Happy early summer to y’all! Out here in, now sunny, Northern California, the rains have finally stopped, but compared to other parts of the country, we are truly blessed. I don’t know if any of you were adversely affected by the terrible storms in the Midwest & South over the last couple of months, but if you were, know that you are in our thoughts and prayers.

It’s been a pretty busy year so far, FACdom wise. And thanks to a great After Action Report from Jay Barnes and super reporting by our esteemed Editor-In-Chief, Tim Eby (is he really the reincarnation of Perry White, Clark Kent & Jimmy Olson - all wrapped in one?), I’ll just hit the highlights since detailed stories will follow!

In January, the old 20th TASS was reactivated as the 20th Reun Qsdn, flying the MQ-1B Predator out of Whiteman AFB, in wonderful and scenic Knobnoster, MO. About 12 of us slightly aged pilots, maintainers, radio operators and intel guys attended the ceremony and were treated like royalty! These highly skilled and dedicated young men and women are flying the same mission we flew back in our day in SEA (and then some), without being put in harms way, and doing it 24/7/365, and with a 20+ hour loiter time! Jay’s report tells all.

Great news for the Bird Dog drivers- the FAC Museum was finally able to acquire an honest-to-Betsy, flyable, O-1, which now safely sits at the FACM in Ft. Worth. Buku kudos to Jim Hodgson and his merry band of scroungers, fixers, flyers, and displayers!

Gotta get a plug in for my fellow Jake FACs. We just held our biannual reunion in May, this time in San Antonio, and had a great time. Once more, our Jake Assn prez, Jay Barnes, orchestrated a wonderful reunion, hosted by one of our old ALOs, Clint Glenny, and his wonderful wife, Ann. I know the Rustics will be holding a reunion later this year, and hopefully Claude Newland will provide us some intel on how that one went. And if any of you other call sign groups hold reunions, we’d love to hear about them as well. (A special Pleiku Covey event report is found on pg 5, Ed.)

Speaking of reunions, while it’s still a year plus out, Pratt Ashworth, Tom McGraw and a whole host of folks are busy working to bring us the “best ever” reunion, that will be held next year in Tucson. More details are in the Newsletter and it looks like it will be an awesome event!!

On a more serious note- we have some of our folks out there who are having some serious health challenges. Three that I know of for sure are Anne Crouch, Pat Green (C3B Bob’s wife) and Joyce Caven (J.D.’s spouse.) Please keep them in your thoughts and prayers. And if there are more, please be assured you are in our hearts also.

Wanted to save the best for last and end on a little higher note, as well. After about 10 years of thought, debate, various designs and a whole lot of machinations- WE HAVE AN ALL FACs CHALLENGE COIN!!! Thanks almost solely to the persistent and tenacious efforts of Jay Barnes (Jake 26 and our FACSA Board Secretary), the Board unanimously approved the design and they were struck in time to be made available at our annual Board meeting, which was held in conjunction with the Jake reunion. Darn, just getting nine FACs to agree on something was a Herculean effort in and of itself! You’ll find a picture of the coin on pg 2.
The coins will be available to purchase at the national reunions and you can order one (or more) by contacting Al Matheson via e-mail at citabriair@yahoo.com. The coins will be available for a nominal fee of $5 (plus $5 S&H) for members of the Association and $10 (again, plus $5 S&H) for non-members. Along those lines, Al has an extensive library of FAC books and also FAC memorabilia that is available for us to purchase, and in the coming weeks he will be putting that list out in various segments over the FACNET. So keep a lookout for that.

I think that’s about all the news that’s fit to print from my end. Y’all have a great summer and fall and be sure to get any FAC news in to Capt Skinny, I mean Tim, so he can put it in the Jan ’12 edition.

Warmest regards to all, Phil Litts

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20th TASS Reborn As 20th Recon Squadron

After Action Report by Jay Barnes

A number of 20th TASS alumni (and other FACs) attended an incredibly awesome event – the stand-up of the 20th Recce Squadron. The 20th TASS has returned from cold storage to Whiteman AFB, MO. We were introduced to every aspect of their mission and equipment, except the classified stuff. The more we saw, the more our eyes were opened. Our first expectation was that these crews wouldn’t be able to identify with our SEA FAC mission. Not true! By the end of the day, we all realized that there were two main differences in today’s FAC mission vs. our SEA FAC mission, both due to the passage of time: 1) Significantly enhanced technology; and 2) Extraction of the crew from an on-board cockpit. Neither has detracted from the ability to perform the mission.

