



# the swash plate

MONTHLY  
**CHPA**  
NEWSLETTER

**Combat Helicopter Pilots Association, Inc.**

800-832-5144 [hq@chpa-us.org](mailto:hq@chpa-us.org) PO Box 2585, Peachtree City, GA 30269

**September 2016**

We want your pucker factor stories no matter which conflict you flew in. I realize not everyone enjoys writing, so call me and we'll get your story by phone, and you get final editing approval. Your fellow CHPA members will enjoy reading your version of an interesting day.

Here's several ways to reach me.

Terry Garlock – Swashplate Editor  
770-630-6064 cell  
800-832-5144 CHPA  
[hq@chpa-us.org](mailto:hq@chpa-us.org)



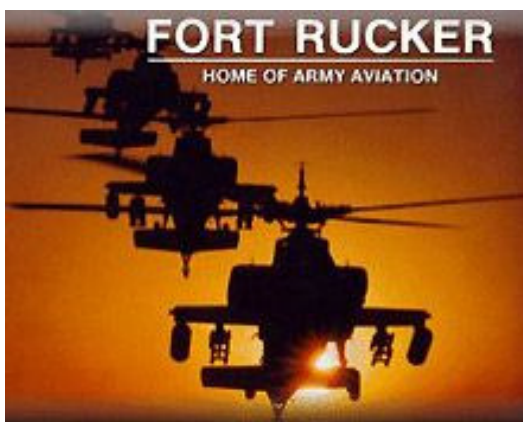
**Rich Miller**

[president@chpa-us.org](mailto:president@chpa-us.org)

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## The President's Corner



Our observance of September 11th has pasted until next year. As it should be, and not unlike the Pearl Harbor date of December 7th, there are always remembrance speeches given. Most have the same underlying message. It is that the American way of life, regardless of those who oppose it, embraces freedom and democracy and that makes ours the greatest nation on Earth.

I hope everyone enjoyed their Labor Day weekend. I spent part of mine looking for lost golf balls, along with the horde of other golfers on the course. And speaking of golf, this year we will have the first ever golf tournament during the annual reunion. The reunion planners have coordinated with the Fort Rucker Silver Wings Course management to host that outing for CHPA

golfers. Please check the reunion sign up information to see everything that is included in the fee.



We are rapidly approaching the reunion start date of October 13th to be held at Fort Rucker, Home of Army Aviation. We have a great reunion planned. There will be tours of several facilities on Fort Rucker, a great guest speaker, and lots of comradery. We will have our annual business meeting, as well. The reunion event is open to

anyone who would like to attend. It is not necessary to be a member of CHPA. So if you know someone that you think might be interested in attending, please contact and let them know.

September 15th was the cut off date to receive the hotel room discount. But if you didn't make that, the rate is still competitive. Early registrations help us plan the transportation resources to and from venues. Thank you for all that registered early.

A friendly reminder that if you have moved, changed a phone number, or email address please log into the CHPA website and update your data file. If you know of anyone who served as a combat helicopter pilot or crew member, and are not members, please let us know. We would like to send them a Newsletter and see if they are interested in joining CHPA.



## From Chairman Robert Frost

### Your vote by email is requested for the first time

Dear CHPA pilot and crew voting members:

On behalf of the CHPA Board of Directors, I am pleased to ask you to vote on an important CHPA issue. At the bottom of this message, highlighted to be clear, is how to send your vote by email.

Until now, CHPA votes have been cast only by the members present at the annual meeting. For the first time, we will take votes from all pilot and crew members electronically, whether or not you are able to attend the annual meeting upcoming Oct 15 near Ft. Rucker.

We are asking you to vote on proposed new Bylaws for CHPA. With the advice of special counsel as a consultant in these matters, we have revised the Bylaws to resolve several issues such as: compliance with IRS regulations for our 501(c)19 tax exempt Veterans Org; provide for electronic voting by members routinely when votes are taken; remove state, regional and international components that do not exist; remove extraneous policy matters that should be decided by the Board of Directors; provide Bylaws that make compliance practical, etc.

Your vote is important. To implement these proposed Bylaws, 25% of our members must vote, and 2/3 of those voting must vote yes for this proposal to pass.

