



FIRST IN ~ LAST OUT

Sept.—Oct, 2006

Volume 11, Number 6

# The Ugly Angel Memorial Foundation Newsletter

## From the Cockpit; Tom Steps Down Wannabe sarge to take over.

### Inside this issue:

Fort Worth Reunion Report	2
Editor's Intro and Agenda	3
Reunion Photo Centerfold	4 and 5
SC, NC, GA Memorial Taps	7
Bobby Johns Update	8
Miscellaneous	8

To all Angels, Ugly and otherwise,

On 17 August 2006, in accordance with the articles of incorporation, the Board of Directors of the Ugly Angel Memorial Foundation elected Bob Skinder as the new President to replace Tom Hewes, effective immediately.

As past President, I am delighted be among the first to offer my heartfelt congratulations to Bob on his election. He has, as all of you know, labored in the wilderness for ten years, first conceiving the idea of the Ugly Angel Memorial, then serving on the BOD, acting as our official historian, and publishing the Ugly Angel Newsletter. As one who has admired his passionate commitment to the squadron over the years, it is particularly gratifying to see my friend Bob Skinder's efforts rewarded by his becoming President of the UAMF.

His election comes at a time when the enthusiasm that characterized our efforts in the early years badly needs reanimation. It is our good fortune that Bob is endowed with the energy, enthusiasm, and leadership skills essential to get the job done.

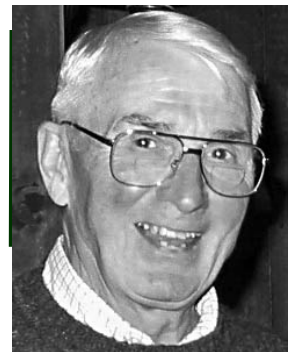
Accordingly, I wish Bob every success and pledge my wholehearted support for his efforts. I'm confident that each of you Angels will do the same.

For my part, I will continue to serve as a member of the BOD, and to provide such advice and counsel as Bob may from time to time request. I will also continue to oversee the movement and installation of the Ugly Angel Memorial at the Semper Fidelis Memorial Park when it's ready.

Once the shock of his election has worn off, Bob will e-mail you his thoughts as to how he sees the Ugly Angels building for the future.

Semper Fidelis,

Tom Hewes  
Past President,  
Ugly Angel Memorial Foundation



## Fort Worth Reunion as Good AS Ever



**Can you believe that we flew these birds 40 years ago?**

### Reunion 06 – After Action Report

It was a grand reunion given the unfortunate hotel business which was no Marines fault.

To make a long story short, there were several hotels within a stone's throw of the Convention Center. Shortly after Pop A Smoke signed the contract, one of the major hotels backed out saying that they were shutting down for renovations. This meant that if you had reservations in that particular hotel or hadn't yet made reservations, you were S-O-L and would have to travel up to 10 miles rather than just walk across the street. However, as we all know, one of the lesser known Marine Corps mottoes is "Improvise and Adapt." So once folks got used to commuting, it was as good as gold.

The Convention Center was enormous. In the center of the centerfold, it's the round building that YL 37 is aiming for. It's so big, in fact, that the Ringling Brothers had their whole circus there and we never once got too badly confused as to who was who.

The area that we had was broken down into 3 multi-acre areas. There was a perimeter area on the outer part of the circle. That's where most of the hootches were located. Since Bill McNair, crew chief of YL3 was also in charge of hootch assignments, you can be sure that we were centrally located. On the lower lever directly across from us was the Vendor's Area where you could buy stuff.

The upper floor was where the grand ballroom was for the big meals. I think that it was larger than the one in Reno. Since I missed the final meal, I don't know if it also had 7 100 foot screens so you could see each speaker.

I did attend the Thursday night Barbeque dinner. That was pretty neat to see all the old timers as well as a lot of first timers that I had never met. It's always amazed me how you can sit down with total strangers and as long as you both served in 362, you're brothers from then on with lots of common ground.

The highlight the next morning was waiting for, and then cheering like crazy when YL 37 and 38 circled again and again. I felt my head spin and my eyes start to fill when luckily, I glanced over and saw my first Ugly boss, Bobby Nickens having the same problem. It ain't so bad when the boss goes down, too. How in the world, can we ever thank the Hail's and their crew for doing so much for us. It doesn't seem right to make them cry, too.



