



# THE SCOOP SHEET

## Information For And About Members Of The First Marine Aircraft Wing Association – Vietnam Service

Issue 30

[www.firstmaw.homestead.com](http://www.firstmaw.homestead.com)

Winter 2009



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Pictures compliments of First MAW Member Bob Jones

**A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT ...**



To: ALMARFIRSTMAWASSOCIATION  
From: Association President  
Subj: Presidents Message

To my fellow Marines and their families and significant others: Happy New Year!, As of the writing of this letter it is exactly nine (9) months until our reunion in Beaufort, SC (Parris Island and MCAS Beaufort). Please make your reservations early for the hotel. How can you beat \$79.00 per night and no parking fees? Don't forget to send in your registration fees as soon as possible. If the new U S President sends out a rebate I know no better way to spend it than at a reunion with your First Marine Aircraft Wing Association (Vietnam Service) buddies. I will be driving down from Yonkers, NY to get there by the morning of 7 Oct 09 to finish any details that may remain. Anyone who can come down a day early and help would be thanked profusely. I know our friends Bill and Linda Walden will be there. As of now their lovely grand-daughter Katie will probably be in College and her attendance is up in the air at this point in time. Wow, College!! We wish you the very best and don't forget to apply for a scholarship. We will have a hospitality room and I will need volunteers to keep it open during the allowed legal limits per Beaufort and SC laws. Please remember that this is my "twilight tour" as your President. Please submit names to be nominated for any and all of our elected positions. Colt has donated a presentation match grade HBAR Rifle to be auctioned or raffled off for our Scholarship fund-more details to follow in the next issue of the Scoop. New York and other states have very stringent laws regarding raffles etc. Speaking of Scholarships please submit your letter and application for a scholarship ASAP. Remember children grandchildren, and even spouses of Members are eligible. Though normally much more verbose than this I have said my piece. I expect a large turnout for our reunion and I hope to see you there.

Yours in Patriotism

Philip L. Beckerich III  
Association President  
Semper Fidelis



THE INN AT TOWN CENTER OUR NEXT REUNION SITE AT BEAUFORT 2009

## MEMBERSHIP NOTES

### DUES RENEWALS

So far this year, the dues renewal rate continues to be **very** good! You guys are doing a great job! Please keep it up, and a **Thank You** goes out to all of you.. Later this year, the reminders will go out for the Life Members who are on the installment plan (a good deal!). But if this means YOU, you can help by sending in your installment payment ahead of time to save us some work.

### ELECTRONIC SCOOP

The Electronic Scoop list is growing. Any other members who desires to receive their "Scoop" electronically in order to reduce mailing and publishing costs please contact Wayne Cook at wayco@comcast.net and please cc Phil Beckerich at yw37@optonline.net and Al Frater at teanal@verizon.net. **THE SCOOP CAN BE ACCESSED FROM THE WEB SITE WWW.FIRSTMAW.HOMESTEAD.COM.** Those members who have requested an electronic SCOOP will be removed from the mailing list as requested.

### VOLUNTEER NEEDED - UPDATE

Volunteers are always welcomed for Veterans day at the wall. For those who live near Quantico VA and the National Museum of the Marine Corps The Heritage Foundation is seeking tour Guides for the Museum. Training will be provided. Contact the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation at 703-640-7965..

### EDITORS NOTES

Please email me any articles or noteworthy events about our members and Association (electronic pictures accepted). All articles and pictures become property of the association and cannot be returned.

Al Frater teanal@verizon.net

### COLT DONATION

In the interests of patriotism and in recognition of our Vietnam service, the Colt's Firearms Manufacturing Company has once again donated a firearm to us. If you will remember, Colt donated a M1911A1 which we raffled off at reunions, with all proceeds going to our Scholarship Fund. This time they have donated a Match Grade HBAR to us, for the same purpose. Many thanks to LtGen Keys (USMC-Ret) of Colts for the donation and to our good friends and loyal Members, Bob "Raggie" Sebetka of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and Robert Milburn who once again did the legwork for the acquisition of this splendid gift.



