



the swash plate

MONTHLY
CHPA
NEWSLETTER

Combat Helicopter Pilots Association, Inc.

800-832-5144 hq@chpa-us.org PO Box 2585, Peachtree City, GA 30269

May – July 2018

From the President

On behalf of the Board of Directors, we'd like to wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous new year.

God bless you, your families, our men and women in uniform and the United States.



Jack Bailey

president@chpa-us.org

Featured Articles

[Name the new CHPA magazine](#)

[Come Join Us – Reunion 2018](#)

[Vietnam Helicopter Pilot and Crewmember Monument](#)

[How about a "Sir" there, Sergeant Major?](#)

... much more.

Ladies and Gentlemen, for this month's President Message, I wanted to provide you a ***State-of-the-Organization*** briefing.

CHPA has taken very aggressive steps to posture for 2019 and beyond, and what are highlighted here are key activities as part of it.

- We completed the 2017-2018 Scholarship drive and awarded two (2) **Goldie Fund Scholarships**.
- We made an organizational contribution to Team Rubicon for **disaster relief** following the hurricane season, with emphasis on veterans' areas.
- We conducted another successful **holiday gift box campaign** providing approximately 300 boxes for troops forward deployed.
- We conducted a **direct mailer appeal** for expired members with the intent of "bringing them back into the fold". We had a nice return on that time and effort ...in the first 30 days of the project. We are continuing to measure the project's success. Our recruiting efforts have yielded results. As of April 1st, we officially have the highest **on-hand membership total** since 2016. The funding for the effort was donated.
- Our **financials are strong**. Your leadership has worked together to implement normal business decisions that have garnered some cost savings without effecting our core values and service. The increased in bank and savings accounts reflect the solid commitment the leadership has to the continued Legacy of CHPA.
- We successfully closed our 2017 administrative actions as an organization. We successfully transitioned Treasurer duties from Terry Garlock to JB Worley. JB has the formal background, experience, and talent for the job. He will officially transition to the Board of Directors Treasurer position following the next Board meeting and vote.

- We've made select changes to our web site, providing a calendar, updated letters from officers and creating a President's message section to the home page. Our site is improving rapidly, and we've made good use of the home page for announcements (holidays, special events and special messages). It gives the appearance for now of being dynamic.
- We published three organization newsletters and we are in the process of transitioning to a magazine format by end-of-year. The new, quarterly editions will be larger and more meaningful in content.
- We attended the Helicopter Association International (HAI) Annual Expo in Las Vegas in February. Board members, Al Winks and Barry Desfor represented us well. Teamed with Al's company, we supported veteran transition consultations and related training provided by Al's company. Our new approach and presence at trade venue is to be "more dynamic" than just having a booth and appealing to younger veterans. We attended the Army Aviation Association of America (AAAA) Annual Conference and again, were represented well by Al Winks and Jack Bailey. As we did at HAI, we teamed with Al Wink's company wherein we supported veteran transition consulting and consultation provided by Al's company.
- The CHPA leadership team was represented by Jack Bailey, Craig Bond, Clyde Romero and Robert Frost at the dedication ceremony of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilot and Crewmember Monument at Arlington National Cemetery on April 18th. The Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association (VHPA) hosted and sponsored the event. (See an informational article about this event farther down in the magazine.)

Additionally, we have several activities "in works" that are helping posture us even better for 2019:

- Jay Brown is diligently working on the 2018 Annual Conference planning and we'll start publishing to membership via mass email, web site, Facebook and the newsletter this month. We'll also do limited print advertising with the military paper at Fort Carson, CO. Our goal is to double attendance from any previous annual conference and Jay's great work has us on that path.
- JB is also working with our administrative arm researching the possibility of changing the mailing address of CHPA from GA to Washington, DC. The intent is to establish ourselves as a Washington, DC affiliated organization for a number of logical and beneficial reasons. Once complete, we'll make the changes to web and print material.

I'm extraordinarily proud of what this organization does and who our members are. I'm grateful to the Board of Directors, volunteers, and the membership for their support and contribution to this success.



