



The Ugly Angel Memorial Foundation Newsletter

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As the mourning band across the Ugly Angel patch indicates, this issue is dedicated to the memory of our past President, GySgt Robert Francis Skinder, USMCR (Ret) who passed away unexpectedly on 5 September in Palmetto Hospital Baptist in Columbia, SC from complications associated with a rare blood disorder. He was, as this extract from his obituary notes, "...a man of boundless humor, kindness, and love of life. Bob loved people, and all who knew him were cheered by his rich wit, positive outlook, and endless store of 'good stories' and laughter. He also loved nature, and spent many hours being a faithful observer and steward of the great outdoors."



For once, I find it hard to put into words what his passing means to me and to the Ugly Angels. Bob Skinder was one of the three original founders of this organization, serving on the Board of Directors and volunteering to assume the role of Ugly Angel Historian. His effort in that regard speaks for itself. Bob was also one

of the "usual suspects" involved in the YL-42 painting project at the National Museum of Naval Aviation and every other project we undertook over the years.

In what was perhaps his finest hour, Bob, who never forgot those we left behind in Vietnam, conceived the idea of building the Ugly Angel Memorial that now reposes in Semper Fidelis Memorial Park. When the old guy who was doing the newsletter got tired, he picked that up too. That left Bob with only one more mountain to climb, and he became President along with everything else in August 2006. Should the thought have crossed your mind that we will miss him, you just put one in the ten ring. That said, we will do what Marines have always done: bury our honored dead and carry on with the mission.

Ugly Angels are not the only ones mourning Bob's passing. On Saturday 17 October Madilyn hosted a beautiful memorial service for Bob at their home in Hopkins.

While the day was unusually cold and gray for South Carolina, the occasion was not. At Bob's request, an otherwise solemn occasion was elevated to a celebration of life. The ceremony was held in a large tent on the lawn. Tables with food and drink tastefully spread lay at the back



awaiting the end of the ceremony. Folding chairs accommodated the nearly one hundred family, friends, and colleagues who came to honor Bob.

The service was masterfully officiated by the Reverend Matthew Horne, Baptist Hospital and former Army Chaplain. Madilyn asked if the Ugly Angels would mind speaking first. Tom Hewes, with Gene Bailey, Robbie Robinson, Rusty Sachs, Bob Case, Gene Camp, and Randy Cady all standing behind him, led off the parade of speakers with a brief eulogy. Bob's "almost neighbors" Gene Bailey and Robbie also spoke of the times they and Bob spent together. Vonette Bailey, Marsha Camp, and Virginia Case were also there to pay their respects. A lighter element was introduced by two or three of Bob's dogs who led their handlers a merry chase throughout the proceedings.



Bob's daughters, Jennifer and Rachael, both spoke so lovingly of their Dad that more than a few of us found ourselves reaching for handkerchiefs. The University of South Carolina was represented by Tom McNally, Dean of Libraries, who described Bob's pioneering work to introduce digital technology into the library system. Faculty and staff members Gary Geer, Jane Olsgaard, and Dr. Venkat Lakshmi also spoke. Perhaps the most heart warming tribute was delivered by former Navy Corpsman and longtime friend, Bob Harpe, who lauded

Bob's tolerance and loyalty, gifts we knew well.

Reverend Horne ended the ceremony with a brief prayer, and we all fell to chowing down on sandwiches, hors d'oeuvres, coffee, wine, and beer. We Uglys worked the crowd, talking to a number of people from the University, all of whom spoke very highly of the Marine Corps. Bob, it seems, had done a fantastic job in preparing the ground. I was struck by how many people stopped to thank us for our service. What a difference from our homecoming.

As the day waned and the crowd thinned, all the Uglys and a few others were invited to move inside, where it was warm. We surrounded Madilyn and settled down to talk, reminisce, and tell Bob stories, which we did until it got dark. Perhaps the most poignant was Madilyn's telling of how she and Bob met and their relationship developed. With more than a little regret, we made our manners to Madilyn and left – we Angels to our motels or homes and she to her memories and an empty house.

The house may be empty, Madilyn, but you are not alone. I know I speak for all the Ugly Angels when I say you will always be a member of the Ugly Angel family. And like all families we stand ready to help, so please call on us if you need anything.

Iowa Farm Boy to Presidential Fly Boy



That's the headline that introduces a remarkable video of a speech made by Capt. Nick Turner on Veterans Day in his hometown, Griswold, Iowa. It's also a headline that speaks from the heart to those who cherish the traditional values that made America great, and worry they are being eroded. I urge you to take a few minutes to dial up <http://www.vimeo.com/7655852> and visit the real America. It's not in Washington, DC but in towns like Griswold and families like the Turners that continue to honor and promote

traditional Marine Corps values. Nick, as you may have heard, is a proud member of HMX-1 at Quantico. The ceremony was filmed by Julie Turner, Nick's sister-in-law, who put together this slick piece of work.

Speaking of the Turners, we want to wish Larry Turner a speedy recovery from multiple by-pass surgery. Keep your turns up, Dad!

YL-37 Continues to Serve

Another great American, Gerald Hail, is also no slouch when it comes to promoting traditional values. YL-37 showed its colors, and the Ugly Angel, in a Veteran's Day ceremony in the Inola area that honored local veterans. Epsilon Sigma Alpha sponsored the event.

