



# the swash plate

MONTHLY  
**CHPA**  
NEWSLETTER

July—Sep 2018

## From the President

Notice to rotary wing – crew and pilots - combat vets of the Gulf War, Iraq, Afghanistan and other post-Vietnam conflicts: we want more of you as members. We would like to involve you in leadership, and we want your stories for this newsletter. We'll even help with the writing if you will call us. Help us preserve your legacy and ours.



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Ladies and Gentlemen, my comments for this edition are succinct as I'd like to use the space as an appeal for attendance at the 2018 Annual Conference in Colorado Springs.

By now you've seen the CHPA web site and Facebook marketing, received a number of emails, and a direct mailer with refrigerator magnet to "save the date". Depending upon where you live, you may have seen the print advertising for the Annual Conference in the local military newspaper.

Such an extraordinary effort was put forth to bring members together because we grow, evolve and become stronger through membership interaction.

The annual conference is a time to meet the Board of Directors, the people you charge with managing the organization, and share your feedback on purpose and direction. It's a place to re-connect with colleagues and friends and engage with people like you who share a very unique bond. It's a place to remember and honor friends, some of whom paid the ultimate sacrifice in the service of our nation. It's a place for heroes to be recognized.

I hope to see as many of you as possible this year. Please consider attending. Dr. Jack Bailey, President CHPA, [president@chpa-us.org](mailto:president@chpa-us.org)

# 2018 ANNUAL CONVENTION REPORT

## Jay Brown

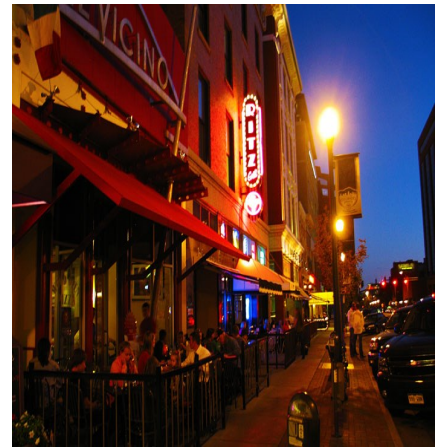
All the paperwork has been done, tours have been arranged, hurdles have been leaped and we're ready to party. I'm sure you all know the 2018 CHPA Convention will be held in Colorado Springs, at the base of Pikes Peak from August 2 through August 5. The weather is usually surprisingly temperate for those not accustomed to the low humidity of Colorado. While the temperatures may get into the lower 90s the humidity will make it feel much cooler and more comfortable than most of you have been at those temperatures.

The schedule is set and we've got a lot of things for those in attendance to do. We've arranged for tours of Ft. Carson and the United States Air Force Academy. We've also arranged to visit the 14,115 foot summit of Pikes Peak and travel by rail through the Royal Gorge, the Grand Canyon of Colorado and home of the highest suspension bridge in Colorado. We think you'll enjoy everything the area has to offer.

Our host hotel, The Antlers, is Colorado Springs finest and is located on the edge of the downtown entertainment district offering

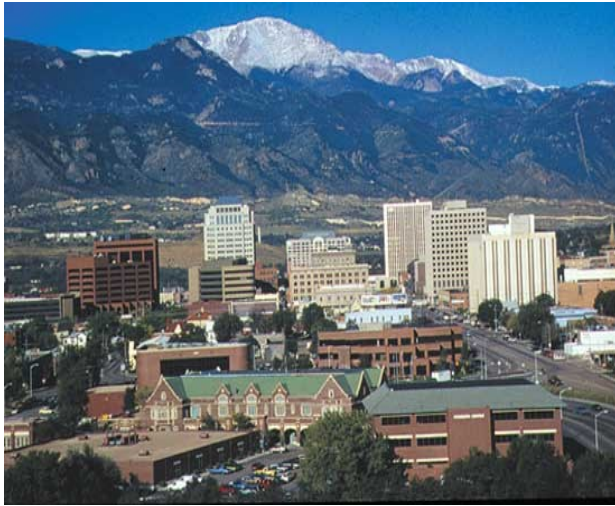


plenty of choices of locally brewed beers, varied cuisine styles and fine dining. The dining within The Antlers is, arguably, the finest in Colorado Springs. You'll have the opportunity to sample the Antlers' Cuisine at the President's Reception and the Banquet and I'm sure you'll take advantage of the restaurants within the hotel itself.