HELP US NAME THE NEW CHPA MAGAZINE



As part of CHPAs re-branding efforts and “push to 2019”, we are modernizing several things including our website and newsletter.

Regarding the newsletter specifically, CHPA’s vision is to progress the newsletter from its original monthly email/web-based format to a quarterly, web-only magazine-style format. The intent is to provide something larger and more meaningful for the reader, with stories shared by members, articles of interest on veteran’s affairs, and photographs from events and reunions.

The BOD is evaluating several different web-based platforms and magazine styles for the re-branding. The first step in this process was transitioning to a quarterly publication schedule.

As part of all of this, CHPA is announcing a contest for members: The competition for naming the new magazine is scheduled for **15 May through 15 June** and is open to all members: pilot, crewmember, legacy and honorary.

On 15 May, all members will receive an email, soliciting a new name, which can be emailed directly to me at president@chpa-us.org. The list will be presented to the BOD for vote and winner announced at the 2018 Annual Business Conference in Colorado Springs, Colorado. An award will be presented to the member submitting the winning name.



WE WANT YOUR ARTICLES FOR THE NEW MAGAZINE

We estimate that, with all of our members, there is 400,000 hours of combat time. Three of our members are Medal of Honor recipients. It would not be unreasonable to assume that there are lots of newsletter articles that could come from the memories of “There I was....”.

Now, you do not have to be a brilliant journalist or writer. If the excuse is “I can’t write well” then please know that the editorial staff will edit, massage and tweak, but yet keep your story in intact. The idea of member submitted articles and other contributions are to build on the sense of community within CHPA. Submit your content to hq@chpa-us.org

Do you have Patches?

Flightsuit Patches and Why They Are Awesome...and, if you don't like them you suck

By: CW4 Dan McClinton (USA/RET)

This is the first of a continuing series of articles that intends to focus on the symbols that pilots and crewmembers wore and continue to wear to celebrate their aircraft, their mission and their continued service to this nation.

From the beginning of the US Army bits of cloth have been used to designate units and recognize various abilities and ratings. Since people have flown aircraft into combat they have worn colored pieces of cloth to celebrate that fact. During the Vietnam war company patches worn on flight uniforms were almost ubiquitous. So, with all these historical facts backing them why have there been so many people in the US Army aviation community that have been dead set against troops wearing them?

This opposition may stem from the fact that unlike its sister services, these patches aren't "official", there is no approval process aside from the local chain of command and they aren't mentioned in the Army's uniform regulation AR-670-1.

In spite of all these things going against company and battalion level patches, they have continued to be created and worn, year after year and across the decades in some cases.

All of that being said, why has no effort been made to make these items of unit pride that refuse to die, official? Aside from people that are usually referred to as the "fun police" who ruthlessly hunt down and eliminate anything that might be considered morale boosting that isn't explicitly spelled out in official Army doctrine, there is a not inconsiderable number of people in Army aviation who worry about what people in the other branches (Infantry, Armor etc.) think. Granted this has become less of a factor after 9/11 but there are still quite a few people that want Army Aviation to be the "grunts of the air" and anything that detracts from that image, which in their eyes are things like one-piece flight suits and company/battalion unit patches need to be eliminated.

Then why in spite of all of this do patches continue to exist? They exist for the same reason the Army has division patches and we give our companies names and mottos. At their best they foster unit pride and remind us of everyone who came before us and serve as a standard to live up to. At their best they are works of art.



As with all good things, there are people who sometimes take it too far. There are more than a few examples of inappropriate themes and messages that have made it into the form of a cloth patch and have been even sometimes worn on a uniform. This stems from the unofficial nature of the patch. The attitude of the wearer/creator becomes something along the lines of, "I'm not supposed to be wearing this anyway so who cares what it says or depicts."



Recently, efforts have been made by people within the Army aviation community to embrace the patches and to codify their wear and appearance. As a lover of the art form and a person who appreciates history I applaud and support these efforts. In my opinion these patches are part of the legacy of what makes Army Aviation unique and in part represents the "go to hell" attitude that has made our aviators legendary. The creation and wear of these items should just be allowed it should be encouraged and celebrated.