Unless and until proposed new Bylaws are voted in, we must comply with the old Bylaws we have currently in place, which do provide for delegates to poll members in their states. Accordingly, the CHPA Board of Directors has appointed me, as Chairman of the Board, to be the delegate representing all 50 states, and I will be polling you by collecting your votes through our membership system which is secured by sophisticated encryption.

Please go to [www.chpa-us.org](http://www.chpa-us.org) to review the proposed Bylaws, and our existing Bylaws on the CHPA website. Consider it a duty - this is not enjoyable reading.

I have appointed CHPA member Terry Garlock to work with me on the voting process for check-and-balance transparency. We will receive your vote by your

email, will verify your membership is in good standing, will count votes pro and con and as your appointed delegate, I will be casting your votes collectively, both pro and con, at the annual meeting in October.

Please look through the proposed Bylaws and cast your vote.

It would be improper for any member to campaign for one side or the other of this issue, and I trust all CHPA members will be honorable about refraining from trying to influence member votes. For this reason, we are disabling the email broadcast feature on our website during the voting period.

Whichever way you vote, I look forward to receiving yours and representing you in this initial electronic vote by members.

**Please vote either Yes to approve, or No to reject, the proposed CHPA Bylaws. Email your vote to [vote@chpa-us.org](mailto:vote@chpa-us.org).** If you have any email difficulty, please leave us a message at 800-832-5144.



Robert Frost  
CHPA Chairman of the Board



# Holy Shite!

by Dan McClinton

For a Youtube clip filmed during this mission, go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PWooHPuPB8A>

## Holy Shite!

by Dan McClinton



Nine years ago on Aug 23, 2007, on this 1-227<sup>th</sup> ARB mission in Iraq, Apaches react to VBIED attack.

It was a typical hot summer afternoon when our Attack Weapons Team (AWT), callsign Crazyhorse 18 & 19 took off from Camp Taji to begin our assigned mission. We were conducting Counter Mortar, Rocket Recon and Interdiction (CM2RI) just to the west of Taji along one of the Main Supply Route (MSR) where there had been some incidents of Anti Iraqi Forces (AIF) activity recently, looking for signs of digging, where the road had been melted or other shenanigans. I was in CZ19 with the newly promoted CPT Griggs as my Co-Pilot Gunner (CPG). CZ18 was being flown by CW4 Bill Ham and CPG, CPT Mike Hutson. We had barely established ourselves on station, when I heard Bill on team internal say, "Holy shite!" Looking back to the east I could see exactly what he was talking about, a dark boiling mushroom cloud from an explosion of some kind was rising rapidly into the afternoon sky. We would soon find out that this was the result of a Vehicle Borne Improved Explosive Device (VBIED) detonation at Combat Outpost (COP) Cavalier.

Without saying another word, Bill turned and accelerated, flying directly toward the site of the explosion. While lead attempted to make contact with the ground unit (2-8 CAV) that had control of this area and whose soldiers were at COP Cavalier, I had CPT Griggs contact the Battle Captain at Attack Mike and tell them the situation.

It was a short distance to the site of the explosion and as we got closer we could easily see that the explosion had occurred just outside of COP Cavalier. We were in the process of setting up an orbit, to establish security, when there was a second detonation. I felt it as much as saw it. I could literally feel the heat from the blast through the canopy and we watched an orange fireball, truck parts and other debris fly through the air well exceeding the altitude of our aircraft, as another VBID detonated at the northern security point to the small combat outpost. It was 1943 HRS local. It was immediately obvious to all of us that they were going to try and overrun the COP.

There was a flurry of radio calls on the 2-8 CAV frequency as people attempted to assess the situation at

the COP. I asked CPT Griggs to call Attack Mike and tell them to get in touch with 2nd Batt and tell them they were going to have MEDEVAC business, shortly and that we'd call back with specific information when we got it. As we assumed a protective orbit around the COP I spotted the blackened smoking wreckage of what used to be an Iraqi Army BMP at the north gate.

Within minutes of the explosion, as we circle around, I see rounds exploding just outside the perimeter of the COP. I call this to the flight over internal and initially I misidentify the rounds as incoming. Almost immediately we figured out it was in fact out-going. The rounds were actually from an M-2 Bradley Fighting Vehicle; he was directing his 25mm cannon fire down a path that led from a village toward the COP.