Between the scheduled events and the myriad of interesting attractions in the local area, we're certain you'll find many opportunities to make memories that will last a lifetime. All you have to do is come join us but make your hotel reservations and convention registration first.

To make hotel reservations online go to <https://www.wyndhamhotels.com/groups/hr/combat-helicopter-pilots-association> and fill in the form. You can also call the hotel directly at 719-955-6202. If you're planning on taking advantage of the shoulder dates to come early and/or stay late it's probably better to call The Antlers directly. You'll also have to register for the convention. The process could not be easier. Go to [www.chpa-us.org](http://www.chpa-us.org), log in, click on the link and complete the form. If you're not a member you'll be asked to establish an account. If you're logged in as a member the form will be pre-populated with your information and all you'll have to do is select the events you want to participate in and select your preferred payment method. We're looking forward to you joining us for out get together in "the Springs" and enjoying all the local area has to offer.



CHPA appreciates the reunion sponsorship of Black Hall Aerospace and Silver Birch, LLC.





## VETERAN'S CORNER

**Direct Service Connection Claims** Since you last filed a VA disability claim, VA has improved the claim process by launching the Decision Ready Claims (DRC) Program. When you file a DRC, you can get a decision on your claim in 30 days or less by working with an accredited Veterans Service Organization (VSO). Your VSO will help you gather and submit all relevant and required evidence so your claim is ready for VA to make a decision when you submit it.

Don't miss out on this important opportunity to get a faster claim decision. Learn more about the DRC Program, including eligibility requirements, what medical evidence you need to submit, and how to find an accredited VSO at <https://www.benefits.va.gov/compensation/drc.asp>.

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Recognitions from the U.S. military such as medals, decorations, and awards are often considered as historical mementos and priceless family heirlooms. The physical medals can be misplaced, lost, stolen or simply begin to show their age over time. Replacements are available to decorated veterans and their families. Just visit the National Archives Veterans' Service Records page - <https://www.archives.gov/veterans/replace-medals.html> - and this site has all the information you'll need for replacing your family's lost military awards

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If you have questions about your service-connected disability benefits then check out the Service-Connected Benefits Eligibility Matrix to discover the benefits you're eligible for. Simply scroll down the table until you find your rating, then look at the corresponding benefits column.

[https://benefits.va.gov/benefits/derivative\\_sc.asp?utm\\_source=newsletter&utm\\_medium=govdelivery&utm\\_campaign=april2018&utm\\_term=derivative\\_sc&utm\\_content=readmore](https://benefits.va.gov/benefits/derivative_sc.asp?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=govdelivery&utm_campaign=april2018&utm_term=derivative_sc&utm_content=readmore)

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For those who have not yet used the VA website My HealtheVet, know that it is a place to do many things reference one's VA health care. It is a free tool to help Veterans be involved in their health care, communicate with their physician, re-fill prescriptions, accessing VA medical records, and a number of other useful features. As with any government designed system, it is not especially user friendly, but the effort to use it is valuable. <https://www.va.gov/HEALTH/NewsFeatures/2017/>



## ***Another Salute to Our Veterans***

By

William R. Halevy, CW5, (R) CHPA Life Member

Becoming a Veteran Service Officer, accredited by the Department of Veterans Affairs, has become a challenge much greater than flying helicopters in combat. Getting shot at and returning fire was an easy task. Diving into a “pool of political quick sand” has become a more daunting task. The more I have learned the more I realize I don’t know. Just take a look at the U. S. Code, Title 38 and you will see what must be digested and acted upon by the veterans advocate for the needy veteran and family.

The VA has three administrative departments. When veterans look for health care or want to file for a disability they need to understand that within the VA alone there are three different departments which encompass compensation, health care, and pensions. These departments do not communicate unless the veteran supplies the permissions with the proper forms. Most veterans or care givers don’t realize these departments are separate and this leads to much confusion in the filing process.