Obviously, this article's focus was on Army Aviation. I hope you enjoyed it. In future articles we wish to highlight notable and historical patch designs from all branches of the armed forces. Suggestions and/or submissions for the future will be gladly accepted at: vp.members@chpa-us.org



May 19, 1908

Lt. Thomas E. Selfridge flew an airplane called the White Wing, designed by F. W. "Casey" Baldwin, thus becoming the first Army officer to solo in an airplane. Sadly, he was also the first active duty military member to die in an airplane crash.

May 10, 1911

At Fort Sam Houston, Texas, a Curtiss D pusher aircraft piloted by Lt. George E.M. Kelly crashed, killing him. He became the first fatality in Army aviation history, and Kelly Field in San Antonio is named in his honor in 1917.

Though the first actual helicopter wasn't built until the 1940s, it is believed that Leonardo da Vinci's sketches from the late fifteenth century were the predecessor to the modern day flying machine. Da Vinci scrawled next to his sketches of the screw-like machine the following description: *"If this instrument made with a screw be well made – that is to say, made of linen of which the pores are stopped up with starch and be turned swiftly, the said screw will make its spiral in the air and it will rise high."*



2018 Annual Reunion

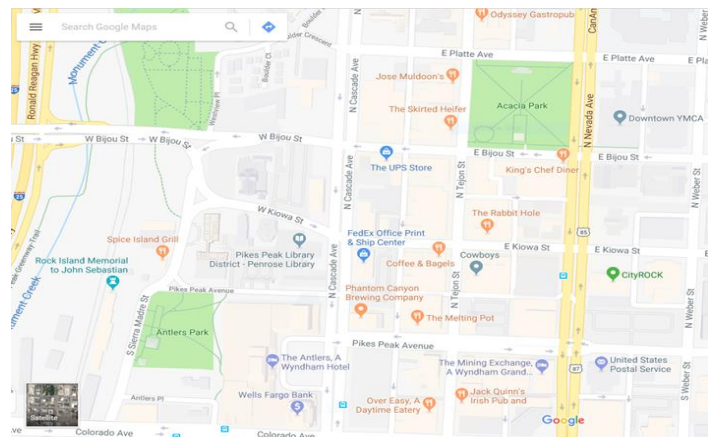
By Jay Brown



While it may seem a long way off, the Combat Helicopter Pilots Association will host its fourteenth Convention and Annual Business Meeting in Colorado Springs, Colorado August 2 - 5. There has been a lot of preliminary work going on, getting the process started of putting this event together. We've visited two hotels, both of which are Wyndham Grand hotels, and both are located near the center of the entertainment district of Colorado Springs. Both hotels presented proposals that were considered by the Board of Directors, who selected The Antlers Hotel as our host hotel for this convention

For now, mark your calendars and plan on joining us for the party. I'm also planning on putting together a golf outing for those who play and a motorcycle tour through some of the most beautiful country you'll ever see. If you have any suggestions or requests drop me an email at JBrown@chpa-us.org. Also, if you're interested in taking part in the motorcycle tour let me know so I'll be able to gauge the interest. You can trailer your own bike (I have a place set up for trailer storage for free) or you can just bring your helmet and riding gear and I'll arrange for rentals with the local Harley Davidson dealer. I look forward to seeing you all in August.

Prior to the selection of the host hotel we paid a visit to both and received tours of the entire facility, taking into consideration the availability of amenities such as parking, which is always a problem in an urban setting; Wi-Fi availability, restaurants, entertainment, conference rooms and hospitality suite. For all those reasons, The Antlers was selected, and I think you'll all agree it is a top notch hotel with excellent choices for anything you'd like to do. The Antlers is a 4-star hotel located at 4 S. Cascade Ave, just one block from city center with many quality restaurants and micro-breweries. All the details remain to be hammered out and I plan on keeping you all informed as the convention schedule takes shape.





VETERAN'S CORNER

GI Bill Info

The Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act, also known as the “Forever GI Bill,” was signed into law on August 17, 2017, and brings significant changes to Veterans’ education benefits. It enhances or expands education benefits for Veterans, service members, families and survivors.