The COP is taking fire from the little village named Hor Al Bash on the other side of the road to the west side of the outpost. They request that we direct our fires to suppress the incoming rounds. Annihilator 6 (the ground commander) reports that they are taking heavy fire from the west and southwest of the COP. The enemy is well concealed, as we circle desperately trying to find the source of the fires. In the meantime, we request permission to place fires in an empty field just outside the village in an attempt to suppress by intimidation. Our request was granted and we placed 40 rounds of 30mm in a field to try and get the bad guy's attention. During the entire process we continued the futile effort to actually spot the AIF firing at the COP. Evidently they went to ground, their plan foiled as the firing at the COP eventually ceased or at least became sporadic.

At 2003 we get a report from Annihilator that there are 10 individuals requiring medical evacuation (4 Urgent, 4 Surgical Urgent and 2 Priority) we relay this information back to Attack Mike and request that they relay the info to the MEDEVAC guys (callsign: BANDAGE) down the hall in the TOC.

About 10 minutes later we get a call from Attack Mike telling us they have information about a possible enemy air ambush in the vicinity of the COP, I pass that info off to flight lead, wondering what good that did us. The reality was, unless you can give me specifics, that warning didn't do much good. Besides, I always assumed somebody was out there trying to shoot us down. A few minutes later we called Attack Mike and let them know we were switching to the MEDEVAC freq for the duration of that particular operation.

Soon after that Annihilator lets us know where the LZ for the MEDEVAC will be and we set up security and got ready to give Bandage a Cherry/Ice call. I ask CPT Griggs the rhetorical question, "Where the hell is the MEDEVAC?" mainly to vent my frustration because he

has no more of a clue about the answer than I do. This COP was maybe 5 minutes flying time from the ramp of Camp Taji to wheels down, here. We called them almost as soon as the bomb(s) went off and now it's nearly 30 minutes later, where are they? I come to find out later, that they can't launch on my word, alone. The request has to go up through the MEDEVAC request chain and then back down to the unit. There will be no jumping of the chain. If I had known that, it wouldn't have made things any better. Time drug on and it seemed like this was taking forever.

So we circle, wait and look for the ambush we've been warned about. We change patterns and try to avoid circling in one area too long. Occasionally, we push out to the west (the most likely avenue of approach for someone wishing to do us harm) looking for any incoming traffic. I listen to Taji Tower on the VHF and eventually hear Bandage call to taxi. At about 2030, the last UH-60 lifted off from the LZ, with the wounded enroute to the CASH. It had only taken 45 minutes from the time we called the first explosion into our TOC, but it seemed like it had taken a lot longer. This was the second time I had been in a flight that called for MEDEVAC within sight of the ramp at Taji and had it take, what I felt was an

inordinate amount of time to get the job done. I couldn't help but think that there had to be a better way. While the MEDEVAC operation was occurring, several ground convoys converged on the COP, to reinforce Annihilator and to posture for follow-on operations. We continued to provide security in the vicinity of the COP until we did a battle handover with CZ 16/17 at 2051 LCL, so we could hit the FARP and get some gas at Taji.

We get to the FARP, quickly and once we're down and have an engine pulled back, I'm able to loosen the seat belts, get some circulation going back in my butt and take a drink of Gatorade from the bottle I had brought with me in the cockpit. While we sit on the refuel pad I watch the last orange go from the sky to the west. It's full on dark, now.

While I'm waiting for the aircraft to get its gas, out of boredom, I bring up an image file on the aircraft's Tactical Situation Display (TSD) of a Playboy Playmate just to have one thing of beauty in this nasty place. After a few minutes contemplating the visage of Miss August 2004, Pilar Lastra, the depressing thought crossed my mind that I didn't have a relationship with anyone, much less know anyone who looked like her and probably wouldn't, at





least as long as I kept doing this business of deploying for a year to fifteen months, re-deploy only to train up to go again infinitum. I didn't need those particular thoughts floating around in my head, right then, so I decided to put Pilar back in her image folder and look at all the pretty colors on the aircraft fuel page instead.