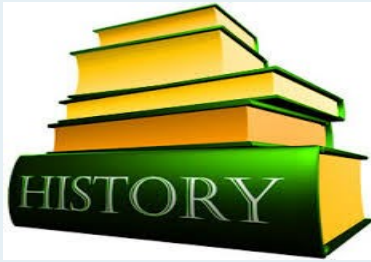
The term veteran applies to all who have served in the military and earned the care and support of the administration, though the provided care is not equal. The levels of care have eight categories depending on when, where the vet served, and the sickness or injuries received. These benefits are the promise of service whether in the combat theater or serving during the combat era.

After 40 years of Army aviation service and not wanting to take off the uniform, being asked to lend assistance to our local veteran organizations became a ‘continuation of service’ for this proud veteran. When asked to write an article describing my efforts to assist our local area veterans, my first thought was, “An article—I could write a book on the subject after just two years.

Several times I was called to assist a family having difficulty dealing with the VA, or not knowing of available benefits, and then having the veteran die before a claim is submitted or returned after filing. It was extremely disheartening. I have found that many older veterans are not internet connected or too proud to file for health benefits and the family suffers the financial burden of the needed veteran’s care.

Then there are the veteran’s I have found being treated at VA facilities suffering from service connected injuries or illnesses and never advised to file a claim for their disabilities. When a veteran dies from a service connected disability the spouse may be eligible for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) if a claim has been first filed for that veteran’s disability. The death certificate must relate that the cause of death was the same as the service connected disability of the veteran.

It is my opinion that there should be no discrimination for the care given any veteran or combat era veteran. To learn more about receiving veteran and family support information visit my web site [www.VHBM.org](http://www.VHBM.org), a secure 501(c)(3) foundation, and click on ‘About Us.’

**June 1, 1967**

The first AH-1G Cobra helicopters were delivered to the U.S. Army.

**June 4, 1974**

Sally Murphy graduated as the first female Army aviator.

**Warrant Officer 100th year Anniversary**

by Rich Miller, CW5 (R)

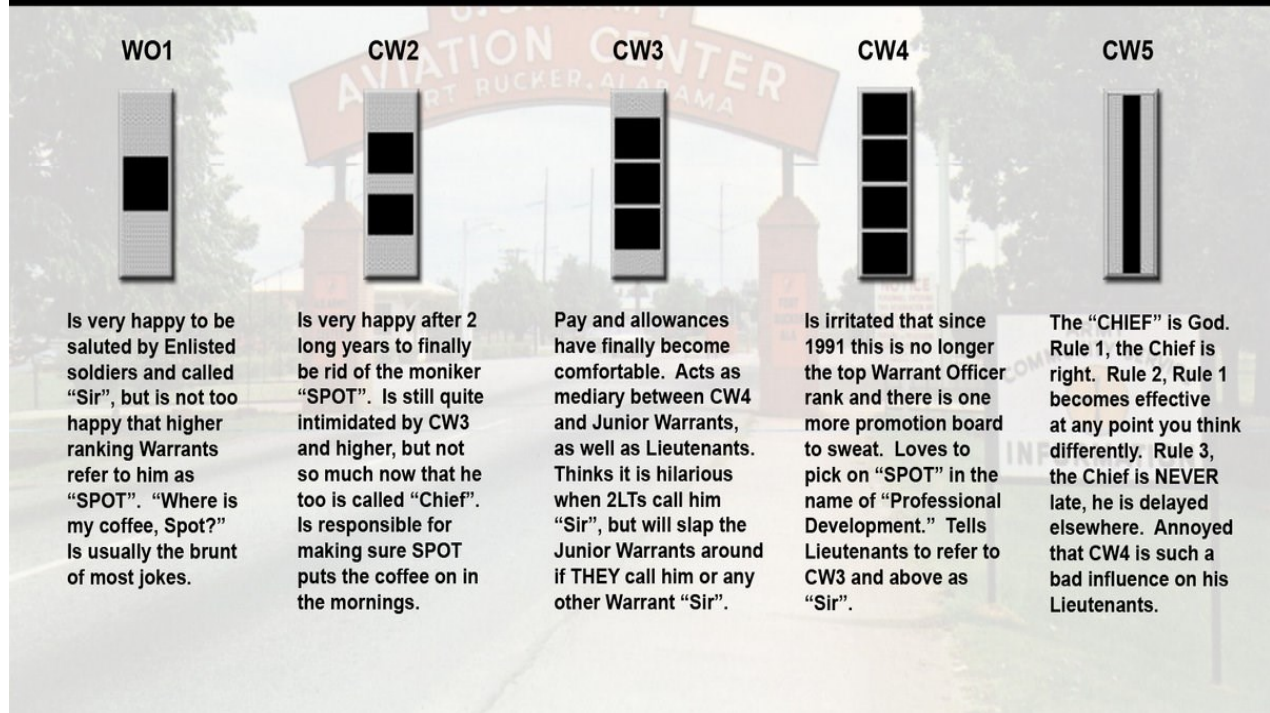
A century ago, the Army officially recognized a special breed of Soldiers that have existed in the ranks since 1896: the Army Warrant Officer. During World War I, a 1918 act of established the Army Mine Planter Service, or MPS, as part of the U.S. Army Coast Artillery Corps. One hundred years later on July 9, 2018, the Army still relies upon Warrant Officers to be adaptive, technical experts, combat leaders, trainers, and advisors. Today's Warrant Officers serve at all levels of the Army. Junior Warrant Officers are typically assigned at the tactical and company level, CWO4 serve as BN level, while CWO5's serve at BGE and higher levels.