This is a group of women Lillie Hail is associated with that provides leadership training, educational programs and community service. Through a network of 1,200 local chapters in the U.S. and abroad, an ESA member has the opportunity to form lifelong friendships and share the power to make a difference. That difference is felt close to home and in far-reaching ways by participation in community service and major philanthropic projects.



Thanks to Garry Doss, who is also recovering from by-pass surgery, for this report.

2010 Pop A Smoke Reunion

It's probably old news to those of you who follow the news on the Pop A Smoke website, but the rest of you Uglys may want to start saving your Tens and Twenties (nothing's cheap anymore) for Reno. The reunion begins on Wednesday, July 7th and runs through Sunday morning the 11th. The venue is the same hotel, renamed the Grand Sierra and under new management, that we enjoyed in 2004. For those of you worrying about the July heat, don't sweat it. Everything you need including restaurants, bars, gambling, heads, and beauty salons is under one roof. Rumor has it the rooms will be going for \$89 per night, which isn't that shabby these days. Please don't try to reserve until you get the word from Pop A Smoke, which should be early next year.



This is the kind of Ugly thing that goes on at a reunion

As atonement for my sins, I have foolishly volunteered to serve as the squadron reunion coordinator, again! Because I'm a really slow learner, I'm also back editing and publishing the newsletter. When I have some firm dope as to the reunion schedule, I'll get the word out. In the meantime, please email me your name(s) if you are planning, or even thinking of planning, to attend. We need this info to plan the Friday night dinner, and the sooner we can lock in a place and a price, the better off we will be. My email is: <UglyAngel67@verizon.net>

We should also be able to set up a "fully supplied" Ready Room hooch just as we did at the 2008 reunion in DC with your help. We'll need lots of that to buy "supplies" if Arch Fleming is still down. You can also plan on a Friday evening squadron dinner and the usual business meeting. Be assured we will do everything within reason to keep the cost of the dinner and other activities as low as we can without sacrificing quality.

I don't know about you, but I'm almost as old as Willie Sproule and Burt Palmer. Since the ability to travel is no longer a certainty for any of us, you may want to think seriously about attending. It may be your last chance to spend time with the guys you shared a night medevac, or emergency extract, or whatever.

YL 18 On the Move

Do you remember the 11 September 09 email that announced that Lew Barnes had given his UH-34 and all spare parts to the Cavanaugh Flight Museum? Well, that chicken is coming home to Texas to roost!

On the 7 December Top Houston reported that the paperwork has been completed and the YL 18 belongs to Cavanaugh. If you're curious about Cavanaugh, check out their website at <cavanaughflightmuseum.com>. I have and it's a first class operation with a great collection. Our Ugly Angel should feel right at home.

There are so many 'Atta Boys' associated with this one that it's hard to know where to begin. Let's start with past President Lew Barnes whose action in donating the 34 has been beyond generous. You will never know how much time, effort, and money Lew invested in YL 18, all for the love of his Marine Corps and the Ugly Angels. Then there's Bill McNair who, as usual, has had a strong hand in making things happen. Bill makes the Energizer Bunny look like a slacker. Hats off to Top Houston and the Marine maintenance crew at Cavanaugh, volunteers to a man, for their role in this. They will be the Marines who will bring YL 18 back to life as soon as they get their hands on it.

The last part is going to be a bit tricky because Cavanaugh can't go it alone on the cost of trucking the bird from Hillsdale Oregon to Addison Texas.

That, as you may have suspected, is where the UAMF comes in. As I write the BOD has already determined that supporting this effort is within the UAMF's legal charter. The Board is now deciding how much money the UAMF can afford to donate. Since we didn't get any TARP money, it won't be as much as needed. That's where you come in.

I know times are tough, but if you could scare up a ten or twenty it would help. And if there are enough 'yous' there will be enough tens and twenties to get the job done. First chance you get, please make out your check or money order to the UAMF and send it to: Tom Hewes at 21 Turtle Creek Way, Fredericksburg, VA 22406. I'll bundle the donations and send them to our treasurer.

Once the money is collected the UAMF will cut two checks: One for the funds from the UAMF treasury and the second from the contributions you have so generously made.

If you're not in a financial position to donate – or even if you are – you can help by volunteering with the restoration effort. As Bill McNair wrote, "...members should also know their participation is most welcome and an opportunity to hang around a bunch of awesome old war birds as a restoration volunteer." Distance is no barrier. Mark Stanton and an east coast crew of Flight Equipment guys are already at work reupholstering the seating of Cavanaugh's static UH-34.

OooRah Ugly Angels!

Some Interesting Numbers,

Gary Doss sent me some very interesting statistics compiled by the Vietnam Veterans Association. I've extracted two of the more surprising:

“Of the 2,709,918 Americans who served in Vietnam, less than 850,000 are estimated to be alive today, with the youngest American Vietnam veteran's Approximated to be 54 years old. Every day, 390 Vietnam Veterans die. So in 2190 days from today you will be lucky to be alive.”

In other words, only a third of us who served in-country are still alive. That's an astonishingly high death rate for a population of our age group. It's also another good reason to attend Reno 2010.

“During the most recent Federal Census [yr. 2000], the number of Americans falsely claiming to have served in-country is: 13,853,227.”

This means that four out of five who claim to be Vietnam vets are phonies. Not surprising but sad nonetheless. Not everyone can be a Marine!

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