The fueling is going really slow tonight. In fact, I think I could have sucked fuel into the aircraft with a straw faster than it was flowing through the hose from the fuel truck. In the meantime, I start re-optimizing my FILR to get the best picture I can. I manage, in 5 minutes of playing with the contrast and gain knobs, not the screw the picture up any more than it already is. Finally, the tanks are full and I give the POL guy the cut sign. I tell the pad chief thanks as he unplugs his headset from the wing and we wait for them to get clear before we pull in the required power to ensure that everything is functioning correctly in a process called a "bubble burn." We hurried to get up to REDCON 1 because, personally, I don't want to be the guy holding up the flight. As we finished the before takeoff checks, I turned on my landing light and called lead over internal saying "One nine is RED 1" signaling that we were ready to go. A few seconds later Bill replies with "Calling tower."

"Taji Tower, Crazyhorse one eight flight of two at the FARP request departure Tango Delta"

"Crazyhorse, Charlie and Delta are closed"

"Roger tower, we are players." Apparently in the 10 minutes we were in the FARP they forgot we were just out there.

"Crazyhorse one eight FARP is not observable from the tower, winds three six zero at six, takeoff is at pilot's own risk, call established Delta."

"Tower, one eight is on the go."

Almost as soon as the words were out of his mouth, Bill's aircraft began to lift off the ground and accelerate toward the Hesco barrier wall about 100 feet away. The first time in that FARP, it was kind of unnerving to blast off and head straight toward a wall in a heavy helicopter trusting that the laws of aerodynamics would kick in and you would be able to climb over it...but it always seemed to work out. As Bill cleared the wall I lifted off. We were still eating some of his rotor wash and until we got into clean air the aircraft didn't really want to climb too much. As Bill turned west to head back to the COP I extended a bit to the north and, upon reaching cleaner air, turned west and climbed to get above lead in our standard formation. We climbed out, heading for the fence. Being on the north side of lead, I was looking for the Taji JLENS observation balloon, which was in the northeast corner of the camp. We're clear of the balloon and as we approach the perimeter to Camp Taji I start cleaning up the aircraft for combat: Landing light off, anti-collision lights off,

CMWS and weapons armed and CPT Griggs starts the videotape. "One nine, fence check complete, we're saddled" I call as we cross the wire. Since we were so close to the COP CPT Griggs completed the battle handover while we were on the ground in the FARP and as soon as 16 and 17 saw us take off they started moving away to the south, allowing us to re-take the fight, while they headed back to Taji, looking forward to landing and calling it a day.

Since we are now back on station I have responsibility for the flight following calls with tower. "Tower, Crazyhorse one eight, one nine established Delta at one and one point five. I'll call you next three zero or departure." Meanwhile CPT Griggs calls Attack Mike and tells them that we are off the FARP and back on station with Annihilator. Up in the lead, they call the ground unit to get any updates and let them know we are back on station, updating our "playtime" and weapons status.

Shortly after arriving back on station Stallion 3A (The 2-8 CAV Assistant Operations Officer) tells us that they are preparing a plan for a hasty air assault operation. Using signals intelligence, they have located the position of the individuals behind the VBIED attack and they intend to take them down tonight. Additionally, he tells us that they have also intercepted conversations about trying to shoot down a helicopter. This is nice to know data, to be sure, but once again no other information that we can use to prevent or avoid the attack. More than anything else it causes me to wonder what they expect us to do with that information. I don't know about anyone else but I'm always looking for signs that someone is preparing to shoot me down. It's now around 2100 HRS.

Around 2200 we were given a Warning Order for the Air Assault and given the coordinates for the LZ. The ground unit call sign would be ROCK 6. The LZ was located a few kilometers north of COP Cavalier, near a small cluster of buildings, where the target was located and H Hour was to be around 2300 HRS.

For the next hour we moved between the COP location and the area around the planned LZ. We were able to gain observation and, hopefully, avoid making anyone, there, aware that something was about to occur. We generally tried to remain downwind from the target and avoided hard maneuvering which causes the rotor blades to make a growling noise, that can be heard at a greater distance than the noise generated by straight and level flight. Darkness is our friend and we take full advantage of it, using our FLIR to observe and report any activity on or near the planned landing zone and target. As the time of the Cherry/Ice call approaches, we climb up and stack, allowing the UH-60s to go underneath us as we observe the target area. At 2315 with not a living thing moving on the ground, we make the call "ICE" and

the Hawks deposit the troops on the LZ and depart back to Taji. We remain on station, making contact with ROCK 6 as they maneuver to the target.