## Aviators - A very Special Fraternity:

The following quotations capture the character and imagination of those who belong to the fraternity of aviators as well as the men on whom the aviators place their lives ... men who commit their lives to the discipline of maintaining those flying machines on whom flyers place their trust every flight. In all it is an honorable and it a courageous group yet a unique group that have experienced life because they have risk death. They are a group that knows themselves perhaps better than any other group because they face and assess the reality of their limitations every time they fly.

Of the many blessings God has seen fit for me to experience in this life Aviation is surely in the top ten. Aviators tend to live in the real world because they sense the rules that govern the environment in which they live and the impact of not staying in touch with reality. Much like God's rules... the rules are absolutes that treat all alike.

Professional aviators are not careless in the foolish sense of thinking they can break the rules and survive but rather they know the rules and use them to perform at their cutting edge obtaining the maximum result. They are reminded and know every flight what they risk and why. They recognize more than most that a certain amount of risk is essential if one chooses to live. They tend to embrace life and live it rather than fear it and hide from what life has to offer.

Where would we be without men like these. I am very blessed and fortunate to have been a part of this fraternity.. and am particularly blessed that you are as well.

It is an exciting and challenging life. There is nothing routine about aviation. Every flight is a challenge and demands your total attention and discipline and it requires a mind that functions to capacity when called upon. A fool will not survive the demands and discipline necessary to operate in space. Our office is the largest and most beautifully arrayed work-place in the world. I rarely have met an experienced aviator that doubts there is a God and/or that he is intimately related to him and at his mercy.

When I get to heaven I plan to ask the angels if any of them remember their first solo flight or if they have ever done a barrel roll or flew acrobatics in formation or performed in an air show or if they have ever performed a Cuban eight or performed in-flight refueling in bad weather... or made an excellent landing,( on time) in difficult circumstances or had the distinct and proud pleasure of standing while passengers of the flight walk by and thank you for a safe flight as they depart your aircraft....knowing they are wondering how anyone could do possibly acquire the skill and courage to do what aviators do every day.

I expect the angels will smile and introduce me to the wonder of a new world of aviation that perhaps defies most of the rules I am familiar with and requires no flight checks and when I explain my aviation experience with a certain amount of pride.....will perhaps show me a DVD of a pilotless aircraft that does everything we did .... only better. HA!

Chuck

Chuck is a friend of mine who was a great AF pilot and went on to a second career in commercial aviation.

GDM



***Shufly Corpsman laid to rest at Arlington 45 years after his death***  
***By David H. Hugel***

A brief item appearing in the November 2008 issue of Leatherneck magazine's "In Memoriam" feature caught my eye. It described how human remains recovered from Vietnam between 2000 and 2002 were recently identified as those of Hospital Corpsman Third Class Manuel R. Denton.

While the article may have had little significance to many who read it, for me it brought back memories of the evening in October 1963 when two H-34 helicopters from HMM-361 took off from the Marine airfield in DaNang on a Search and Rescue mission to locate the American and Vietnamese pilots of a plane reportedly shot down during a bombing run about 40 miles from DaNang. During the course of that mission the two helicopters crashed as a result of enemy ground fire, resulting in the deaths of nine Marines, a Navy doctor and two corpsmen, including Petty Officer Denton.

With the crash site under control of Viet Cong forces, recovery efforts could not be undertaken until the area was secured. Once the site was secured all the bodies were recovered except for Petty Officer Denton and one of the helicopter crewmen, LCpl Luther Ritchie Jr. According to contemporary news accounts of the incident, the twelve deaths represented the single greatest loss of American lives in a single event up until that point in the war. The others who died in the crash were: LCpl. Donald F. Davidson, Lt. (MC) Bruce C. Farrell, Capt. William T. Harris, Sgt. Larry D. Jameson, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Daniel K. Lessig, HN Claude Rice, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Arthur G. Richardson, Cpl. Ronald F. Skoviak, Cpl. Charles P. Tuthill\*, and W.O. Charles F. Whitehead, Jr. These names are enshrined on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D. C., on panel E1, about three feet from the top.