**What you do at a reunion**

Aside from our own flyover, the big deal for us was the Friday night dinner. Because of either bad taste or corporate takeovers, a lot of places look as if they were designed by a computer without the slightest bow to where they are located. Believe me, The Stagecoach Dance Hall was not one of those. From the first minute I visited there with Bill to scope the place out, I knew we were in Texas. As far as I was concerned we were only missing Paul Newman and Robert Duvall.

The dinner was a kick, too. As in Reno we started with a social hour and just before eating asked all of the members to come up to be recognized by year of service. The chow was good old fashioned Tex-Mex, but I think most folks were pretty busy remaking old acquaintances and in some certain cases introducing people to their new wives or soul mates. At the end of the dinner we were supposed to have a talk on his

**Continued on Page 6**

## Editorial: Who is he and.....

It's been more than a month since Tom called to ask if I could take over as "Honcho." My first response was "negative," but the guy is slick so I finally agreed. I think the idea that somehow this all erased my inability to make sergeant in '67 was the deal maker.

A quick intro for those of you who don't know me might be appropriate. I was born in Boston in 43. I was an Ugly tinbender in 66-67. I first worked for Bob Nickens and then Charlie Appleton and was, I think, eventually the senior corporal in the shop by the time I finished that trip. After that tour I shipped over for four years which got me back to Phu Bai just in time for the 69 Ugly Angel stand down. I did that tour in Scarface, right next door and then at Marble Mountain when they went from the hueys to the Cobras. When I got back to the States, I made Staff Sergeant but got out to go to college and grad school. Somehow I found myself back in the reserves and eventually retired as a USMCR Gunny from NAS South Weymouth.

As you might know, my career with this outfit was as one of the original founders with Tom and Rusty. That was the result of one of my few brainstorms which was to create a memorial to our Fallen Angels. Somewhere along the line, Tom assigned me the job as historian and then later I became the editor of this newsletter. It's been a great addition to an otherwise pretty quiet life.

I have attached a rough agenda of what I want to accomplish with whatever time I am allowed in this job. I think that you will realize that there is nothing terribly new or creative there, just the general principles of consolidation and some gentle guidance. It is obvious that we are the premiere squadron of veterans of the Marine Helo War. A great deal of why we are at that point is due to Tom, part to history and part to an incredible amount of luck that has hooked us up with great folks like the Hails and their YL 37 Group. My main job will be to not screw it up. Yours is to stay in touch and help me.

Most of the agenda is housekeeping but another part is fraternity. I passionately believe that almost anyone who served in Marine Helicopters in Vietnam will be closer to me than anyone I work with on a day to day basis. I further believe that is also the case with a lot more of us than just me. At 63 I am probably pretty close to our membership's average age. That means our days are not as limitless as they were ten years ago. When we get sick I want us to have squadron people call and visit. When its Taps time, I think we should have people there. The only way we are going to accomplish these things is with leadership and initiative, yours.

As a guide for where I think we need to be headed, the following agenda is here for your review. I'll be appreciative if you would take the time to share your ideas about this with me.

## ...where we be goin'? —An agenda for Growth and Continuity

### Communication

**What?** The *Website* is our public face to the world and a key to recruitment. Best possible way to communicate with members as well as publish our history.

**How?** My responsibility but sure would like to hear from volunteers with marketable skills and/or free server access.

**What?** Our *History* It is imperative that we finish this as it is our legacy.

**How?** I have 99% of all of the Command Chronologies. I will continue to publish these but we need commitment from members to expand on what really happened.

**What?** *The Newsletter*. It was recently pointed out that our organization is nothing if not communication. I will try to get the newsletter up to a quarterly publication for non-reunion years.

**How?** I am also going to pursue this M/S Publisher program that gives us a new look and maybe I can implement a few techniques worthy of a 10 year old organization. It seems fairly easy and more professional looking.