The primary change was the elimination of the 15-year time limitation on the Post-911 GI Bill.

Download this fact sheet

<https://www.benefits.va.gov/GIBILL/docs/factsheets/ForeverGIBillFactSheet.pdf>

The transferability option under the Post-9/11 GI Bill allows service members to transfer all or some unused benefits to their spouse or dependent children. The request to transfer unused GI Bill benefits to eligible dependents must be completed while serving as an active member of the Armed Forces. Check out the requirements here: https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/post911_transfer.asp

VA Claims

Do you want to file a claim for benefits or disability compensation with the Veterans Administration but do not live near a VA regional office? It can be done by snail mail but know that each state has a system in place that provides County Veterans Service Officers (CVSO), employed by their respective states, and are knowledgeable individuals who know their way around the VA system. County Services Offices can help you with compensation/pensions, medical care, military records, grave markers and veteran home loans. Other veteran organizations such as Disabled American Veterans (DAV), VFW, American Legion, AMVETS, Military Order of the Purple Heart, and other like veteran’s groups usually have volunteers who provide assistance and can get the claims process started. For a state directory of CVSO offices, click here: https://www.nacvso.org/find_service_officers/state

Thrift Saving Program (TSP)

In November 2017, a bill was signed into law a bill to allow multiple age-based in-service withdrawals and multiple post-separation withdrawals in the TSP and to create more flexibility in the option to choose “substantially equal” withdrawals by allowing annual or quarterly withdrawals in addition to monthly changes in amounts at any time rather than just once a year. The law also allows the purchase of an annuity after receiving such payments, in addition to taking a lump-sum payment. The TSP agency is working to establish several rules, processes, and literature for participants.

VIETNAM WAR COMMEMORATION



The 2008 National Defense Authorization Act authorized the Secretary of Defense to conduct a program to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War.

This year many commemorative programs have been going on around the country that have the objectives of thanking and honoring veterans of the Vietnam War for their service and sacrifice on behalf of the United States. The programs include personnel who were held as prisoners of war (POW), listed as missing in action (MIA), and families of these veterans. A commemorative pin and certificate is awarded to qualifying individuals at local ceremonies around the country.

Locate upcoming commemorative events by visiting <http://www.vietnamwar50th.com/events/> Enter your zip code to locate the nearest events.



Rich Miller, Chairman of the Board, CHPA
at a pinning event with U.S. Representative,
25th District of Texas – Roger Williams

AA Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award

The Federal Aviation Administration's Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award Program recognizes pilots who have conducted 50 or more years of safe flight operations. It is the most prestigious award the FAA issues to certified pilots. This award is named after the Wright Brothers, the first US pilots, to recognize individuals who have exhibited professionalism, skill, and aviation expertise for at least 50 years while piloting aircraft as "Master Pilots".

Qualifications requirements and application information can be found here:

<https://www.faa.gov/content/masterpilot/>



IT WAS A PROUD DAY FOR MANY



More than 40 years after the end of the Vietnam War, the helicopter pilots and crew members killed in action during the conflict were honored at Arlington National Cemetery with their own monument. On April 18th, a dedication ceremony for the Vietnam Helicopter Pilot and Crewmember Monument took place at Arlington National Cemetery in the auditorium associated with the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. It was hosted by the President of VHPA and speakers included MG(R) McNair and Congressman Mark Amodei. It was attended by 1,500-2,000 people.

The Monument is carved in Barre granite, which was quarried in Vermont. It is in Section 35 of Arlington National Cemetery; located near the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. It bears engravings of the seals of each military service, as well as a depiction of the UH-1 helicopter. Additionally, the monument bears the words: "1961 - 1975 In honored memory of the helicopter pilots and crewmembers who gave the full measure of devotion to their nation in the Vietnam War."

CHPA President Jack Baily, Former Chairman Robert Frost, and current Board member Clyde Romero were in attendance.