According to the Leatherneck article, which was based on a Department of Defense News Release, "Between 1991 and 2000, several joint U.S./ Socialist Republic of Vietnam teams, led by the Joint POW/ MIA Accounting Command, traveled to Quang Nam Province to investigate the incident and interview witnesses. Teams also surveyed the crash site and found wreckage consistent with a UH-34D." The article goes on to explain that in 2000 and 2001, human remains associated with the crash were turned over to U.S. officials, and that in 2002, a joint team excavated the crash site recovering additional human remains. As a result of remains turned over in 2000 and 2001, and those recovered in 2002, LCpl. Ritchey's remains were identified in 2003 and buried. Based on the fact that some of the remains could not be individually identified, however, a decision was made to bury them together as a group. Petty Officer Denton's remains were among this group, which were buried at Arlington National Cemetery on August 7, 2008, nearly 45 years after he died serving his Country in Vietnam.

\* Cpl. Charles P. Tuthill, was NCOIC of the Shufly photo lab, who volunteered to go on the flight to provide photographic coverage of the Marine rescue operation. On that fateful night he became the first of 21 Marine combat correspondents and photographers to die during the course of the Vietnam War.

## Bridge Renaming Ceremony For Fallen Marine

Bad weather rain, fog and wind held us up but it did not prevent us from completing our mission. We flew YN-19 and hovered the ship over the bridge while the Color Guard marched over the bridge during the ribbon cutting.

L/Cpl Haerter had only been in Iraq one month when he was defending a checkpoint in the city where a truck began careening down an alley toward his post. The driver defied several orders to stop, and was ultimately confronted by Haerter and fired at the truck. The truck detonated, killing Haerter and another Marine, but Haerter's actions are credited with saving 33 other Marines stationed further up the alley, dozens of Iraqi Police and hundreds of Iraqi civilians. Below are pictures of the Memorial and Bridge renaming Ceremony held in Sag Harbor NY



**The Shufly Marine Who Fought Muhammad Ali  
By David H. Hugel**

When 1<sup>st</sup> MAW helicopter squadron HMM-362 was first deployed to Soc Trang in April 1962 to provide support to Vietnam's armed forces as part of Operation Shufly, base security was provided by a combination of helicopter crewmen and base support personnel. As the months passed, it was determined that the burden of standing guard duty adversely impacted the effectiveness of the Marines performing their primary mission of keeping helicopters flying and running the base. To address this problem a platoon of Recon Marines from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Marine Division was assigned to assume responsibility for base security.

MacArthur Foster, a 20 year old lance corporal hailing from Fresno, California was one the early members of that security detachment. Arriving at the Da Nang Marine airbase in April 1963, then the home of Operation Shufly, Mac fell into the routine of providing base security, acting as an honor guard for visiting military VIPs, securing landing zones and other assignments in the field. Anyone who met Mac could tell that he was in great physical shape, but no one would have dreamed that he would go on to a successful career as a professional boxer and, just nine years later, fight the legendary Muhammad Ali.

After completing his tour at Shufly, Mac Foster returned to his 3<sup>rd</sup> Marine Division unit in Okinawa where he polished his boxing skills and fought his way to claim the All Marine heavyweight title during the spring of 1964. Leaving the Marine Corps to pursue his boxing career, Mac turned pro in 1966. According to a 1970 Sports Illustrated article, Mac's amateur record was an impressive 20 wins, 17 of which were KO's, with only one loss.

