painted international orange. Can you believe it? Well, as Case points out, he can't very well tell his impressionable young son war stories while standing in front of a helicopter painted like Mary Kay's – and be believed. During a lucid moment it occurred to me that the Ugly Angel Memorial Foundation might just be able to do something about this sorry situation so I wrote the Museum *proposing that we paint the Museum's 34 in Ugly Angel colors for free.*

To my amazement the Museum has verbally agreed, subject to approving our paint scheme and using gloss paint. Willie Sproule, Burt Palmer, and Willie Jr. have volunteered to do the job. The problem is that it's going to be costly – around \$1000 for materials alone. The question is, do you want to support this idea or should we back out because of the cost?

I hate to ask for money, but this is a once in a lifetime opportunity. If we all pitch in we can establish the Ugly Angel's rightful place, the first Marine Corps UH-34D squadron in country and last one out, in naval aviation history forever.

If you support the idea, please send at least \$15 – more if you can afford it! If you can't afford to send anything, that's OK too. You will always be an Ugly Angel whether you contribute or not. The following paragraph explains our spending plan – and where to send your check.

Send your check ASAP. We have to know if we can do this within the next 30 days.

About The Check

To make the simple complicated – and as much like the Marine Corps as possible – this reunion we are going to break down our fund raising into two periods. The first, to start as soon as you can reach your wallet, will be to fund the painting of the 34, half the newsletter, and the incorporation and IRS filing fees. Later – when we decide the “what, where, and how” of the Ugly Angel Memorial – we will ask you to contribute to the memorial. That contribution will be tax deductible .

To fund the paint, newsletter, & filing fees, we ask you to contribute at least \$15, more if you can afford it. We ain't in this to make money (against the laws we are incorporated under), just to cover expenses. As in the past, I will continue to fund 50% of the newsletter out of my own pocket.

Make your checks payable to the **Ugly Angel Memorial Foundation** and mail them to the Sachs Law Office , P.O. Box 1360, Norwich, VT 05055 (attn: UAF). Please do it today.

Thanks already to speedy Willie Sproule, Don Nickens, and “Mush” Melin for “anticipating the command” as my drill instructor at PI used to whisper in my ear.

“You have the right to remain silent” is always excellent advice 1

Hotel Alert

The Association reported on 11 March that Pensacola Beach hotel rooms were already scarce. In addition to the names and numbers you will find listed in your Reunion Packet, additional space has been contracted with the Holiday Inn in Gulf Breeze. POC is Jennifer Savage at (850) 932-2214. The room rate is \$59-\$69 per night with 95 rooms available as of 11 Mar. The single POC for additional hotel and RV space in the greater Pensacola area is Christy Klemm at the Hampton Inn. She can be reached at (800) 320-8108. The single POC for condo rentals is Susan Jones at (800) 239-4334. You should be reading this before everyone except e-mail capable Assn. members get it, so act now!

Association Policy

You procrastinators should be aware that it's Association policy that you have to be a member in good standing (1998 dues paid up) to receive a reunion packet. Without a packet you may as well stay home because you won't be able to get tickets to any of the Association events. If you plan to go, make out a check for \$30 to the USMC/Vietnam Helicopter Association and mail it to 11151 Alejo Place, San Diego, CA 92124 along with your name/nickname, address, and squadron. Do it now! It'll be the best thirty bucks you ever spent.

Never get into a fight without more ammunition than the other guy 1

Friday Night

Reunion Friday is the day/night set aside for each squadron to do its thing. We are tentatively planning (subject to your approval) a Happy Hour and dinner at an excellent downtown restaurant, the New World Landing, on S. Palafox Street near Trader Jons. We are thinking of having a cash bar and a choice of two entrees to simplify service, and holding the price to less than \$25.00 per person. A short program will probably follow. If you have any druthers, now is the time to send us your input. In this outfit, everybody gets a say. How we plan to collect the money is still an open wound.

Where the Hell is...?

“Pete” Petersen, former Angel, retired federal agent , and ace security investigator, is looking for three former Angels: Former 1st Lt. Rick “Goofy” Gehweiler, 1st Lt. Mike “Purcey” Purcell, and Cpl Jay Erbeck (sp?).

Wayne Sutter is trying to locate Dave Neiderhaus, Mike Readick, and Larry Anderson.

If you are looking for an Association member and you are on the internet, try dialing up **www.popasmoke.com** and searching under "mailing list". The e-mail address of everyone who has registered with the Assn. is there.

Casualty Report

Ron Sorensen has requested that we add 1st. Lt. Ronald James Janousek's name to the Ugly Angel roll of honor. Ron was an Ugly Angel for most of his tour (Nov 68 to Jul 69) up until the Angels returned stateside. He then joined HML-367 on 1 July 69 and was tragically lost over Laos on 9 August .

Rab Adler reports that two more former Angels, Jim Roth and Dave Williams, have died since Vietnam. Jim, an Ugly tin bender in Vietnam, died of a heart attack in late 68 while working with Rab in the KY Air Guard. Dave, a former Ugly electrician, also died of a heart attack, but later in 1990.

Jim Fisher regrets to report that Warrant Officer J. S. "Sam" Chastain, USMC (ret.) died of cancer in 1995.

In contrast, Tom McKnight said that the last time he saw Chuck Bowers he was flying SAR at MCAS Beaufort sometime after 1968 which suggests he is not as dead as we thought.

Speaking Of...

Since I am two years older than dirt and fully retired, I have had time to think about getting an accurate count of all Ugly Angel casualties suffered during the war. Accordingly, I have written the Reference Section of the Marine Corps Historical Center requesting they send me copies of the HMM-362 Command Chronologies for the period 1962-1969. Hopefully by the time we get together in Pensacola we will have a complete list.