Jack commented: *"It was an emotional event and I was very proud to have been there. I wanted you to know we were represented. It was right and fitting that CHPA was there to pay respect."*



Craig Bonds, CHPA Director, in period uniform

The VHPA Legacy committee worked long and tirelessly to make this monument a reality.

For those unable to attend the helicopter flyover can be viewed here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AM1FJ1kwUqo>



How about a “Sir” there, Sergeant Major?



I was brought up to be respectful of authority. I always called people older than me or in a position of authority “Sir” and “Ma’am” long before I ever thought about entering the military. I generally don’t have an issue with following rules and I don’t break the law. But the one thing I can’t stand is people who use a position of authority, assumed or legitimate, to harass and badger in the name of rule enforcement without attempting to apply even a modicum of common sense.

To illustrate exactly what I am talking about I give you the BDE Command Sergeant Major. As “King of the FOBBITS” he has not left this FOB since we arrived here on a combat mission. He fills his days roaming about the FOB concentrating on minutia. Lord help the poor Soldier who is checking ID’s at the DFAC if he/she fails to yell “At Ease” when the CSM enters (even though there’s an O6, inside, already enjoying his meal) and pity the Specialist who chose to drive a Gator across the flight line without wearing a Kevlar helmet. He is the man who must stop the outbreak of people wearing civilian clothes to go 50 ft. to the shower trailer at 0200. He will make sure that everyone riding a bicycle around the FOB is wearing a reflective belt.

Heaven forbid the CSM might do something constructive like give a door gunner the day off and fly a mission or two in his place or go down to the flight line and see if there is anything the Soldiers working there need...like water.

Even though he isn’t in my chain of command he speaks with the authority of the BDE Commander, which he believes gives him license to address junior officers like Lieutenants and Captains as if they were his subordinates. But his favorite target for derision and harassment seems to be Warrant Officers. During the Vietnam War there was an explosion in the number of Warrant Officers in the United States Army because they needed helicopter pilots. It was during the Vietnam War that the Aviation Warrant Officer cultivated the image of a mustachioed renegade, something the Army and Sergeant Majors have been trying to smother, ever since.

So here we are at Camp Taji, Iraq Warrant Officer dogs and CSM cats living together. It could be a disaster of biblical proportions.

On the evening in question I wasn’t on the flight schedule, so I had gone to work around 1430 to work on the daily airspace briefing and SPINS as the BN TACOPS officer. The sun was shining brightly that day, so I wore my approved ballistic sun glasses to function as the eye protection we were required to wear when we were outside. You see, someone decided that we needed to wear eye protection (EYEPRO) at all times because someone out on patrol lost an eye when a stray round kicked a splinter of rock into his eye. On the FOB the only real danger was from indirect fire (rockets and mortars), this fact lead to my rather snarky observation that the only reason they wanted us to wear EYEPRO was so they could donate your eyes to someone else after you were dead.

I finished up my work that night about 0200 and as I was leaving the TOC on my way back to the trailer, I then realized the only eye protection I had was a very dark pair of sunglasses. I decided that the risk of falling over something I couldn’t see in the dark because I was wearing sunglasses was greater than catching a rock or splinter in the eye due to enemy activity, so I made the decision to forgo wearing my glasses in the interest of SAFETY. I was soon to find out that I had chosen WRONG.

I was about half way back to my trailer when I heard of crunching gravel under boots which was followed by a shout. “HEY!” I stopped, turned around and saw the BDE CSM approaching out of the darkness. He must have been lurking in the shadows waiting to catch someone having sex hopefully without a reflective belt or eye protection.

I immediately knew who was yelling at me and given that I don’t really care for being yelled at in the dark in a rather dismissive tone by someone I outranked, I took the opportunity to let my displeasure be known with an abrupt shout of “WHAT?!?”

“We’ve talked about this before, where are your glasses?” He failed to address an officer properly, but I failed in my duty to him by not giving him an on-the-spot correction.

"No, we haven't talked about this before. I forgot my clear lens EYEPRO so I chose not to wear my sunglasses in the middle of the night. I thought I would be safer that way." To which he repeated "You've got to wear EYEPRO."