During the tours they hosted for us, we got to see areas and equipment that soon will be off-limits for those without an operational need-to-know. We got to see one of the trailer cockpits, which is a modular unit that can be transported in a C-130, along with a boxed-up bird. There are two types of crews for a mission: One is located in-theater, and they perform the takeoff/climbout phase, and the descent/landing phase. The enroute and combat theater portion is performed by a separate crew that is located at the home base. Their laser-equipped sensor gear allows them far better visibility of the target than we ever had with our binoculars and eyeballs. Plus, the targeting laser can lock on to a target, so the crew doesn’t lose contact with it. Not only can the birds lase the target for fighters, or buddy-lase for another bird, they can strike the target themselves with the hellfire missiles they carry. The crews are not immune to the stress of combat; the adrenaline rush and felt responsibility for mission accomplishment and getting their bird back intact, is just like we felt.

We got to meet the new 20th commander, Lt Col Travis “Flare” Burdine, and his family, along with many of his unit members. The squadron had based their patch on the original 20th TASS Snoopy”

(Con’t pg 3)
Help Locate Honored Families

In addition to Crew Chief Bob’s great work with the families of our brothers who take their final flight west, he is attempting to locate more families of our KIA fallen brothers. Our list is woefully inadequate, so we ask each of you to send any addresses or contact numbers that you may have of a family member of our KIA’s to Bob Green, email address on the cover page. We must have better information if we are to invite the honored families to our reunions and events. Thank you for your help in this worthy cause.

Something to Consider

From Darrel Whitcomb for the Board Of Directors
Fellow members, as we enter our senior years, we need to think about our wills. If you would consider leaving a donation to the FAC Association, here is the way to do it. This was discussed at our San Antonio BoD meeting and has been coordinated with our Association attorney, J. D. Caven, and our treasurer, Bob Gorman.

**STEP 1:** Just insert this statement in your will, FOR UNSPECIFIED PURPOSE: “I hereby give, devise and bequeath to the Forward Air Controllers Association, a nonprofit, charitable corporation, the sum of ___ Dollars ($___) (or shares of ___ stock) to be used at the discretion of the Board of Directors for the general purposes of the Association. Should the Association no longer exist at the time of my death, this bequest shall be null and void and the gift shall become part of the rest and residue of my estate.”

FOR SPECIFIED PURPOSE: “I hereby give, devise and bequeath to the Forward Air Controllers Association, a nonprofit, charitable corporation, the sum of ___ Dollars ($___) (or shares of ___ stock) to be used for ___ (state the purpose). It is understood and agreed that should the purpose for which this bequest is instituted cease to exist at the time of my demise, this bequest shall be null and void and the gift shall become part of the rest and residue of my estate.”

**STEP 2:** The donation should be sent to:
Forward Air Controllers Association Incorporated
EIN 20-5942219
c/o Robert E. Gorman
3416 Broken Hill St.
Newbury Park, CA 91320-5501

Note: The EIN number is the federal tax ID # assigned to the Assoc.
Thank you

Darrel Whitcomb, as seen by his new grandchild

Photo credit unavailable

Hilliard A. Wilbanks Middle School Dedication

From Alan J. DeWitt, brother-in-law of Hilliard Wilbanks and board member of the Hilliard A. Wilbanks Foundation, whose mission is “PERPETUATING A LEGACY OF COURAGE, SACRIFICE AND PATRIOTISM”, in honor of Captain Hilliard Wilbanks, MOH. The Habersham County Board of Education voted unanimously to name the new middle school in Demorest, GA in honor of memory of him. The school will be dedicated on **August 13, 2011, 1000 to 1400 hrs.** Everyone is invited to attend, with special emphasis on FACs. They are planning a full event with a USAF flyover, O-1E Bird Dog flyover, educational opportunities for the students to learn about the history of patriotism, and military exhibits, along with two special surprises to be unveiled on that day. The Foundation needs to raise about $15,000 for the dedication. Any excess monies will go into the Captain Hilliard A. Wilbanks Scholarship Fund. This fund Provides scholarships to outstanding students in the JROTC program in four surrounding counties. This program has already had a significant impact on worthy area students. Your tax deductible donation should be mailed to: Hilliard A Wilbanks Middle School Dedication PO Box 1776 Cornelia, GA 30531
Please come, all who possibly can,
Many thanks from Alan and Pat DeWitt (Pat is Hilliard’s sister)
2012 FAC REUNION
17-21 October 2012
in Tucson, Arizona
at the Doubletree Reid Park Hotel
Hosted by the Arizona FACs