Everything goes smoothly as ROCK 6 hits the objective. We are now in an orbit around the target looking for "squirters". By the time we did a BHO with CZ

20/21 at 2355, ROCK6 was still working the objective, so we never found out if they got a "jackpot". Once the BHO was complete I called the TOC and let them know we were inbound to Taji, mission complete. Of course it couldn't be that easy. They had one more thing for us to do.



I don't know how they came by this information, but we were told by Attack Mike to go check out a possible Infrared (IR) strobe light located in Zone 110, west of Taji. "Sweet" I thought to myself. They keep warning us about intercepted transmissions and people wanting to shoot us down and now they want us to go check out a reported "IR strobe" in an area of known enemy activity...this just didn't seem right. I thought about asking the TOC if they were sure about this, but elected not to.

The location of the "suspected IR strobe" was near what we called "The Grand Canal." So off we went in pursuit of the phantom IR Strobe people. We flew south and picked up the MSR that ran east/west on the north side of the canal and flew out towards the grid coordinate. Sure enough, when we arrived near the area and looked through NVGs there was, in fact, an IR strobe going. We kept our distance and looked at that grid and the area around it with our FILR. There were no dismounts or movement of any kind in the area. It could have easily been dropped by a soldier on a patrol; it also could have been a lure to get us into an ambush. We knew there weren't any friendlies in the area currently so after not seeing any other activity in the area we decided to call it a day. We started back toward Taji and gave them the

negative spot report in a manner as to discourage them having us do anything else.

"Attack Mike, Crazyhorse 19 confirms there is an IR Strobe at the grid, negative activity at that site, we are RTB (Return to Base) at this time."

Thankfully, they didn't ask us to do anything else. I think they may have realized that we were just about at the flight time limit for a combination day/night system mission (without getting an extension from the commander) so they left us alone. You always kind of held your breath when you announced to the TOC over the radio that you were RTB, because far too often they found just one more thing for you to do.

We touched down back at Taji and rolled into parking without any trouble. I already had the APU running as we pulled into our revetment, so as soon as we set the brakes I pulled the power levers to idle. We went through the shutdown checks and after a two-minute cool-down, killed the engines. Seconds later I shut down the APU and a quiet settles in over the flight line. 5.8 hours after we left we are back in the same spot.

The crew chief is there, waiting on us to get out of his aircraft. I hand down my helmet, pubs bag and rifle and he sets them next to my helmet bag that he's pulled out



of the survival kit bay. I thank him as I climb out and he hands me the cover for the infrared jammer, which I put in its rightful spot, to protect the mechanism from possible flying debris.

Doing the post flight inspection, I open the engine cowling and give the #2 engine a close look using my Surefire flashlight/hand-warmer/battery destroyer. The engine is still popping and crackling as it cooled down after the flight. Everything looks OK with the engine, itself. Nothing is leaking and the fluid levels are where they are supposed to be. Looking over the rest of the aircraft, I'm pleased to see that there aren't any holes that aren't supposed to be there. After CPT Griggs and I finish the post flight, we put our flight gear in the shed and head back to the company CP, to fill out the aircraft logbook. On the walk back we linked up with Bill and CPT Hutson and compared notes. We inform CPT Hutson that he has drawn the imaginary short straw, so he gets to fill out the debrief paperwork over at the TOC. After making sure CPT Griggs has all my info to fill out the logbook, I left with CPT Hutson for the TOC, as I still had to do the Airspace Control Order and ARTY Restricted Operating Zone sheets for tomorrow.

When we get to the TOC, we turn in the PCMICAs and give our videotapes over to the S2. They know about the VBIED and are anxious to download the video for a briefing or some product the S3 or Commander has dreamed up.

Somebody had thoughtfully gone to the DFAC and gotten us some sandwiches, which are sitting on the briefing table next to the computer. I grab one and realize just how hungry I am, as this tastes like the greatest sandwich in the history of the world...even though in the back of my mind I know it doesn't even approach the quality of a day old sandwich from Jimmy Johns. After all it IS the thought that counts, that and I'm starving. The folks that worked in the TOC always took care of us, in that regard, and we never really thanked them enough for doing things like that.

