



FAC Association Newsletter

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President's Corner Final Newsletter

I sit here on Christmas Eve day trying to wrap my arms and brain around the fact that this will be my last President's corner article, in the last edition of our newsletter. I have put off writing this for that very reason. I have had a difficult time trying to organize my thoughts and feelings during the last couple of months since our Final Reunion.

First of all, many thanks go to Claude Newland and his great team for putting on the FR2024 gathering at the ole schoolhouse. It was a rousing success, and a great time was had by all. Kudos to that team for all their hard work.

Now my thoughts and comments to you the members of the Forward Air Controllers Association (FACA) as we wrap up 24 years as an organization. I joined up as soon as I heard about the formation of this group. At first, I was just one of the guys and did my best to reach out to those I had served with, both over there and afterwards, and let them know about the FACA. It was lots of fun finding folks I hadn't seen or talked to in a very long time. I acted as a point of contact for the Coveys for a while, assisting Dan Skutack put together a much larger group of those who flew under that call sign.

Over the first 14 years or so, I was able to attend all but two reunions and soon found myself getting know a much larger group of those who flew the mission and those who provided support for us. In 2012, I approached then president, Phil Litts, whom I had flown FCFs for at Da Nang when he was the chief of QA in the maintenance world and raised my hand wanting to become a Director on the Board of Directors. Well, you know what happens when you do that, you get the job, effective immediately!

In 2014 Phil wanted to step down as president and he asked me if I would put my name in the hat. Well, truth be told, I hesitated, and he persisted. As they say, 'the

rest is history'. I took the reins as president at FR2014 in Fort Walton Beach. Of course, I was thinking this will only last maybe 4 years and somebody else will be the new president.

Now for the good and not so good parts of my ten-year tour of duty. Well, there were a few bad parts and that is all I will say about that. But what were the good parts, you ask? There were many and probably too many to mention all of them, but I want to tell you of my favorite parts of the job. I many times referred to them as the 'Dear Mr. President' emails and phone calls. Many of them asking for help finding out about who flew during a particular timeframe under such and such call sign or a family member trying to find out more about one of our fellow FACs who was no longer with us. Many times, I came up with no good answers for an inquirer, because I couldn't find anyone who could help out. Other times, I would be totally amazed at, not only by what I could find out, but to help reconnect people who had been involved in the same actions but never knew who the other was. Occasionally, I would be very gratefully surprised at finding out that the person I was looking for was somehow related to somebody that I had known in my career and had totally lost contact with. Each call or email became a personal contact that I had with somebody I had never known, who would be sincerely grateful for my efforts in trying to help them in their quest.

Another great thing that I really did enjoy, was being able to get to know the members of the Board and those who played the supporting roles, such as webmaster, legal advisor, database guru, newsletter editor, FAC museum liaison and chaplain. Each and every one of those who served in those positions before my term and during it became part of a team that kept this organization alive and well for over 20 years. If I needed help or counsel, all I had to do was ask. I thanked all who served with me at the last reunion with a memento plaque and recognition from all those in attendance.

So, in closing, I want to thank each and every one of you for your service to our Country and our Association. I was sad that we, as the Board, had to close it down but for a number of reasons, it was necessary. As was said during the decision process and completion of the Dissolution Plan, "We are declaring victory, and going home!"

To say thank you for the honor of serving as your FACA president is a gross understatement. I wish you all the best that life can bring your way in the future

and will always remember that I was able to serve with those who flew towards the sounds of gunfire and bravely and honorably served.

All Gave Some. Some Gave All.

Cleared Hot, Hit my smoke!

Brad Wright

Covey/Hammer 251



Dan Swiger

FAC Official
Photographer

Thank you for all of the wonderful photographs taken at the final reunion and posted to the FACA website.

FORWARD AIR CONTROLLER ASSOCIATION HOLDS FINAL REUNION.

The FAC Association recently held its final reunion in Ft Walton Beach, FL on 23-27 October 2024. **Claude Newland** posted a full reunion debrief report on the FAC Association's website. www.fac-assoc.org. Ten FAC aircraft (2 OV-10s & 8 O-15/L-19s) flew in to support the reunion and offered short courtesy flights on Thursday, 24 Oct. from the Destin Executive Airport.



Reunion events included a Friday morning visit to the Eglin AFB Armament Museum where over 240 attendees received an Eglin AFB mission briefing and an excellent briefing from the director of the Texas Tech Vietnam Archives Oral History Project, **Dr. Kelly Crager**. This was followed by self-guided tour of the museum. Later that afternoon, reunion attendees took a dolphin/sunset cruise from the Destin harbor.