"Like I said, all I have are sunglasses. Wearing sunglasses at night isn't very safe. You can't see anything."

Once again, he said "You've got to wear EYEPRO." He was beginning to sound like a broken record.

"Look, I went to work, the sun was out, I wore my sunglasses and forgot my clear glasses. I thought it would be MORE dangerous to wear sunglasses in the middle of the night, than to go without my EYEPRO."

The repetitive conversation continued.

"You've got to wear EYEPRO."

"Is that all you're going to say?"

"You've got to wear EYEPRO."

"This is stupid; I'm going to bed."

"You've got to wear EYEPRO. We'll talk about this later, and you've got to wear EYEPRO."

"No we won't and how about a salute there, buddy?" In retrospect, maybe I should have locked him up at the position of attention as was within my rights to do, but if I had I would have been in front of the BDE commander the next day...it just wasn't worth the hassle.

This wasn't the first run-in the guys in my battalion had with this pompous buffoon. Previously, several aviators had been accosted after finishing flying a mission late at night for having "concealed weapons". When we flew, a lot of us chose to carry our assigned pistol in a shoulder holster. We didn't have a jacket that was approved for wear during flight at that time. So we wore our body armor over just the flight suit with our sidearm and survival vest. We kept a jacket to wear later under the seat or in a compartment called the "saddle bag". Because it was cold, when we finished flying we would slip on a fleece jacket and walk to the TOC. The pistol remained safely in its holster under the jacket.

One night while walking back to the TOC after flying a combat mission, two aviators were accosted by a figure that leaped out of the shadows. The conversation went like this:

"Where's your weapon sir?" The reply was "Under here..." Lifts up his jacket to show he's got his pistol. "You can't have a concealed weapon; it's against the Geneva Convention."

"As soon as I go outside the wire, I'll remember that." "You can't have a concealed weapon!"

"What about my knife?" the pilot asks as he reaches into one of his pockets and pulls out a Gerber knife, and shows it to the Sergeant Major. "You can't have concealed weapons!" This guy was big on repeating himself as if he was in some sort of trance.

The CSM also stopped several pilots walking in a light rain who were wearing fleece jackets. He was haranguing them for several minutes, enough time to cause them to get rain soaked, telling them that the Army bought rain gear and they should wear it.

It is people like the CSM that make an already unpleasant, difficult experience almost unbearable at times. I could deal with flying in combat. I could deal with a less than desirable commander or boss. But a person who uses his position to harass and badger Soldiers by trying to enforce rules that he doesn't even seem to understand or is unable to apply even a modicum of common sense. That, my friends, is almost enough to make you want to drink...that is if we actually could drink.

As bad as all of that is, the most galling situation was this individual's involvement in the vetting of awards submissions at the BDE level. I acknowledge that the BDE Commander can involve whomever he pleased in the awards process. But, the inclusion of a person in the aviator awards approval process when he has never been at the controls of an aircraft in combat was at the very least puzzling. It became infuriating when award packets were returned to company commanders with a sticky note from the CSM that read, "Standard troops in contact, no valor involved."

I have a great deal of respect for our BN CSM and the First Sergeants that I served with during this deployment, but this gentleman literally took the cake. If NCO's really are the "backbone of the Army" then that this particular backbone had a slipped disk, or more appropriately, suffered from scoliosis. The troops have a phrase for a person like that - "oxygen thief." Guys like this is why books like "Catch 22" and "M*A*S*H" get written. He's also one of the reasons good people leave the army. Where do we get such men?



U.S. Army Aviation Digest Archive

For those who may be interested in reading some off the older articles from Aviation digest, here is a link to magazines published from the 1950's to the 1990's.

<http://www.rucker.army.mil/usaace/techlibrary/avdigest/index.html>



The National Vietnam War Museum

The National Vietnam War Museum project was formalized in 1999 to develop a national venue that would create an atmosphere of learning about the Vietnam War era and engage people of all ages, nationalities, and political points of view. Groundbreaking occurred December 9, 2017. Currently, there are five outdoor gardens and a Visitor's Center with indoor exhibits

The mission of the museum is "To promote an understanding of the Vietnam Era, while honoring those who served." It is built around eight major themes relating to the Vietnam War and Era: The Cold War, The National and Culture of Vietnam, The Vietnam War Chronology, The Helicopter War, The Home Front, Technology and the War, War's End and Aftermath, and Fort Wolters.