As CPT Hutson got to work on the debrief paperwork, I excused myself to go to the back and work on my daily TACOPS tasks. Hopefully, tonight there wouldn't be any classified info compromises like maps flying out of cockpits that would add to my workload.

On the way to the back of the building, I ran into CW3 Dana Dreeke who was a UH-60 pilot and the 2nd Batt TACOPS Officer. In one of those weird coincidences that always seem to occur in the Army if you stay in long enough, Dana had been my crewchief when I flew UH-1H's in the 6th Cavalry Brigade back in the 90's. We talked for a few minutes and exchanged some non-professional opinions about the way things were being run around "this place". It was sort of comforting to find out that your unit wasn't the only one facing "challenges".

Matt Silverman, from 4th Batt was still hanging around at his desk, which had now "magically" moved its way into what, at first, was my part of the room. One day, 4th Batt had decided to build an office in the back of the shared attack plans area for their mission video editing crew. This left no room for Matt, their TACOPS officer, so he moved into "my" area. If someone had let me know this was about to happen I might not have been so upset about it, but it just happened. One day I came into work and saw all of Matt's stuff piled onto a desk in what was previously considered my space.

I said hello to Matt and engaged in some small talk, grabbed some cheese peanut butter crackers from my goody box, a Dr Pepper from the fridge and sat down behind the computer on my dusty desk and went to work on the flight planning products I was responsible to produce daily. By the time they were printed and posted to their correct places I got out of there around 0130 or so.

The walk back to my trailer wasn't too bad, as I didn't have any interaction with CSMs jumping up out of the shadows to challenge me about the kind of eyewear I may or may not have. The thought momentarily crossed my mind that if we hadn't been extended in-country by The Surge that would have probably been one of my last flights in-country, as we would have been wrapping up our tour just about now. But, it ended up being just one more day done and a bunch more to go.



Dan McClinton

*(Editor's note: it is my role to edit for length and smooth out imperfections, but in this case I thought the story is best told just as written. Terry Garlock.)*

# Friends, Rivalries and Future Members

by Terry Garlock

I'll tell you about two future CHPA members, both named King but no relation, and at the end I'll tell you how I will recruit them, hoping it gives you ideas of your own.

## Wayne King

This morning over coffee, a Loach pilot named Mike King was tormenting Skip Ragan, who flew special ops slicks with the Kingsmen his first tour in Vietnam. In the lifelong and good-natured rivalry among those of us who flew different aircraft and missions, Mike was poking fun at Skip, kidding him about safe and easy slick missions.

Mike is no stranger to me, as you will see below. But I emailed much of this about slicks to him and Skip today as a follow-up after coffee.

Over a five year period, I worked on and finished a book about my brothers in Vietnam. One of the chapters, titled Robin Hood & Brotherhood - is about Wayne King, who flew slicks and then guns in Vietnam and is also a friend of Skip and Mike at our coffee meetings. The "Robin Hood" part of that title comes from the horse-trading and midnight requisitions Wayne did to get the things his unit needed.



Their shower was a 50 gallon drum with an immersion heater, so of course they usually had a cold shower. But a big unit nearby had some kind of operation under way in which one helicopter after another came to a hover over a big pile of 500 gallon bladders, the ground crew hooked one up by a net on the

cargo hook and they flew away to parts unknown while the next helicopter came to a hover over the pile.

So Wayne cranked up a UH-1, flew around, got in their line, hovered over the pile when his turn came, and flew back to his unit with the purloined bladder, which became the source for their shower. Robin Hood, indeed.

As I was interviewing Wayne about his mission experience, I prompted him to tell me about the pucker factor of flying slicks into a hot LZ and taking hits. This was my takeaway, excerpted from the chapter about Wayne.