Currently, there are about 26,000 warrant officers -- roughly 2.5 percent of the Army. Warrant officers are highly specialized technicians spanning 17 different Army branches and 44 warrant officer specialties. We aviators, who have enjoyed "slipping the surly bonds of earth", are only about 40 percent of warrant officers. The other 60 percent are highly specialized WO's who are technical officers that manage, maintain, operate, and integrate critical Army systems and equipment across the full spectrum of Army operations.

From our humble beginnings as mine planters in World War I, and through every conflict since, we are as eagles rising to become the technical experts.

Warrant Officers - the quiet Professional.

# WARRANT OFFICER RANKS EXPLAINED



## 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](mailto:hq@chpa-us.org)

# Friends who leave large footprints

by Robert Frost

On May 11, 2018, CHPA Life Member John Synowsky was inducted into the Artillery OCS Hall of Fame. The induction ceremony was held at the 34th annual Artillery OCS alumni reunion banquet at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. Including John, there were 16 inductees for this year, some posthumous.

My fellow CHPA warrior brother, Terry Garlock, organized the nomination of John for this honor. His nomination project involved considerable effort gathering and creating documents, letters of recommendation, and his own writeup of the impact John had on his life and others as a Cobra helicopter gunship pilot in Vietnam.

Terry undertook this effort to honor John at the same time he was burning up the roads in five-hour drives each way, once or twice a week since Nov 1 last year, between his home in Peachtree City, GA, and Pensacola FL, keeping many balls in the air as he assumed family duties helping his sister and mother through their simultaneous medical crises. He said since both sister and mother were first in the hospital, then in a rehab facility, this project was a welcome distraction when he was alone in their house in the evening, doing something useful before sleep.

Terry's mother passed away June 3, and he continues to burn up the road with much left to do. Amidst the chaos Terry was dealing with, he was thrilled on April 3 to receive notice the Artillery OCS Hall of Fame Board of Directors had unanimously approved his recommendation for John's



John Synowsky with his wife, Anny, on the deck with friends at their ranch home

I recently moved to Houston, TX, but when Terry introduced me to John over a year ago I had long lived in Tyler, TX, and proximity gave me the opportunity several times to visit John at his ranch south of Weatherford, TX. Just as Terry and I have become close friends, I now have a new close friend in John. I accepted the invitation to join them and the rest of their Vietnam Dragon Platoon for their annual reunion at John's ranch on Columbus Day weekend last October, and I participated in the student event Terry organizes, presenting to the local high school a program on the Myths and Truths of the Vietnam War.

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When Terry told me about John's HOF induction, and that he could not attend, I was so pleased for John and I told Terry I would attend and would sneak in as an unannounced guest to surprise John. That's when Terry told me he had written a short speech, that the HOF administrator had scheduled him to speak briefly about John or even to submit a video, but he said he would much prefer that I speak for him. I told him I would be honored to do so.