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 17th
-- Golf/Tennis available nearby. Self directed.
   (Local AZ FAC member to facilitate).
-- Registration Open at Doubletree Reid Park Hotel.
-- Hospitality Suite Open.
-- FAC Association Board of Directors Meeting.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 18th
-- Registration at the Doubletree Hotel.
-- Board Buses – Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum & Tour Desert Museum.
-- Board Buses for Old Tucson, Lunch at Old Tucson & Self Directed Tour of Old Tucson.
-- Hospitality Suite Open.
-- Evening meal self directed.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 19th
-- Tour Pima Air & Space Museum (PASM):
   1. Tour PASM’s Aircraft Collection over 280 Aircraft.
   2. Tour PASM’s Titan Missile Museum in Green Valley.
   3. Tour AMARG, DOD Storage of over 4000 Aircraft.
-- Return to Hotel to freshen up for the Informal Evening.
-- Hospitality Suite Open.
-- Banquet at Pima Air & Space Museum.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20th
-- Morning Memorial Service at Davis-Monthan AFB.
-- Event Option 1 9:30AM – 1:30PM
   1. Tour Davis-Monthan – 12th AF HQ, A-10s & HH-60G Helicopters.
   2. Lunch at D-M O’Club.
-- Event Option 2 9:30AM – 4:30PM (for spouses and honored guests only—precludes attendance at General Membership Meeting) Tour of Tumacacori Mission (Arizona’s First Spanish Mission) and shopping in Tubac.
-- Hospitality Suite Open.
-- General Membership Meeting at hotel at 1430
-- Evening Informal Dining/Party at hotel.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 21st
08:00 – 12:00 Breakfast (on an individual basis)
We’re looking forward to seeing you in Tucson!

-- The Arizona FACs
Pleiku Coveys Honor Col McGraw
March 18-20 in Fredericksburg, TX, 500-level Coveys from across the nation gathered for the first time. The occasion was to honor our beloved ALO from 1970, Lt. Col. Warner R. McGraw.

Many of us had not seen him nor each other for 40 years. Some thirty Coveys and most of the wives met for a mountaintop experience. The bonds of this Band of Brothers are as strong now as ever. The joy, the spirit, the emotion was unparalleled.

Unfortunately, Col McGraw had spent several days in the hospital with serious medical complications just prior to our reunion. But he managed to escape his rehab facility for dinner on both Friday and Saturday nights to be with his “boys”, resplendent in his party suit on Saturday. His grit is an inspiration to us all.

The McGraw family honored us with their presence: wife Lois, son Rick (Tug), daughters Kathy and Shirley. The affection and esteem that remains in the hearts of all his Coveys for their hero was in abundant evidence. Bill Hartsell spent innumerable hours and effort producing a beautiful slide presentation of Col McGraw’s life and career on Sat. night. Not a dry eye was to be found in that room! Ed Eberhart spoke deeply appreciated words. Bob Szul was presenting a Purple Heart for wounds suffered on the golf course earlier in the day. Great fellowship, great stories, great reunion!

We missed George Boehmer, Ken Blutt, and Lonnie Nelson, who had to cancel suddenly for medical reasons. We all lost, guys. Such wonderful memories…
Tim Eby

THANKFUL VIETNAM IMMIGRANT

It looks like we did some good after all! On Saturday, July 24th, 2010 the town of Prescott Valley, AZ, hosted a Freedom Rally. Quang Nguyen was asked to speak on his experience of coming to America and what it means. He spoke the following in dedication to all Vietnam Veterans. Thought you might enjoy hearing what he had to say.

35 years ago, if you were to tell me that I am going to stand up here speaking to a couple thousand patriots, in English, I’d laugh at you. Man, every morning I wake up thanking God for putting me and my family in the greatest country on earth.

I just want you all to know that the American dream does exist and I am living the American dream. I was asked to speak to you about my experience as a first generation Vietnamese-American, but I’d rather speak to you as an American.