*"With a load of armed grunts in the back, the ride was usually at the treetops to evade enemy fire, dipping and rolling with the terrain and the grunts with their feet hanging over the side sometimes yelled their delight at the ride.*

*"When the LZ was not far away, we climbed to tighten up in formation with just one rotor blade of separation since ideally we would touch down and take off as one to*

*minimize exposure to enemy fire, and room in the LZ was often tight.*

*"We stepped up toward the back of the formation, keeping the next rotor to the front three feet lower by keeping it visually on the horizon just in case of near-fatal rotor overlap, jockeying to stay in position with slow smooth movements to prevent the dangerous stretch and compression of a slinky, and keeping the right rear skid strut visually lined up with the left front strut on the aircraft to the front left to stay in position 45 degrees to the rear, even in a slow turn, listening intently to radio traffic announcing the marker rounds from artillery indicating their prep fire was complete, then gunships were alongside firing rockets, trying to nail the enemy or at least keep their heads down while our grunts got on the ground, sometimes scaring the hell out of me if*



*detonation was close, listening for other pilots announcing, "Taking fire from three o'clock!" and being ready for the sudden change of "Go around! Go around!" if enemy fire was still too heavy, scanning the gauges every few seconds as always while the crew chief and gunner on either side just behind me tried to bust my eardrums as they opened up with their M-60s to*

*shoot back at the treeline, or if we were going in I stayed lined up tight with the other birds as the ground approached while watching intently for an enemy to pop up from the deep grass to punch my lights out, and I was ready with the skids never touching the ground for the grunts in the back to jump out and scramble away from the helicopter because it is such an inviting target, I'd rock it forward to take off, still keeping formation separation while gaining altitude until I had enough room to drift apart since scattering might lead to a midair collision.*

Wayne asked, "Who had time to worry about rounds whacking through the aircraft? We just looked for bullet holes when we got back to base and fixed what needed fixing so we could go do it again."

## Mike King

That should shut Mike up about safe and easy slick missions, but Mike was a Scout pilot and not easily deterred by logical argument.

A few years ago I was asked to speak to the Atlanta AAAA chapter meeting, and I took my buddy Mike King with me. As usual when I speak to a group of vets, I began with my confession that among combat vets I am really a bit player because I was in the Army just four years, and I was shot down and badly injured halfway through my Vietnam tour, medevaced home and my flying days were over while my brothers flew far more combat than I did.



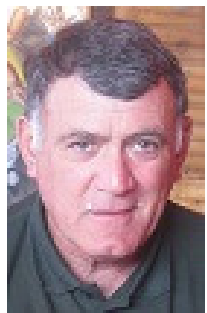
Of course once aviation enters your bloodstream it never truly leaves, and I will always know a good landing in a war zone is one you can walk away from and use the airplane again.

After my talk the chapter President asked Mike if he would come back to talk to one of their meetings soon. Mike hesitated, looked at me, and said, "I will if Terry will come introduce me!" So I told him I would certainly do that and that he might regret it.



Mike was scheduled at AAAA a few months later and we went together again. At the appointed time I stood up to introduce Mike, and I apologized in advance to the ladies in attendance, telling them a Scout pilot cannot be properly introduced in completely polite language.

I told them I have been presenting to high school students since 2001 a session titled The Myths and Truths of the Vietnam War, and that my buddy Mike King had recently joined me to help, and that he usually found a place to tell students when a Cobra pilot rolled in on a target the only thing he was guaranteed to hit was the ground. My retort was to tell the kids if a Loach pilot ever gained more than 100 feet of altitude, he was likely to have a nosebleed.



I told the AAAA audience that in 1969 everybody wanted a ride in the cool-looking Cobra, but that the Loach Mike flew – Hughes OH-6 Cayuse - was a well-built, powerful and highly maneuverable little aircraft, and I always did want to try flying it but that never happened. I told them Scout pilots needed that quickly responsive aircraft to work their magic of flying down low and slow, blowing tall

grass apart, snooping for footprints, campfires, weapons or food caches or any other sign of the enemy, and of course drawing enemy fire to expose their position so the Cobra pilots flying gun cover could take them out unless the Loach pilot engaged them in surprise close range and sometimes bloodied his nose bubble.

I told them Scout pilots were very bold, they were volunteers, that Mike was shot down five times, but it could be six if you counted the time he zigged when his gunner thought he was zagging and shot off the tips of his rotor blades and Mike had to set it down quick before it shook his teeth out.

I told the audience I always had a mental image of how one of my brothers would become a Scout pilot, and it went like this:

CO: "Top, I need a Loach pilot. Get me a list of the helicopter pilots with great big balls!"

First Sgt: "What about brains, Sir?"