John Synowsky's horse Jet Eye before a 2016 race at Lone Star Park between Dallas and Ft Worth

My last trip to Fort Sill was almost 50 years ago - the summer of 1968 for ROTC Summer Camp.

What I remember most from that time made for a miserable experience.

The chiggers were all over us - I including the most private of places! I also remember it was hotter than the hinges on the doors of Hell!

This time however, it was much nicer - a black tie affair with lovely ladies, great chow, adult beverages, air conditioning, and no bugs! This time it was a wonderful occasion and a pleasure to be among so many revered "cannon cockers."

When it was time for me to deliver Terry's message, knowing I was the only speaker on behalf of an inductee, I wanted to convey it with the earnestness that Terry intended. I did that as best I could. Because Terry's message deftly touched what all of us as combat vets carry deep inside, I found my own eyes tearing up and my voicing cracking with emotion as I delivered his words, just as he wrote them.

As I walked back to my table to take my seat there was loud applause, but more importantly there was an emotional energy in that banquet hall that I don't have adequate words to describe. The audience got it. When the ceremony was over there was a mass migration over to our table with eyes focused on John. Everyone wanted to meet him, the cowboy in the Stetson hat to match his tux, and big cigar clenched between his teeth. John and his wife, Anny, stayed until the last person left.

Several who attended later told me there were no dry eyes in the audience when I finished reading Terry's words, and the banquet administrator told me if he had it to do over he would schedule me last because what Terry wrote made every combat vet in the room quite distracted with deep reflection about days long past.

Looking back at that evening, I have this compelling thought. Terry and John and I are now close friends; each would come running if either of the others called for help in the middle of the night. I think this is a good example of what the Combat Helicopter Pilots Association is all about. Every one of us has a story - or three or ten - to tell, and the unique nature of rotary wing in combat is what draws us together, brothers and sisters all, even though the conflicts we served in might have been markedly different. When we take the time to get to know each other in some depth, good things happen, the bonds of friendship take root and bind us closer, sometimes for life.

So I am grateful for every one of you and urge you to look for the opportunities to spend time with other members to make good things happen. The good things for me are that I now have two close friends I value and trust, and I have the memory of a banquet at Ft. Sill that will always carry special meaning to John, to me and to Terry.



Robert Frost (L) and John Synowsky at the induction banquet

*I want to thank the Artillery OCS Hall of Fame Board members for voting to admit John, and since I couldn't be with you for the induction, thanks to Randy Dunham for letting me send a message this way, and thanks to Robert Frost for speaking in my stead.*

*Here are just a few high points. John Synowsky is successful in the ranching and horse racing business, has a long history of strong support of Boy Scouts of America, and long ago in Vietnam he left large footprints as a Cobra helicopter pilot and Fire Team Leader in the 334<sup>th</sup> Attack Helicopter Company, based in Bien Hoa in 1969.*

*John led by example with a quiet style and taught many of us how to do our job flying close air support missions covering our brothers on the ground in combat. He taught us a few tricks of surviving, and he taught us our highest calling was to bring our brothers home alive, and on that we would never quit. Because of John, an unknown number of Americans in the air and on the ground lived to go home. I am one of them.*

*When Ron Hefner and I were shot down flying John's wing, I was trapped in the wreckage of a broken Cobra, unconscious with a broken back and paralyzed legs, with the turbine still running, fuel leaking and the enemy nearby. John landed in this highly dangerous area to help his men. He and his co-pilot Graham Stevens stayed with us, with only a pistol for defense, until Dustoff took us to a hospital while other gunships covered us in their own firefight to keep the enemy away from us.*

*John received many combat awards, but the Soldier's Medal he and Graham received for saving lives that day is special to him, I think because amidst all the killing and dying, Ron Hefner and I were two he was able to save. So, John I am more pleased than I can say you are receiving this honor, and I want to tell you something that might seem odd about what it means to me.*

*I don't think of you as a larger-than-life hero. That overused word has been worn thin, and to me heroes are the ones who could not keep their family hearts from breaking because they did not make it home alive.*