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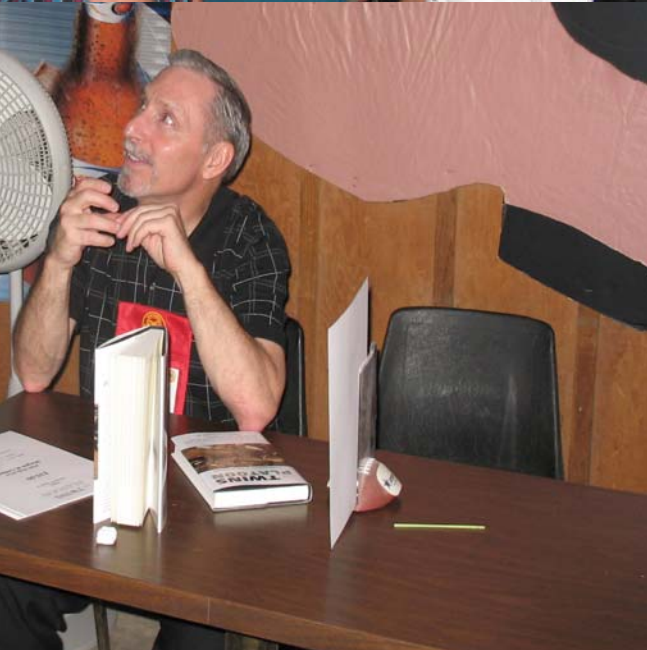
**Bob, Madilyn and the troops sending Ralph Jones off.**



**"...we are the premiere squadron of veterans of the Marine Helo War."**

Pa





## Reunion (continued from Page 2)

we were supposed to have a talk on his new book by the first Ugly Author, Chris Sauro. Unfortunately, Yours Truly, forgot to share that part of the plan with Chief Auctioneer, Tim Wilson, who went and started the auction before I had the chance to introduce Chris.

We had some wonderful guests of honor in attendance. The planned for ones were the YL 37 crew but we also had the son, brother and grandson of Ron Fix who had only recently passed away while preparing for the reunion and the air show. Other guests were Nadine Bodett, a local radio celebrity who was a great help to Tim in the auction and Kim Weems, one of Bobby Johns daughters who brought greetings from her Dad and stuff back to her Dad.

I need to mention that intermingled with the dinner and auction was a great country band who were there for the Friday night dancing. I'm not sure if any of us participated but that two-step stuff sure is a treat to watch. In closing this part we need to give max credit to Bill Mc Nair who did so much to organize this trip both at the Squadron and Pop A Smoke level. He was ably assisted by Romy Myszka throughout the year but I think the dinner at such a special place was pretty much Bill's doing. Sad to say, he never got to dance because his wife Linda had gotten mangled in a cat fight at home and they both missed the dinner although Bill did peek in now and then.

Saturday was highlighted with the static air show and talking to today's Marines. For family reasons I didn't attend the big banquet so can't really report but am sure it was fine as well as final.

Sunday was saying, "see ya later" as we all headed back to a more normal and duller existence than the weekend we had all just shared. If you were there, it was great seeing you again and if you weren't, I sure wish you were there. Maybe, next time, huh?

## An Agenda for Growth and Continuity (continued from page 3)

**What? *The Newsletter.*** It was recently pointed out that our organization is nothing if not communication. I will try to get the newsletter up to a quarterly publication for non-reunion years.

**How?** I am also going to pursue this M/S Publisher program that gives us a new look and maybe I can implement a few techniques worthy of a 10 year old organization. It seems fairly easy and more professional looking.

**What? *Scholarship Fund.*** We need to get this going and out of here. I am hoping that you will contribute if you see this as a worthy project and see that we are making progress.

**How?** Determine what we need to buy in? Will someone volunteer to head this up and communicate with the organization involved? Explore fund raising options. Periodically post our progress. Recognize contributors.

### Fraternity

**What? *By area or states.*** We deserve to be more than an every other year group or a newsletter subscription.

**How?** Localities vary greatly but if we distribute membership lists to each member, leaders will emerge to create activities.

**What? *Social.*** We have something in common with one another, regardless of years served, that no one else can provide.

**How?** Go to a ballgame, have a cookout or a party.

**What? *Welfare and Funerals.*** As we get older there will be more need to visit the sick as well as perform the final duty. For example: *Our members swooped in when BJ was in grave danger.*

**How?** If you can go to a pal's cookout, you can also attend his funeral. By getting together locally we will know how to reach one another.

### Membership

**What? *Based on years served in RVN.*** He's your brother. Find him.

**How?** Membership list will start the process. Maybe Google will do the rest.

**What? *Your friends*** – close to the above. People go to reunions or join associations if they think they are going to see their buddies.

**How?** The whole business about the Corps is based on leadership. Call someone and get something going. Don't wait for someone else to do it.