CO: "Hell no, Top! If they figure out what we want them to do, they'll never fly Scout missions."

First Sgt: "Lt. King would be perfect, Sir!"

That's how I introduced Mike. He asked for it.

## Turning Two Kings into Members

Wayne and Mike don't know it yet, but I will give them the same treatment I gave Skip, who joined as a Life Member and will be at the annual reunion in Oct in Dothan. It will go something like this.

Terry: "Mike, there's an organization you need to join."

Mike: "Oh, hell, you know I'm not much for joining, I don't even belong to VHPA . . ."

Terry: "Shut up and get out your wallet!"

Mike: "What for?"

Terry: "The Combat Helicopter Pilots Association is an exclusive club and not many are qualified to join. You are because you flew helicopters in combat. You need to be a member. Do you want one year for \$30, two years for \$55 or three years for \$80?"

Mike: "Grumble . . ."

Terry: "I'll even fill out the form and I'll call you to fill a hole if I need to. Give me your credit card number, expiration and security code. Come on, we don't have all day!"

With Wayne, I might have to say, "Am I going to have to pay the first year for you? If I do you better not embarrass me by letting it lapse!"

If you care about CHPA, I hope that gives you ideas.

## Reunions and Gatherings



### **Vietnam Dustoff Association**

"So Others May Live"

Gathering of Rusty Eagles--Reunion

OCTOBER 13 – 15, 2016  
Pensacola, FL

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

<http://www.vietnamdustoff.com/2016reunion.html>



### **Vinh Long Outlaws Association Reunion**

The VLOA - Vinh Long Outlaws Association, will be holding its biennial reunion in Branson, Missouri September 15-19, 2016. The reunion is open to all former Outlaws, Mavericks, Bushwhackers, legacy units and support elements. Complete details can be found on the VLOA

website [www.vinhlongoutlaws.com](http://www.vinhlongoutlaws.com) (Click: "Reunions") or contact Jim Donnelly, [jcdonnelly1@cox.net](mailto:jcdonnelly1@cox.net) 757-481-6196 for details and forms.



**Dustoff story coming soon**



## **Share this Swash Plate newsletter**

Note the member app and renewal forms below - send to those qualified to be members. Tell your fellow combat helicopter pilots and crew, "Our combat experience makes us part of an exclusive club. You should be a member of CHPA. Get out your wallet and join!"

CHPA – 800-832-5144 [hq@chpa-us.org](mailto:hq@chpa-us.org) PO Box 2585, Peachtree City, GA 30269



## Combat Helicopter Pilots Association

### Membership Application

Mail or eMail application with supporting documents  
(please print clearly)

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

#### Contact Information 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 \_\_\_\_\_

#### 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 \_\_\_\_\_

Please attach documentation of qualifications such as DD214, unit orders, award orders, combat flight records, or other documentation of 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 \_\_\_\_\_

#### Membership Type and Dues:

<b>Annual:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Pilot	<input type="checkbox"/> Flight Crew	<input type="checkbox"/> One Year-\$30	<input type="checkbox"/> Two Year-\$55	<input type="checkbox"/> Three Year-\$80	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Friend of CHPA, Individual- \$30		<input type="checkbox"/> Friend of CHPA, Corporate-\$50			
<b>Lifetime:</b>	<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 _____						
<b>Legacy:</b>	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:

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

I certify that the above information is true and correct. I understand that my membership application will be reviewed by the CHPA Board and that, upon approval, my membership will be accepted. If membership is denied, my payment will be refunded. I acknowledge that information provided on this application may be used by CHPA for publishing an online and/or printed directory or for eMail communications to and from the membership.





## Combat Helicopter Pilots Association Membership **Renewal**

**DO NOT USE FOR MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

Mail or eMail application with supporting documents  
(please print clearly)

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

You may either renew by completing and mailing or emailing the form below, or renew online by logging in to [www.chpa-us.org](http://www.chpa-us.org) and selecting My Profile on the Menu. At the top you will see a reminder to pay dues and to check your expiration date. If you get stuck call us and we'll figure it out.

### Contact i nformation/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 \_\_\_\_\_  
Name/eMail of others you would recommend as qualified for CHPA Membership \_\_\_\_\_

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<b>Lifetime:</b>	<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
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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:

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