

The Association Board completely agrees with Paul on use of the Association's membership list for political use, and that the Association does not engage in politics at all - period. It has been our policy since day one.

We exist only for 3 reasons: old friendships, new friendships, and to make sure we are seen and recognized as AC-119 Gunshippers who had a significant role in the Vietnam War. We do not ever want to become a political forum or venue - there are plenty of other organizations available to anyone who desires that kind of engagement.

We checked this out and some of the premises do need clarification:

1. While his actions created a perception the mailing was part of a more formal "AC-119" mailing, or that he used the Association's contact list, Chuck Williams never received (or took) our Membership roster.
 - a. We never gave him an electronic or hard copy roster and he never took one (since we do not make copies that are capable of being borrowed or taken).
 - b. Chuck "did" keep his own list of folks he met at Reunions or via AC-119 e-mails that he received. He created his own list from contacts he made during our Reunions. It was from those contacts that Chuck created the addresses used in the letter he sent.
 - c. It is a fact that anyone can send e-mails or letters to those who may have either personally, or via mutual friends, provided their contact info. We have plenty of e-mails and communication about political issues among our guys, but NONE via our Association contact list, or endorsed by the Association.
 - d. The "AC-119" he wrote on the envelopes was to identify who he was to the recipients; i.e. a fellow AC-119er, so they would at least know that it was not someone out of the blue.
2. The Association Board was not aware he had sent the letter.
3. Chuck has been a long-standing member of our Association, a valuable asset in our efforts to determine the viability of recovering the only remaining AC-119 gunship in existence, and a supporter of our Association's policies. As an example, he refused to be called by his prior position (Deputy Assistant Undersecretary of Defense) and he went on the record about that in an Association Meeting. Specifically, during a Reunion Association Meeting, a member tried to recognize his position and include it as a title. Before the Board could even explain why rank or position had nothing to do with our Association, Chuck stated "My name is Chuck and I was a Shadow Nav. Within this Association, that is who I am."

With all of that said, I do not defend Chuck's action on the letters he sent. In fact, the Association Board agrees with Paul that the perceptions of roster abuse, and use of "AC-119" and our patches as a descriptor easily leads anyone who receives it to the same premises he asserted, and we need to avoid those perceptions.

Chuck agrees and is issuing a note to all recipients explaining the above. His stated intent was to reach out to potential like-minded voters who might support his candidacy as the only Special Ops, Air Force person in Utah's legislature, and that he intended to represent those versus a "party platform." Perhaps not the best thought out strategy was "how" he approached that, and he is just as upset as we are that his actions created the perceptions they did.

In summary, we totally agree with Paul's stated policies.

We totally agree the perceptions of abuse of those policies occurred.

We will reiterate our policies in the Association Meeting, and include it in the Newsletter.

If guys want to create their individual networks (including politics), that's their right. However, they cannot use our roster nor our Association as a forum or venue for that. Period.

I greatly appreciate Paul bringing this to our attention. His vigilance and rapid communication will enable us to work with Chuck to clarify his letter, to confirm to all recipients that it is not an Association action or engagement, to reinforce our policies, and to stay true to what our Association is about – old friends, new friends, and AC-119ers.