*You and I were in very good company, John. While Americans at home were being told we were doing dishonorable things in Vietnam, what I saw around me was completely different. Most troops were between 18 and 25, and I saw in their daily actions the true meaning of duty, skill, loyalty, courage and trust. I saw my fellow pilots in the air and our brothers on the ground kicking a tough enemy's butt and struggling mightily to bring each other home still breathing. The things we did to protect each other would steal our family's breath if they only knew.*

*You had about 1200 combat hours in the cockpit, while I had less than 225 when I was injured and Medevaced home, but even my short tour taught me important lessons, not only about you, but also about Graham Stevens, Tony Armstrong, Bob Metzger, Larry Pucci, Dutch Holt, Jerry Denton, Bob Lugo, Charlie Densford and countless others, in the air and on the ground.*

*What I saw was the very embodiment of honor. Our fathers would have been proud, and our country would have been proud if the truth had not been strangled by political noise.*

*Thinking back on the guys I observed or served with, even though I have a couple of fancy medals myself, I have long thought the very highest praise anyone can give me is that I was just "one of the guys" who fought in Vietnam.*

*So, John, here's how I think of you. What if I could pick only one man to represent us all? Which one best serves as the example of our collective virtues, stained as we were by our sins and imperfections, doing a hard job well even though our own government ultimately gave it all away?*

*Who is the guy the rest of us can point to and say, "I was trying to do my job as well as he did."*

*I pick you, John. I can't think of any better example to stand for all of us. I pick you, with no need for a hero on a pedestal because we were all in it together. That's how I think of you.*

*As a final note, John, as you know I had kids late in life by adoption. You met Kristen a year ago when she was 15. You met Melanie 17 years ago when she was 4, and when you picked her up she yanked hard on your beard just to make sure it was real. At the end of that evening Melanie said to you as her parting shot, "Thanks for saving my Daddy, Mr. John!"*

*I couldn't say it better myself.*

*My family's love to you and Anny on this occasion of your well-deserved induction into the Artillery OCS Hall of Fame. The members should be proud to have you among them.*

## Celebrating July 4th for a Reason

by CHPA editor

This month, we once again celebrated the 4th of July - also known as Independence Day. It has been a federal holiday in the United States since 1941 when The U.S. Congress enacted legislation making it so. But the tradition was started in July 1777. From that time to the present day, July 4th has been celebrated as the birth of American Independence with festivities ranging from fireworks, parades and concerts to more casual family gatherings and barbecues.

It could be argued, certainly by we proud Americans, that the people of the United States have more freedoms, liberty and treat their tired, their poor, their huddled masses better than anyone else!

There are is a reason that the U.S. is a leader of the free world. Here are two video examples. Both were speeches given by the then Pres. Ronald Regan.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GiuFzpl28io>

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



## Combat Helicopter Pilots Association



We organize and unify US Armed Forces Rotary Wing Aviators and crew members from all service branches who have flown helicopter combat missions.

We remember and honor our fallen aviation comrades lost during helicopter combat operations.





# Army Aviation Hall of Fame

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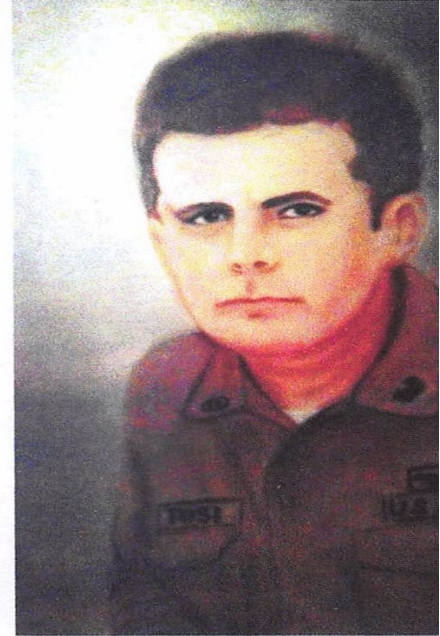
Chief Warrant Officer Two  
Ronald L. Tusi

Army Aviation Hall of Fame 1983 Induction

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CW2 Ronald L. Tusi is one of Army Aviation's most outstanding attack helicopter pilots.