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### Membership—continued

**What?** *Within your local area.* If you served in 62 and he served in 69, he was a private and you were a colonel, you may have more in common than your neighbor of 20 years.

**How?** Call someone up and be there for Veteran's Day Parade or Memorial Day service. Two of you is a pair, four is a fire team or a crew. Six or more and you are a parade.

### Alliances

**What?** *YL 37 Group.* No one does more for our image or history than this group.

**How?** We can publish planned events and if you are local, you can attend.

**What?** *HMM-362 Veterans Association (Lew Barnes folks and H-34).* These guys are going to be famous some day and their only purpose is to honor us.

**How?** I can publish photos and progress reports. If you are a left coaster, spend some time with them working on the bird.

**Remember: we were formed for a primary purpose and that was so that no one can ever say that HMM-362 ever forgot its Fallen Angels. Following is a little idea that I had when I heard that The Wall That Heals is coming to South Carolina in late October.**

## Local Gathering.      Calling SC, NC and GA Angels— Vietnam Memorial Replica in Columbia, SC - October 27th ~ 29th

Ugly Angel Memorial Foundation. It's pretty clear why and how we got together; to be sure that our brothers who were lost in combat are always remembered. It's only a coincidence but it just so happens that on the 5th weekend of October the 27th, 28th and 29th, the half scale Wall that Heals, will be about 10 minutes from my house. I would like to suggest that if you live in South Carolina or are one of our neighbors within driving distance you come over for that Saturday. The site, a local cemetery is about 2 minutes from I-77 and 10 minutes from where I-26 and I-77 join on the east side of Columbia. It is also adjacent to Fort Jackson, one of the Army's boot camps. If you are interested give me a call or drop me an e-mail. Because of the proximity to Fort Jackson, there are several family priced motels right across the street.

If we get enough people, I'll be glad to host a cookout of some sort. I think that we can also make *a meaningful service of getting together to memorialize our brothers whose names are on the Wall.* Let me know if you can do it, okay? Contact info on the back page.

**Taps** **Roland "Frenchy" CAOUTTE, Jr.**, 59, of Wagoner, OK, returned into his Father's loving arms on Saturday, September 9, 2006, in Wagoner. Interment will be held at the Ft. Gibson National Cemetery in Ft. Gibson, OK, at 2 p.m. Roland was born in Quantico, VA, on November 22, 1946, to Roland J. Caouette Sr. and Jeanette (Harrison) Caouette. The family settled in Tulsa, OK. where Roland graduated from Will Rogers High School in 1965. He then joined the Marines, serving in Vietnam, HMM 362 where he received 24 air medals. He later served in Air National Guard of Tulsa, with his last tour being the Middle East. He lived and volunteered twenty-six years at the Episcopal Camp Grounds at Ft. Gibson Lake. Roland also helped start the Volunteer Fire Dept. at Taylor's Ferry, where he served as Fire Chief for a short time. He was also an Officer in The Benevolent Order of Elks in Wagoner. He is survived by: his loving wife and soul mate of over 20 years, Sue Caouette of Wagoner; his 3 daughters, Rachele Caouette, Evonne Durand and husband, and numerous relatives who are sure to miss him.

**Bob Burlingame** passed away a year ago. He was with us as An **Archie's Angel** in 1962 in avionics. He did at least one additional tour in VN, with MAG-36, '67-'68. He was a retired from the USMC in 1980 as a CWO-2, became an RN and last worked in the Florida penal system as an intensive care nurse. He was fully retired about 3 years and played a lot of golf. He had lived in Defuniak Springs, FL, in the panhandle. The cause of his death was colon cancer. He was cremated and interred in the military cemetery in Saratoga, NY.

**Ralph Wright.** The original Pop A Smoke notice read as follows: We just received word from Danny Wright that his Dad Ralph Wright passed away on September 16, 2006. Ralph served with HMH-463 and HMM-363 in country. Funeral services will be Wednesday at 1300 at the Jaynes Memorial Chapel at the intersection of Hiway 67 and Cockrile Hill Road in Duncanville, TX which is a little south of Dallas. He asked if any members who are in the area to please attend the services.