If you are wearing body armor, they will probably miss that part 1

Medevac Mission

Gunnery Sergeant Doyle Sanders, USMC (ret.), who spent two back-to-back tours as a Naval Gunfire Spotter with the 7th Marines, is eager to find the Ugly Angel crews who tried on 16 and 17 September 1967 to Medevac his radio operator, Cpl Mark Tamkus, and finally got him out. As Gunny Sanders says, "It was Ugly Angels that tried three times to get him out over those two days. We were a forward observer team supporting the 37th ARVN Ranger Bn. during Operation Bihn Quan 8 when a Ranger tripped a 155 mm booby trap. It killed three and wounded 11. It was H-34s that plucked them all out. Then Mark Tamkus was hit. The first two choppers which came in were practically shot out of the sky. There were chunks of metal flying off of them in every direction. I later heard that one of them could not take off when it got back and the co-pilot possibly died. Bright and early next day you came back and this time Tamkus was taken out. I never knew the crews who did this, never got to meet them or tell them thanks --hopefully, maybe, I have just done that".

If this rings a bell with any of you guys, drop the Gunny a line. His e-mail address is "Doyle Sanders/Susan M. O'Brien, M.D." <'s Reunion Newsletter for April smobrien@ionet.net>. He would love to hear from you.

The terms "protective armor" and "helicopter" are mutually exclusive 1

Ailing Angels

Got a call from Pat Bray in late January that gives new meaning to the expression, "you think you got problems...". Seems Pat fell and broke two ribs in March of 97, broke his arm at the shoulder in October of 97 falling out of a sink (I didn't ask), and slipped on the ice and broke his hip in Jan 98. He says, with a flair for understatement, "Extended physical therapy may cause me to miss the reunion".

Bill Willey also recovering from a serious diabetes incident, but is now on the mend and hoping to make Pensacola. We all hope you make it too, Bill. It won't be the same without you.

New Trim Mailing List

As indicated in the Winter Newsletter, I have scrubbed the original 148 man mailing list down to 128 names. Eliminated were those who did not attend the Las Vegas reunion and also have never responded to a letter, newsletter call, or e-mail. If anyone calls you complaining they didn't get their newsletter, tell them "no tickee, no laundry". On the other hand, if they want to play all they have to do is come up on the net.

Wanna Paint a Helo?

If we collect the bucks, this summer we're going to need a few good men to help prepare and paint the museum's UH-34. If you have a couple of days you would like to spend reliving your reckless past, and working for Willie again, standby for a newsletter call. More in the next edition.

A free fire zone has nothing to do with economics ¹

Squadron Status Board

Suiting Up (55)

Rabon Adler		Charlie Appleton	Steve Atell	Lew/Jean Barnes
	Denny Beckman	Tom Bong	Al Cain	
Gene Camp		Mike Carley, Jr.	Ben/Ailene Cascio	Bob Case
Archie Clapp*		C. J. Cormier		Norm Derylak
Adam Deveny		Jerry Dooley		Bill/Carol Duffy
Jim/Diane Fisher	Ron/Gerry Fix		Frank Flagg	
Jim Gordon		Oramel Hall		Ron Heald
Tom/Joanne Hewes	Steve Hucal		Ron Ice	Bobby Johns
Nick Kapetan*			Bill Kelly	Dick Koeppe
Jerry Kottkamp		Chuck/Linda Linn	Jack/Cindy Lodge	Ken/Raeann Logue
	Terry Mann		Tom McKnight	Dave/Amelia Moore
Romy Myszka		Bob O'Neil		Smokey Norton
Jim Peryman		Earl Rose	Gunny/Marlene Sachs	Bob/Janice Sheehan
	B. J./Mary Sigman	Bob/Madilyn Skinder		Ron Sorensen
Ed Southworth	Willie/Esta Sproule		Lou Stefan	Wayne/Becky Sutter
Al Thomas		Tom/Anita Thurber		Phil/Judy Turner
		Tim/Karen Wilson		

* former COs

Checking the Schedule (18)

Beetle Bailey		Bo Beaumer	Pat Bray
Gary Doss	Don Flick		Steve Hill
Brad Jealous		Al Kerst	John Longdin
Mush Melin		Bob Nickens	Donn Proven
Charlie Upshaw	Carl Wheeler		Billy Wilkison
Bill Willey	Carl Yung		Mike Zacker

If you don't see you sweetie's name listed, send it in and I'll add it.

Gravity: It may not be fair, but it's the law ¹

Ball Cap, GI?

Again this year we will be working with Frenchy Lafontaine who will be providing for your soft goods needs. The difference this time is that you, the customer, will be dealing with him directly. We will have the full line up of shirts and caps in the next edition, but if you can't wait Frenchy can be reached at: Ultra Marine Productions, 57 Long Plain Rd. Mattapoisett, MA 02739. Tel. (508) 758-2314. e-mail: comprise@ici.net

Modelers

The following hot scoop comes from Assn. Vice Prez J. D. Barber who is always looking out for us. If you are into plastic scale models you may want to check out the recent release of an UH-34D model from ITALERI. It's a 1:72 model (product # 066), **complete with HMM 362 markings**. It's distributed by The Testor Corp, 620 Buckbee St., Rockford, IL 61104. Your publisher got one for Christmas from his wife. Does she know his maturity level or what?

1 Courtesy of "Everything I ever needed to know about life, I learned as a helicopter crewman in Vietnam" by an unidentified Corpsman and "Pop A Smoke"

The official newsletter of the Ugly Angel Memorial Foundation

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