The main events were on Saturday at Hurlburt Field. The morning started at the Soundside Club with an Air Force Special Ops Command (AFSOC) mission briefing which was followed by a Joint Tactical Air Controller (JTAC) briefing. Everyone was then shuttle bused to the Hurlburt Airpark for a Remembrance ceremony which included reading the names of our 267 FAC brothers who gave all in the service of their country. The AFSOC commander **Lt Gen Conley** and many members of his Hurlburt staff were in attendance. Rustic **Claude Newland** served as the master of ceremonies and FACA Chaplain, **Dale Hill**, was the guest speaker. The Service concluded with an OV-10 and 4-ship O-1 fly-by. This was followed by a buffet lunch at the Soundside Club.



FAC Roll Call for those who did not return.
Read by Brad Wright and Bob Denison



Col. Dale Hill, FAC Chaplain speaks at the
Remembrance Ceremony

WEBSITE FUTURE (FAC-Assoc.org)

For almost as long as there has been a FAC Association there has been a FAC Association website. It has served as a distribution tool for information of and by the association. It contains a history of our association from its beginning through its closing. It is a record of who we are and what we did during the war in Southeast Asia. It is a record of our legacy. Now that we are disbanding the formal organization, what shall we do with all this unique information?

The Board of Directors have elected to donate it to the largest collection of Vietnam war era memorabilia, The Vietnam Center and Sam Johnson Vietnam Archive at Texas Tech University. There it will be preserved and available to the public online through the Texas Tech Vietnam Center website. On 31 March 2025 the content of our website as it is on that day will be loaded on to a thumb drive which will be delivered along with a deed of gift to Texas Tech University. There the content of the site will be reviewed for suitability and placement within the archive. It will be given a name and place in the virtual archive. A likely name would be something like "The FAC Association Collection."

Once the acceptance process is completed anyone will be able to log on to an index page at Texas Tech University and directed to our website. The site will not be active as it is now with new information; it will be the information that exist as of 31 March 2025. Because the staff members working on the archive are volunteers, the acceptance process could take several weeks. The Vietnam Archive is a physical collection that can be visited in person by going to Lubbock and the virtual collection which is available online.

The following is a link to the virtual archive:

<https://www.vietnam.ttu.edu/virtualarchive/> From this link one should be able to navigate to our site once it is added to the virtual archive. Hopefully, we will receive notification of its being uploaded and I will be able to put that out on the FACNET.

Happy New Year. Harry, Helix25



I cashed in the CD on 12/18 and deposited the \$69,583 into the checking account. I have now sent the \$25,000 to MOAA for our 4th scholarship. The \$50,000 has been wired to the FACM bank account. Wells Fargo Bank has mailed our \$7,500 check to the COS VFW post and should arrive NLT 1/6. We now have \$21,398 remaining in the bank. After approval by the BOD, and with instructions I'll send the \$10,000 donation to the museum foundation at Hurlburt Field. At that point, we will only have the transfer costs for our stuff to go to the FACM. I am waiting for AI to give me that amount. After that, we will have between \$5,000 and \$8,000 remaining.

As of the end of December 2024, our financial worth was \$21,398.17 in checking, after consolidating accounts, cashing our CD, making minor administrative payments and receiving several small amounts in income and paying our planned annual contributions. We also completed our \$50,000 contribution to the FACM, \$25,000 for a fourth scholarship and \$7,500 donation to maintain the FAC Memorial in Colorado Springs. Still to be spent is approximately \$6,000 to move our history materials from Utah to the FACM and a \$10,000 donation to the Special Operations Museum at Hurlburt Field. After these expenditures, we will have \$5,398.17 remaining which the Board of Directors has approved as a final donation to the FACM. At this point, sometime in the spring, we should be able to file our final reports with the state of Florida and the IRS to terminate the corporation.

Trey Moran, Nail 13



In Memoriam A tribute to those who have flown west since July 2024

Links to some obituaries are located at <https://www.fac-assoc.org/flew-west/flew-west2023.html>. **Please** send additional information of a brother-in arms who has passed and not yet recognized by the association, to Bob Cohen bobcohenx@aol.com or Trey Moran <nail13@fac-assoc.org> or Harry Pearce <helix35@fac-assoc.org>

Chan	Joseph W.	Nail 11	8-Jan-25	life
Claiborn	Edward L.	Helix 21	15-Jan-19	yes
Drahn	Peter Lloyd	Red Marker 06	10-Dec-24	life
Hiu	Roland (Hen-Min)	Cutie11	15-Jun-24	life
McDaniel	Gary E.	Nail 76, Hammer 76	8-Dec-24	life
Nellis	Raymond C.	Nail 04	5-Dec-24	life
Smith	Dallas L.	SaoMai 13	2-Nov-23	life
Spohn	Vern J. Jr.	Nail 30, Zipgun 30	1-Jun-24	life
Willis	Leonard M.	Covey 5w	15-Jan-25	life

Slow hand salute to these brothers-in- arms, American patriots all.



Visit to the Air Armaments Museum

OV-10 AT DESTIN
AIRPORT



Pete Culhane, Andy 21
back in the saddle.