### Changes of e-mail addresses

Max retired from Pfizer on 30 June and finally established a new e-mail address: [thomasjmcknight@yahoo.com](mailto:thomasjmcknight@yahoo.com)

Tim Wilson has decided to reenter the 21st century and has a new Email address (And Bride); It is: [WCD362@CASCADEACCESS.COM](mailto:WCD362@CASCADEACCESS.COM)

Please note my new email address: [bearsr@suddenlink.net](mailto:bearsr@suddenlink.net) Larry Shirley. Drop Larry a note to get on his mail list. Real USMC and Vet News. No garbage, no politics!

President / Editor /Historian also has new address:[bobskindler@bellsouth.net](mailto:bobskindler@bellsouth.net) or [uglyeditor@bellsouth.net](mailto:uglyeditor@bellsouth.net)



## FIRST IN ~ LAST OUT

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## B.J. Update

Immediately after the reunion I asked Kim, one of Bobby's daughters for an update which she sent me. Since then, due to computer troubles I have lost a lot of my mail, including hers. However, last week we got another message from an Ugly friend and a buddy of Bobby's, Tom Warning, which is more recent but a little less detailed than Kim's. An old editorial maxim is "Use what you got."

Just got off the phone with Bobby (one of the longest conversations we've had). He wanted me to pass the info. along. He just got his voice back (has been fighting a sinus infection). Currently, he has a bad cough (they say it's allergies).

He is on the transplant list. There are different list (blood type, size, etc.). When selected he will have to travel to Nashville where the VA will operate. He had to go to a "meeting" (bullshit - his word).

I mentioned "every" meal was a feast. Then he brought up the subject of "mystery meat". I said that I would send him a card (his room number is 1C220). He appreciates all of the support that we all have given him. He said that he could NOT have made it this far without that support. I added that we weren't going anywhere.

He sounded upbeat, in good health (considering), optimistic and like the Bobby we all remember.

S/F Tom Warning

## Mail Call

Just a short note to see if you knew my brother who had served with Marine aviation, helicopters, in Vietnam, I believe it was 65 - 67. His name was Richard Cassidy and I was able to find his name on one of the Ugly Angels web sites, shortly after he passed away about three years ago. We really don't know much about what he did, if maybe you could direct us to some areas that we could check. We are just interested in his service time. Thank you for any assistance that you may provide.

Michael Cassidy <[mcassidy@scana.com](mailto:mcassidy@scana.com)>

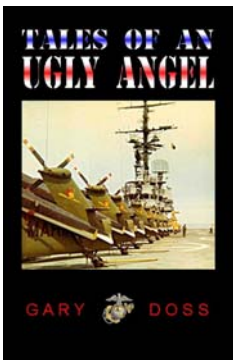
## YL 37 Group

In the upper right hand corner of the photo spread is a group shot of our friends that have done so much for us personally and as a group. While most of us recognize Gerald and Lilly Hail, the rest of the crew are hereby identified as Mike Schneider also sitting. Standing is Greg Dierks, Jesse Schneider and Jason Griffin. Now we all know!

## Ugly Angels Books

We are now in the incredible position of having two books and two authors connected to 362. At the reunion, many of us got to meet and get our own signed editions of Chris Sauro's book, **The Twins Platoon**. Now he even has a web site, <http://www.twinsplatoon.com> for the book as well as a review in Leatherneck. If you don't have a copy, tell your local bookstore to order some.

## Now we learn that Gary Doss has one out about his days as one of us.



Order **Tales of an Ugly Angel** from Gary Doss, 311 South Highland Ave., Midwest City OK 73110. Price is \$15.95 plus \$3.00 shipping and handling. Be sure and tell him which years you served and if you were in 362.

## Remember our Friends

There were two generous contributors to our reunion auction. One was Sgt Grit, Marine Specialties.

Please visit them at [www.grunt.com](http://www.grunt.com)

The other is Exotic Woods, Ltd. who donated one of the wooden UH-34s auctioned.

Remember there is a 30% discount if you write HMM362 in the coupon box.

Visit their site at [www.ExoticWoodsLtd.com](http://www.ExoticWoodsLtd.com) or call 800-591-2121

## Final Notes

Deb Davitt, the widow of Tony was extremely grateful for the generosity of Chris Sauro and for everyone who signed his book for her. Best wishes to Tim Wilson and Len Altano who have both married way above themselves and Congratulations to Curtis Gray and Mike Zacker and the women who brought them such healthy new bodies. I wasn't sure I'd ever see them again after the last reunion.