

President's Message – August 2020

Greetings from New Jersey, fellow AC-119 Gunship Brothers and families!!

I hope and pray that this message finds you all well and safe. It is an unusual and stressful time, dealing with social distancing and facemasks in public. Still, time seems to be passing by quickly. Although this year's reunion has been postponed, I was hoping to take a trip to the FL panhandle in October, visit with my AC-119 brothers and families, but I now worry a bit about a COVID-19 resurgence in the autumn. It is likely I'll be sitting in NJ this October. Uncertainty is awful.

I'm happy to report that your Association Board continues to work on routine matters, and dealing with some special projects that enhance our Association. We are now teleconferencing every other month (instead of monthly). I do hope you found our May *Firing Circle* and June FLASH message interesting. As you read through these, you can see how engaged we are with our Outreach Program, and special history capturing activities.

Organization Update: Many large associations have a position named Sergeant-at-Arms. There had been and will be a few situations where the AC-119 Gunship Association needed "security" oversight. Therefore, to make things official, we created a new Appointed Position name Sgt-at-Arms. I asked our long-time member, Larry "Baby Huey" Hunter if he would accept the appointment. He gladly did. Larry has helped us in the past and I am thrilled to officially help us moving forward. **Thank you, Baby Huey.**

Some News (for more detail, see Aug. *Firing Circle*):

1. For those who served at Phan Rang and are using social media Facebook, there is a FB page for "Happy Valley" Phan Rang AB. That FB site's managers publish a "Happy Valley" Newsletter, which includes a wide variety of Phan Rang history. In a recent issue, they published our V.P Roy Davis' story of ferrying an AC-119 from Ohio to Phan Rang. This put the AC-119 into a highlight for those Happy Valley FB members. Thank You, Roy.
2. Association T-Shirts: For those who purchased T-Shirts for this year's reunion, you all now have a rare one, the T-Shirt for the reunion that wasn't!! But wait, there is now an updated version of Shirts for next year's reunion at Ft. Walton Beach, 2021. The back has listed the past reunions, and 2020 is referred to as COVID-19. Quartermaster Gus Sininger will be announcing opportunities to purchase in the future.
3. Good News: **Master Gunsmith Ron Soderquist has completed** a stainless Kimber Classic 1911 .45 ACP pistol, which is currently being raffled with the drawing to be done at the 2021 FWB reunion. Ron is dealing with many of the supply chain issues that we see every day, but is working through the issues. Good job, Ron.

Enjoy the remainder of the summer! I will miss seeing many of you this year. I trust that if we all do the correct things to practice safe behavior; we will get past this global crisis and stay healthy.

All the best,

Mike Drzyzga, President