If you hadn’t noticed, I am not white and I feel pretty comfortable with my people. I am a proud US citizen and here is my proof. It took me 8 years to get it, waiting in endless lines, but I got it and I am very proud of it.

I still remember the images of the Tet offensive in 1968, I was six years old. Now you might want to question how a 6 year old boy could remember anything. Trust me, those images can never be erased. I can’t even imagine what it was like for young American soldiers, 10,000 miles away from home, fighting on my behalf.

35 years ago, I left South Vietnam for political asylum. The war had ended. At the age of 13, I left with the understanding that I may or may not ever get to see my siblings or parents again. I was one of the first lucky 100,000 Vietnamese allowed to come to the US. Somehow, my family and I were reunited 5 months later, amazingly, in California. It was a miracle from God.

If you haven’t heard lately that this is the greatest country on earth, I am telling you that right now. It was the freedom and the opportunities presented to me that put me here with all of you tonight. I also remember the barriers that I had to overcome every step of the way. My high school counselor told me that I cannot make it to college due to my poor communication skills. I proved him wrong. I finished college. You see, all you have to do is to give this little boy an opportunity and encourage him to take and run with it. Well, I took the opportunity and here I am.

This person standing tonight in front of you could not exist under a socialist/communist environment. By the way, if you think socialism is the way to go, I am sure many people here will chip in to get you a one way ticket out of here. And if you didn’t know, the only difference between socialism and communism is an AK-47 aimed at your head. That was my experience.

In 1982, I stood with a thousand new immigrants, reciting the Pledge of Allegiance and listening to the National Anthem for the first time as an American. To this day, I can’t remember anything sweeter and more patriotic than that moment in my life. Fast forwarding, somehow I finished high school, finished college, and like any other football 21 year old kid, I was having a great time with my life. I had a nice job and a nice apartment in Southern California. In some way and somehow, I had forgotten how I got here and why I was here. One day I was at a gas station, I saw a veteran pumping gas on the other side of the island. I don’t know what made me do it, but I walked over and asked if he had served in Vietnam. He smiled and said yes. I shook and held his hand. The grown man began to well up. I walked away as fast as I could and at that very moment, I was emotionally rocked.

Con’t page 7
RESCUE OF DELTA TEAM CAPITOL

BY

MICHAEL L. KELLEY

Ed note: If anyone can answer the question at the end, please let me know. See front page for address.

January 29th, 1966 was a rainy, foggy day in Bong Son, Binh Dinh Province, South Vietnam. It was the beginning of a major operation by the 1st Air Cavalry Division, called “OPERATION MASHER…three teams of Special Forces were deployed into the mountains and valleys northwest of Bong Son to recon possible enemy locations and base camps. The 5th Special Forces sent three teams from their base at Nha Trang up to the Bong Son area. This story is about the experience of one of them, Team Capitol, consisting of six Delta Force soldiers, SFC Frank R. Webber Jr., Patrol Leader SFC Marlin C. Cook, SFC Jesse L. Hancock, SSG Charles F. Hiner, SSG George A. Hoagland, and SSG Donald L. Dotson.

Team Capitol was inserted into the An Lao Valley by helicopter at last light around 1853 hours on January 27th, 1966. After infiltration, the team moved out along its patrol route about 400 meters northwest and set up camp for the night. Early the next morning they moved out on patrol to recon a trail complex which lead up from the valley floor and showed recent heavy traffic. They followed the main trail until they came to a clearing and saw two wood cutters dressed in black shorts and shirts with an ox cart. They pulled back into thick brush to hide and watch the wood cutters. Soon the wood cutters started to move away and walk up a hill until they disappeared into the jungle. Fearing that the wood cutters had seen them and were on their way to report them, the team moved to higher ground as quickly as possible.

Finding a concealed position, they stopped for the night. It was a dangerous and uncomfortable night and at first light on the 29th, they moved out quickly without eating. The weather was very bad with rain and ground fog. After making a radio contact report at 0730 hours, they began to encounter rough terrain with thick undergrowth and rocks. After a short stop for chow, they moved out and once more had to low crawl through heavy thickets and rocky dense terrain. Soon they broke out into a clearing at coordinates BS 751182.

