

Greetings to the AC-119 Gunship Association Board for 2004-05.

I am very pleased to have been selected (drafted) to serve on the board, and to be the first to represent the 71st SOS. This year's reunion was a milestone in many respects. Most importantly it was the first time the three squadrons combined as one unit. Having the reunion in the hallowed halls of the Air Force Museum with Ron Terry as the guest speaker also made it a VERY special reunion. Al Heuss and I had the opportunity to assist Ron and Rogers this summer, and we were certainly impressed with the dedication and attention to detail these fellows exerted. Both gentlemen get a huge 'Atta Boy' for a job well done.

I believe there were close to forty 71st members that attended the reunion. While I did not speak to all of the fellows, I think the vast majority was very pleased with the reunion. Al and I are convinced the 71st must continue to be an integral part of the Association from this point forward. There are strengths and efficiencies in numbers, and we are ready and willing to contribute and participate. I also want to add that many Association members welcomed the 71st with open arms, and we really appreciate the brotherly hospitality.

The following are the notes I jotted down during Sunday's board meeting.

1. Develop a calendar or time line for future projects and events.
2. Start immediately to line up a speaker for the 2005 reunion. One suggestion was someone close to the 71st who could describe and explain the unit's role in the call-up, training, and development of the G models for deployment to SEA.
3. Ron Julian is working on a master list of members and non-members in an Excel spreadsheet that can be sorted for various purposes.
4. Establish a VA Information officer.
5. Need to develop a list of who is responsible for the different merchandise items. There was quite a bit of discussion about merchandising, and concern whether the Association is receiving a fair return on items sold. The consensus was a system of controls needs to be developed to know who is selling what, and a means for assuring some returns. Because of the large number of Life members, the Association cannot rely solely on annual dues. Merchandise sales is vital to maintaining a good cash flow position.
6. Rogers proposed the past or outgoing board member be responsible for determining the recipients of the 'Above and Beyond' and 'Magellan Awards'. (Correction by Rogers: I suggested the Past Board Member be the person responsible to acquire the Magellan Award and the Above & Beyond Award plaques for the next reunion. The entire board determines the person to receive the awards.)
7. Rogers suggested the board develop a reunion cancellation policy for future reunions.
8. It was brought up that a push be made to encourage more participation by maintenance and support personnel for membership and future reunions.
9. I believe Rogers suggested the board establish a nominating committee a few months prior to the reunion. Wayne Laessig agreed to head up the committee next year.
10. There was considerable discussion regarding the next four reunions being held at Ft. Walton Beach. The 2005 reunion will definitely be held there, but some felt the board should have the option of selecting other locations if appropriate. The board requests suggestions for alternate locations. This issue stemmed from the fact a few survey respondents suggested reunions in other parts of the country.
11. The Association membership was 321 total members, including 175 life members.
12. Bill Petrie discussed the 18th SOS Memorial Plaque in more detail. One suggestion was to offer personalized bricks around the base of the memorial as a means of helping to offset the cost of the monument. This was viewed as a very good idea if the Hurlburt Air Park people would approve. Gus is to look into this possibility.
13. There was some discussion regarding the newsletter. With the inclusion of the 71st, several felt the format should be 'tweaked' to reflect all three squadrons.
14. Discussion ensued regarding the continued issuing of the metal 'life member' cards. Ev stated the metal cards cost over \$8 to produce and mail. The board voted to discontinue the metal card in favor of the less expensive laminated card.

On a side note, the 71st will proceed with efforts to acquire a flag to join its rightful place with the 17th and 18th flags. I would like suggestions for a source to have a similar flag produced. If you can help, please let me know. Thanks.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jim Alvis