For more information visit their website: <http://www.nationalvnwarmuseum.org/>



2018 ARMY AVIATION MISSION SOLUTIONS SUMMIT

SPONSORED BY ARMY AVIATION ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

By Al Winks, CHPA Board member



Ribbon Cutting Ceremony



Al on right with Quad A President BG Steve Mundt



One of my former crew chiefs, SFC Chris Smith, being honored for donating his dog to the gent in the chair.

From the Ribbon Cutting to the Soldiers Appreciation Dinner & Concert, CHPA was there for the 2018 Quad A Summit!!!

Over 5,000 Army Aviators converged for Networking, Connecting, Education, Career Progression, Industry Evolution, Celebration, and just seeing some old friends.

The Aviation Industry has changed at the speed of light even since the last Quad A. More pilot positions are open since the early 2,000's.

Drones and Unmanned Aircraft are multi-billion-dollar industries with regulators scrambling to keep up with technology.

However, even though social media allows us to remain in contact from afar, there's nothing like shaking hands and sharing drinks face-to-face at events like this.



CHPA Representatives attend HAI Heli-Expo



Al Winks and Barry Desfor have done an exceptional job of handling this event for us. They've represented us at all events, dinners and awards ceremonies. Likewise, Al has hosted training related events specific to his company, Ascencion. These events are focused on veterans transitioning into civilian life and is tied to our charter as a 501 c-19, veteran support organization. CHPA and Ascencion have a verbal agreement/relationship. <https://www.ascensionmentorship.com/>



Al with Serge Sikorsky, son of helicopter pioneer and legend, Igor Sikorsky



CHPA Board members, Barry Desfor (r) and Al Winks (l) "in action".

May 13, 1940 - The world's first practical helicopter took free flight on a Stratford, Connecticut. It was designed and flown by Igor Sikorsky, the helicopter was the first to incorporate a single main rotor and tail rotor design.



"As many of you know I sometimes try to make you think outside your comfort zone, especially on the subject of how egregiously our country breaks faith with our own men and women in the military when we send them off to war. Even though this was long ago, consider one man's combat experience for a little taste of what it is like, and the national commitment that should stand behind every one of our troops in combat." ...Terry Garlock.

Terry forwarded this article to us. Terry lives in Peachtree City, GA and occasionally contributes a column to The Citizen newspaper. He was a Cobra helicopter gunship pilot in the Vietnam War. He serves on the Board of Directors of CHPA.

**Written by R.J. Del Vecchio,
who was a Marine combat photographer
in the Vietnam War and known for the TV Mini-Series documentary – ["Inside the Vietnam War"](#)**

It is Lent, with Easter coming up, and I was thinking of something that happened in our church a while back. The priest, in part of his sermon, asked the congregation what I realized later was supposed to be a rhetorical question. "Who among us has seen the face of Christ?", he asked loud and clear. Without thinking, I raised my hand, but of course no one else did, and then he looked at me briefly and continued with the sermon.

Later, someone asked me what I was thinking, to get in the way of the sermon. I had to say I was honestly answering what I thought was a serious question. That got me a strange look, so I explained.

Late in the very hot morning of May 7th, 1968, I was crawling backwards from an intense battle scene. I was wounded, with one hand useless and one foot swollen to football size after being run over by a tank in the confusion and melee of battle. All I could manage was to crawl, using elbows and knees to push along through the hot sand of the place. As I was making slow progress, another unit of Marines came forward to join in the fight. One of them stopped by me, looked down, and asked if there was anything he could do for me. By then I was getting dehydrated, so I asked if he had water. He slapped his canteens, two were empty already, and one still had just a little left in it. He offered it to me.