This area was about 20 meters long and 10 meters wide with some big rocks about 4 feet high. At 1040 hours they stopped and began to set up a defensive position. As they did so, an unseen enemy force of about platoon size opened fire with automatic weapons and wounded Sergeants Hoagland, Hancock, Cook, and Webber. SSG Hiner reported that Hancock died right away. Hoagland was badly wounded and could not move. Cook was shot in the back but managed to return fire at the enemy. Webber’s left arm was shattered from the elbow down and he was losing blood. Only Dotson and Hiner were uninjured. As Hiner moved up to return fire, Cook told him to get the radio from his backpack and call for help. Webber laid down a base of fire so Hiner could retrieve the radio. Hiner then took cover with Webber behind a large rock and began calling for assistance. He contacted a C-47 and his call was relayed to a Forward Air Controller (FAC) code named ROBIN ONE. After giving his coordinates to the FAC, SSG Hiner and his men continued to hold off the enemy platoon. But their luck was running out. Dotson tried to move into a new position and was hit in the chest, killing him. The FAC arrived in the valley advising Hiner he had two army gunships on the way to help his patrol.

The 3rd Infantry Brigade was tied down in a major battle along the coast and had no reserves to support the Delta Team. At about 1100 hours, two UH-1B Huey Gunships from Troop C, 1/9th Cavalry (Recon) were dispatched to support Team Capitol. After flying through thick fog and heavy rain into the valley, the gunships were met by FAC Robin One and lead to the position of the Delta Team. After the gunships made their first gun pass the enemy fire died away, but resumed after a few minutes. The two Huey gunships then made another run right over the top of the team’s position. On this run, SSG Hiner was hit in the head by a bullet that almost knocked him out. By this time, only Hiner and Webber were still alive. The other men had died from their wounds. Both Hiner and Webber were wounded and running low on ammunition. Their situation was desperate. The enemy was closing in for the kill. Robin One advised Hiner that he had more gunships coming into the valley and a reaction force on the way. By about 1300 hours the gunships had laid down a heavy volume of suppressive fires onto the enemy forces. By now the reaction force was able to get on the ground and climb up to the clearing where the team was waiting. SFC Webber and SSG Hiner were rescued from certain death in the An Lao Valley. FAC Robin One and the gunships of the 1st of the 9th Cavalry provided valuable assistance to the 5th Special Forces operation during Operation Mascher.

Editor-I have two names you can check to see if they were affiliated with FAC Robin One. LTC Robert C. Ruby of Goldsboro, N.C and Capt. Walter Clerihew, Jacksboro, Texas. I think they were Air Liaison to the 1st Air Cavalry Division. Who was ROBIN ONE?
This was a profound moment in my life. I knew something had to change in my life. It was time for me to learn how to be a good citizen. It was time for me to give back. You see, America is not a place on the map, it isn’t a physical location. It is an ideal, a concept. And if you are an American, you must understand the concept, you must buy into this concept, and most importantly, you have to fight and defend this concept. This is about Freedom and not free stuff. And that is why I am standing up here.

Brothers and sisters, to be a real American, the very least you must do is to learn English and understand it well. In my humble opinion, you cannot be a faithful patriotic citizen if you can’t speak the language of the country you live in. Take this document of 46 pages - last I looked on the internet, there wasn’t a Vietnamese translation of the US Constitution. It took me a long time to get to the point of being able to converse, and until this day I still struggle to come up with the right words. It’s not easy, but if it’s too easy, it’s not worth doing.

Before I knew this 46 page document, I learned of the 500,000 Americans who fought for this little boy. I learned of the 58,000 names scribed on the black wall at the Vietnam Memorial. You are my heroes. You are my founders.

At this time, I would like to ask all the Vietnam veterans to please stand. I thank you for my life. I thank you for your sacrifices, and I thank you for giving me the freedom and liberty I have today. I now ask all veterans, firefighters, and police officers, to please stand. On behalf of all first generation immigrants, I thank you for your services and may God bless you all.

Courtesy of Claude Newland and the internet
THE FAC ASSOCIATION

Annual dues are $20

Life membership dues depend on your age
55yrs and under—$225
56 to 60 yrs — $200
61 to 65 yrs —$175
66yrs + —$150

Copy this page, fill in the table below, and send your check to:

Bob Gorman
3416 Broken Hill St.
Newbury Park, CA 91320-5501

FAC Association Membership and Annual Dues Form
Enclosed is my check for $———- Make me a member of/continue my membership in the FAC Association

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