One specific action best illustrates his tactical skills. On April 15, 1972 at An Loc, Vietnam, a number of enemy tanks had penetrated the friendly position and were within a few meters of the Republic of Vietnam Army's Fifth Division Headquarters. As conditions deteriorated rapidly, U.S. advisors to the Division Headquarters urgently requested AH-1 Cobra support. CW2 Tusi responded immediately and despite extremely intense antiaircraft fire, he single-handedly attacked the threatening enemy force, killing four tanks, damaging a fifth, and forcing the others to withdraw. At the time of his Hall of Fame induction, CW2 Tusi's record of killing ten tanks with helicopters had never been equaled, and he was considered to be Army Aviation's leading tank killer.



During five tours in the Republic of Vietnam, he earned the Distinguished Service Cross, four Silver Stars, eight Distinguished Flying Crosses, three Bronze Stars (one with "V" device), 67 Air Medals, the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Gold Star, and the American Legion Aviation Award for Valor in 1972.

CW2 Tusi's brilliant aviation career was cut short by his untimely death in a Cobra accident on the night of August 6, 1974. He was participating at the time in the dangerous "Night Owl" experiments which were used as a basis for today's night fighting techniques.

## **CW2 Ronald L. Tusi, August 24, 1937 - 6 August 1974**

### **Cobra Gunship Pilot**

By J.M. Wilhite

CW2 Ronald L. Tusi enlisted in the Navy in 1956. He was attached to the Marine Corps as a medic, received advanced training in underwater demolition, and served as a Navy SEAL in action surrounding Santa Domingo, the Bay of Pigs and the Cuban missile crisis, and two tours as a SEAL in RVN. Ron Tusi left the Navy as an E-6. He was described by one of his Team members as "the meanest man in on our Team" Tusi switched services and went to WORWAC 68-13 (my class). In RVN, Tusi was referred to by his colleagues as "King Cobra".

At the time of his Hall of Fame induction, CW2 Tusi's record of killing ten tanks with helicopters had never been equaled, and he was considered to be Army Aviation's leading tank killer. During five tours in the Republic of Vietnam 3- as an Army Aviator, he earned the Distinguished Service Cross, four Silver Stars, eight Distinguished Flying Crosses, three Bronze Stars (one with "V" device), 67 Air Medals, the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Gold Star, and the American Legion Aviation Award for Valor in 1972. CW2 Tusi's brilliant aviation career was cut short by his untimely death in a Cobra accident on the night of 6 August 1974. He was participating at the time in the dangerous "Night Owl" experiments, which were used as a basis for today's night fighting techniques. One of the highest decorated Army Aviators of all time.

Units in of Vietnam service: B/7/17 CAV in 70-71, C/2/20 ARA 1 CAV in 71, C/16 CAV in 72-73 Call signs in Vietnam UNDERTAKER, DARKHORSE, BLUE MAX

Tusi Army Heliport, Fort Hunter Liggett, California, is named for Chief Warrant Officer (W2) Ronald L. Tusi.

Ronald Tusi is buried along with his father at Oak Mound Cemetery, Sonoma County, California, USA

His DFC awards citation can be read here: [http://www.liberty1st.org/honorroll/citation\\_detail.asp?ID=6235](http://www.liberty1st.org/honorroll/citation_detail.asp?ID=6235)



One of his tank kills

**Jim Spiers (fellow classmate and CHPA member—they were bunk bed buddies) on Tusi:**

“The only thing I recall about the Feds trailing Tusi, is that he would disappear occasionally. Sometimes for a couple of hours and sometimes longer. I never saw it, but I was told by other candidates that he was picked up by the mysterious "Black Cars" occasionally and then dropped off later. There were lots of rumors, but he didn't talk about it other than to say he was dealing with some legal problems. He and I talked mostly about his Vegas days as a card dealer.”

When we arrived at Hunter Stewart, we were greeted by CID. A 2LT tried to break Tusi by making him do push-ups. Tusi keep finishing the set and asking the LT if he wanted 50-more...Finally, the LT left the grounds in frustration.

Tusi told me that during a mission in Vietnam with indigenous, the Team was boxed in on three-sides by opposing forces. The CO was a young inexperienced Ensign...the Ensign wanted to retreat. Ron told him that if they retreated they would be slaughtered; Ron told the Ensign if he tried to retreat, he would kill the Ensign. The Ensign started the retreat and Tusi killed him.