Mac's pro career likewise got off to a blazing start. He won his first 24 professional fights by knockout, but Mac's winning streak would soon come to a screeching halt when he fought heavyweight contender Jerry Quarry at the fabled Madison Square Garden on June 17, 1970. Despite the fact that Mac went into the fight a 6-1 favorite, Quarry handed Mac the first loss of his pro career, and his only knock out in the sixth round of a scheduled ten round bout.

After four more wins, all by knock out, Mac was ready to take on former heavyweight champion Muhammad Ali. Having been stripped of his title by boxing authorities as a result of his failure to comply with Selective Service requirements based on his opposition to the Vietnam War, Ali was on a quest to reclaim the Heavyweight Championship. The match was held in Tokyo, April 1, 1972, and was broadcast around the world on closed circuit TV. Mac went the distance (15 rounds) against the ex-champ, but Ali out fought Mac winning a unanimous decision. (A video of Mac's fight with Ali can be found on the Internet)

Mac continued boxing until 1976, but never returned to his early form, ending his pro career with a record of 30 wins, all by knockouts, and 6 losses. He now makes his home in Madera California, not far from where he grew up, and enjoys getting together with Marine buddies he served with in Vietnam at various reunions.





Poster for the closed circuit TV broadcast of April 1, 1972 fight between Mac Foster and Muhammad Ali held in Tokyo Japan. (Remember because Japan is on the other side of the International Date Line, it's a day ahead of the US)



Mac Foster (center) flanked by two Marine buddies from the Da Nang Security Detachment, Neil Grissom (left) and John Gariano (right), attending a Marine Recon Reunion during the summer of 2008.



LCpl Mac Foster being inspected by 3<sup>rd</sup> Marine Division CG, Maj. Gen. James Masters as a member of the honor guard greeting Gen. Masters on his 1963 visit to the Shufly airbase in Da Nang.



## **SCHOLARSHIP**

The First MAW Association will award five scholarships of \$500 each during Reunion '09. To qualify for a scholarship, applicants must meet the following qualifications:

Be a FIRSTMAW ASSN. regular member in good standing (i.e., dues are up to date), their spouse, dependent, or direct descendent. Further, the member must have a minimum of one-year membership as of June 1, 2009.

**-OR**

Be a spouse, dependent, or direct descendent of a deceased member of the First MAW Assn.

**-OR**

Be a spouse, dependent, or direct descendent of a Marine or member of another military service, who lost his/her life while serving in Vietnam with the First Marine Aircraft Wing.

Applicant must be presently enrolled in an accredited college, university, or trade school and be in good academic standing.

Applicant will be required to submit an essay of 300 – 350 words. The applicant can choose one of the following topics:

- 1. What the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Means to Me.**
- 2. What all Americans can do to solve the energy crisis**
- 3. How I plan to use my education to aide society**
- 4. Why I support our Marines who are in harms way**

To compete for a scholarship, applicants must submit their essay in accordance with the following instructions:

The essay must be typed. Do not include applicants name on the essay. Attach a separate sheet of paper containing applicant's name, member's name and membership number, address, and phone number. A letter from a counselor or other school official verifying that applicant is currently enrolled. The letter must be on school letterhead.

A copy of student transcripts

The essay must be postmarked no later than June 15, 2009.

Mail the essay to:

First MAW Association – Vietnam Service  
111 Sedgwick Avenue  
Apt 2M  
Yonkers, NY 10705-2653

## PX News

Here are some of the items we have at your First MAWVNS PX. Help support your association.  
[http://1stmaw.wamarinesmc.us/mawpx/index.php?main\\_page=index](http://1stmaw.wamarinesmc.us/mawpx/index.php?main_page=index)

Challenge Coin \$7



FMAW Logo hat:  
\$18



Hat Doober:



Vietnam Necklace: \$11



POW Necklace: \$11



Vietnam Ribbon:  
\$3.50  
'64-'75



Vietnam Vet: \$3.50



Vietnam Pin: \$3.50



Flag set: \$3.50



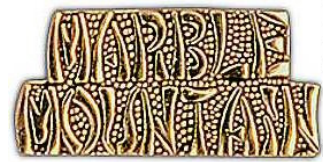
Marine Corps  
Pin: \$3.50



Semper Fi Pin: \$3.50



Marble Mountain: \$3.50



Danang Pin: \$3.50



Natural Death Hats  
\$18



1stMAWVNS pin:\$3.50



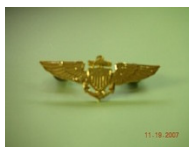
Sm Combat  
Aircrew Pin: \$4



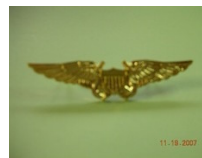
Crew Chief  
Pin: \$3.50



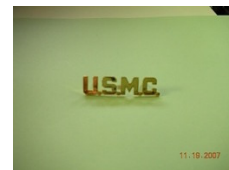
Pilot Pin: \$7



Navy Flight Off: \$7



U.S.M.C. Pin:  
\$3.50



Combat Action Rb:



MCorps: \$3.50



First MAW: \$18.00



FMF Corpsman:



REGISTRATION FORM FOR THE FIRST MARINE AIR-CRAFT  
WING ASSOCIATION (VIETNAM SERVICE)  
2009 REUNION OCTOBER 8-11 2009

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

NICKNAME/CALL SIGN \_\_\_\_\_

YEAR/UNIT(i.e. 67-68 VMFA-323) \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

(For Confirmation of Receipt)

NAME OF GUESTS \_\_\_\_\_

BUFFET/BANQUET MEAL SELECTION BEEF \_\_\_ CHICKEN \_\_\_ FISH \_\_\_\_\_

SHIRT SIZE(S) S \_\_\_ M \_\_\_ L \_\_\_ XL \_\_\_ XXL \_\_\_ XXXL \_\_\_

PLEASE LIST ANY SPECIAL NEEDS: \_\_\_\_\_

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY NOTIFY \_\_\_\_\_

IS THIS YOUR FIRST REUNION? YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ NOT SURE \_\_\_ DON'T CARE \_\_\_

**REGISTRATION FEES INCLUDES :** HOSPITALITY ROOM, EMBROIDERED POLO SHIRT, CHINA BEACH NIGHT & PICKIN', AND BANQUET

NUMBER OF PERSONS ATTENDING \_\_\_ X \$165.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

SUNDAY BRUNCH/FAREWELL \_\_\_ X \$20.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

**OPTIONAL CARRIAGE TOUR OF BEAUFORT SC FOR THE LADIES DURING OUR NATIONAL BUSINESS MEETING**

SATURDAY OCTOBER 10 2009 ON OR ABOUT 09:30-10:00 \_\_\_ X \$15.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL AMOUNT INCLUDED \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

PAYMENT IS DUE NO LATER THAN AUGUST 31 2009( THIS IS NECESSARY IN ORDER TO HAVE THE SHIRTS EMBROIDERED AND NAME TAGS PRINTED etc.)

PLEASE SEND PAYMENTS TO THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS:  
(CHECKS OR MONEY ORDERS PAYABLE TO: FIRST MARINE AIRCRAFT WING ASSOCIATION

**FIRST MARINE AIRCRAFT WING ASSOCIATION  
C/O TREASURER, JERRY SERGEANT  
5282 OUSTERHOUT DRIVE  
STERLING, MI 48659**





## REUNION 2009 SITE

**First Marine Aircraft Wing Association –  
Vietnam Service  
567 Rivercrest Drive  
Woodstock, GA 30188**

We are a fraternal organization of Marines and others who were attached to or supported First MAW units serving in the Vietnam War. The organization was founded in 1986 and incorporated as a not-for-profit entity in New York State in 1988. Our purpose is to reunite members of the First MAW either through scheduled reunions or by means of our newsletter, web site, or other various functions. The organization strives to disseminate information about our history as well as about legislation, entitlements, and welfare involving First MAW members.