He was going forward into hell, on a day when it was at least 120 degrees and the sun was full, and he offered me the last of his water. He was a young white man, with short, dirty blonde hair, but in that moment his face was the face of Christ. I remember it as clearly as anything in my life, his face, the outstretched hand with the canteen, the blazing sun, the staccato sounds of firing and some explosions just a few hundred yards away.

I said no, thanks, you will need it more than I, and waved him on. He went forward and I continued in the opposite direction, and I do not know if he survived that day or the days that followed or not. But I have always known what his offer meant, and how that is humanity at its best, and how, for me, his face took on an aspect of divinity in that moment.

Others may not see it that way, but that is what is etched in my memory.

Call me too imaginative, it does not matter. That was as real an image of God as we get here, and I remain ever grateful for it.

Mr. Del Vecchio





CHPA partners with the Fort Rucker Aviation Museum gift store wherein they carry our line of merchandise and memorabilia. Here are just a few of the items that are available for purchase.



Hats



Metal and Ceramic Challenge Coins



Polo Shirts

Shop here: <https://aviation-museum-gift-shop.myshopify.com/collections/combat-helicopter-pilots-association>

vernon
graphics | promotions

Richard P. Yood, MAS
Life Member CHPA
850-222-7755, Cell 850-339-0116
rick@richardyoodmas.graphics
www.myvernon.biz/rickyood

Want more Business? Want to reward Employees? Want to thank good customers? All of the above can be obtained through the creative use of decorated promotional items. They are tangible, useful and stay around long after you have bought them. Call me for ideas.



Combat Helicopter Pilots Association

Membership Application & Renewal

Mail or eMail application with supporting documents

www.chpa-us.org

800-832-5144

hq@chpa-us.org

PO Box 2585

Peachtree City, GA 30269

Profile:

Name (Rank/Mr./Ms.) _____ Date of Birth _____

Name you prefer to go by _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Primary eMail _____ Home Phn _____

Secondary eMail _____ Cell Phn _____

Membership Type and Dues:

Annual:	<input type="checkbox"/> Pilot	<input type="checkbox"/> Flight Crew	<input type="checkbox"/> Friend of CHPA	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 yr - \$40	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 yr - \$80	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 yr - \$120
	<input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Friend of CHPA			<input type="checkbox"/> 1 yr - \$60	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 yr - \$120	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 yr - \$180
Lifetime:	<input type="checkbox"/> Pilot	<input type="checkbox"/> Flight Crew	<input type="checkbox"/> Under 50-\$585	<input type="checkbox"/> 50-59-\$475	<input type="checkbox"/> 60-69-\$350	<input type="checkbox"/> 70 & over-\$175
If you wish to pay \$100 now and the balance of Lifetime dues in equal installments over 3 months, initial here _____						
Legacy:	Complimentary membership for immediate family member of deceased who would have qualified.					
	Deceased Name _____ Relationship _____ Service _____ Aircraft _____					

Payment Method:

☐ Cash ☐ Check (Payable to CHPA, mail to address above)

Credit Card: ☐ AMEX ☐ MC ☐ VISA ☐ Discover

To avoid expiration, I hereby authorize CHPA to renew my annual membership with this credit card - Initials: _____

Card Number _____ Expiration Date _____ Security Code _____

If this is a gift membership, or paid by business credit card, you must provide billing name and address tied to your credit card or the credit card payment authorization will fail.

Taken by: _____

Date: _____

Signature _____

Membership renewals not required to complete below, already on file

Military Aviation Information:

Branch of Service _____ Flight School Class/# _____ Total Flight Hrs _____ Combat Flight Hrs _____

Combat Tour Date(s) With Units _____

Location or Theater _____ Call Sign(s) _____

Combat Acft (List All) _____ Combat Medals/Awards _____

New member applicants: Please attach documentation of qualifications such as DD214, unit orders, award orders, combat flight records, etc showing combat helicopter experience. If the documents you need are inaccessible, please call us to discuss.

Optional Information:

Hobbies _____ Current Employer/Position _____

Related Associations to Which You Belong _____

How Did You Learn About CHPA? _____

Name/eMail of others you would recommend as qualified for CHPA Membership _____