Reader's Digest published an account of this in an article—I was told that this was the/one of the first acknowledgments of Kennedy's vaunted Seal Teams. I can find no evidence of this on the internet, but the CID were constantly monitoring Tusi everywhere we turned. I don't include this in my narrative, but offer it as background.

I hope that we can accept CW2 Ron Tusi posthumously into the CHPA. I have the bulk of his military records from my initiative in Ron's posthumous induction into the DFC Society—impressive is not a strong enough adjective.

I am very honored to have played a part in Ron's rise to Army Aviation Fame...He peered at my papers in class "occasionally"...

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Modern day Da Nang. Marble Mountain can be seen in the upper right hand corner



## **The New Vietnam**

By Robert Frost

My business requires that I be in Vietnam for about two weeks every few months. I returned to Vietnam more than 45 years after my tour. Even though I have never met a vet who regretted that he had returned, I was still very apprehensive. Now I actually look forward to my visits.

First, I have made some wonderful Vietnamese friends. Secondly, the people are warm and friendly. And believe it or not, I feel safe. Vietnam is booming economically. The young people are educated, hard-working, and enjoy the latest gadgets and clothing – much like in our own society. Saigon is a beehive of activity, commerce, finest hotels and resorts in the world, and a beautiful city of 12 million people. It is totally unrecognizable from the war years! I have yet to find any physical reminders of the war except in the museums – and a few aircraft revetments that still exist at Tan Son Nhut (Now called Tan Son Nhat). Long Binh has become a modern industrial business park. All of the old military-style buildings are gone. It is like driving through any modern industrial park here in the USA. The countryside is beautiful and is as lush and green as you could imagine. Also, I indulged in some 333 beer – the old 33 beer (Ba Mui Ba).

I met a Vietnamese tour guide named “Tom”. He speaks very good English and has his own tour service. He was a Captain in the South Vietnamese Army when the Communists overran the Republic of Vietnam in April, 1975. He was captured after the fall of Saigon and put in an “Re-education Camp” for three years. He managed to survive, unlike many of his fellow warriors. Today, officers from the South Vietnamese Army are the lowest citizens in the country. Tom seems to have defied the odds and is prosperous and happy. He has extended an invitation to have dinner in his home on my next visit. I look forward to that occasion.

I would ask any of our Vietnam warrior brothers intending to make a trip back to Vietnam to consider hiring Tom as their guide, especially if they are going to travel in what we referred to as “III and IV Corps”. Tom’s Vietnamese name is Hoang Lan Nguyen. His email is: [hoalan4953@hotmail.com](mailto:hoalan4953@hotmail.com). If anyone is reluctant to contact Tom directly, please refer any inquiries you receive to me. I would be happy to discuss their travel planning and address any questions or concerns they might have if they are considering a trip to Vietnam. My email is: [robertfrost75@yahoo.com](mailto:robertfrost75@yahoo.com).





# I AM NOT INVISIBLE

AN EXHIBIT TO HONOR OUR WOMEN VETERANS



A new awareness campaign designed to honor women veterans called "I am Not Invisible" is underway in Minnesota where more than 29,000 women

veterans call it home. The initiative is designed to educate the public about some of the unique challenges women veterans face when they come back from their service - as do their male counterparts.

The campaign gained traction as soon as it was announced last October 2017. It highlights the contributions of our women service members, honor their sacrifices, and make them aware of the support that is around them.

The exhibit consists of the portraits, videos, and stories of 33 Minnesota women veterans from all walks of life, and all military branches, who served in World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as during peacetime. They include bomb and armament technicians, pilots, nurses, intelligence specialists and members of the military police.



One of the supporters and participants in this campaign is LTC Patricia Baker who currently serves as a member of the CHPA Board of Directors. She is Senior Army Aviator who has two OIF combat tours flying the UH-60. LTC Baker is a full time Army Guard officer in the state of Minnesota and has had several command assignments. She will soon be attending the Army War College.



Pat's recent participation representing ININ at a Minnesota Twins baseball game.

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