



THE HARD CHARGER

COMMENTS FROM THE EDITOR

While the snow is piling up, and the temperatures are hovering well below the freezing mark, there are warmer and more pleasant days ahead! The 22nd Annual Reunion, to be held in Branson, MO, is coming up on the 3rd of June, at which time the current weather will be but a memory and the subject of much bragging about how tough it was and how we were lucky to have survived! (Although I will admit that the pictures of Niagara Falls nearly frozen over does cause me to think that global warming is not as widespread as some would have us believe...)

Branson has ben attracting visitors to the Ozarks for more than 100 years, primarily because of the natural beauty of the area and the many activities that can be pursued outdoors. Among the first tourist draws was Marble Cave, so called because of the damp limestone walls which were thought to be marble. The early visitors had to lower themselves 200 feet on ropes into the interior, surely an impediment to the establishment of a mass attraction! An another early traveler, H. B. Wright, wrote a best-selling novel called **Shepherd of the Hills**, which glamorized the location and led to a live production of the tale and a new influx of visitors.

In spite of a devastating fire which destroyed most of the town in 1912, the completion of the Ozark Beach Dam in 1913, which created Lake Taneycomo, led to more fishermen, boaters, swimmers, and outdoor enthusiasts pouring into the area. But it was the era of the 1960's that led to the development of the Branson area as a major tourist mecca, as the completion of the Table Rock Dam brought reliable electric power to the city. One look at the neon lights and the electronically fueled shows of today will demonstrate how critical that was. Silver Dollar City opened in 1960, and the improved lake conditions made possible aquatic attractions such as the White Water Park and the Branson Belle

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showboat. The seventies and eighties saw the growth of the entertainment industry, heavy on country and Ozark themes. A camping trip to the Branson area led to the creation of “The Beverly Hillbillies,” one of Television’s most highly rated shows, and further exposed the location to the public, as did a segment of “60 Minutes” in the nineties. While declaring Branson to be the “live music capital of the entire universe” was clearly a little over the top, it did result in an influx of performers, developers, and new residents who inspired growth beyond the country and western origins of the early days. Branson Landing opened in 2006, bringing luxury dining and lodging, marinas, shopping and nightlife to a waterfront ambiance. And in 2011, the 30th FAR Association held their reunion here!

And so we will again! This was one of our best attended non-Fort Sill reunions, and in spite of the 2012 tornado which caused moderate damage in the city, we will find the attractions and programs as enjoyable, entertaining, and ready for our annual get-together as before. Make your reservations and join in the fun as we reunite for at the 22nd time as proud veterans of the 30th Artillery!

JOHN

use or copy this form to pay your dues

For those members who enroll as active members on a yearly basis, please complete this form and send it in with a check as indicated. You can also take this opportunity to enroll as a lifetime member and end the annoyance of having to do this every year!

First name _____ MI _____ Last name _____

Address _____ City _____ St _____ ZIP _____

Phone (H) _____ (W/M) _____ Email _____

\$15.00 Check enclosed for 2015 dues ()

\$99 check enclosed for lifetime membership ()

Contribution (\$) enclosed to help with Association expenses ()

Mail form and check to: Jim Harris, 30th FAR Association Membership
212 Brittain Court, Brentwood, TN, 37027

NOTE: since the last newsletter, two events have been added to the activities list. In addition, a charge for the registration fee was inadvertently omitted on the form in the November newsletter. If you have already sent in your registration, please review the new form in this issue, and if you need to make changes, send in the revised form with your new choices indicated.

Two Shows Scheduled as Group Event

Arrangements have been made for the Reunion attendees to see two of Branson's most popular attractions as a group event on Thursday, 4 June. As those of you who attended the Dolly Parton Show and/or the Lake Cruise last time will recall, these are wonderful opportunities for shared experiences and memories as well as immediate topics of conversation.



The 70's Music Celebration with Barry Williams

This two hour show is hosted by Barry Williams, who nearly all of us will remember as one of the kids on the Brady Bunch TV show of the 70's era. More than 50 memorable songs of the artists who were popular in that decade will be featured, including such performers as John Denver, Neil Diamond, Donna Summers, the BeeGees, and many others who established the music genre of the period. But it is more than just songs. It is a trip into nostalgia to remind us of the great events, inventions, people and the impact the decade has had on our lives today. As one of the advertising lines for the show puts it - "life before the cell phone."

This promises to be a terrific production for our group, as it marks a time when many, if not most, of us were remaking our lives following our time in Vietnam - some in the Army, some as civilians, but all as guys and gals trying to adjust from a time in our lives like no other.

30th Field Artillery Regiment's 22nd Annual Reunion 3 to 6 June, 2015

Registration Form

The Stone Castle Hotel and Conference Center
3050 Green Mountain Drive, Branson, MO 65616

Name (s) _____

_____ () please list all attending and total

Address _____ City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Tel# _____ Email address if applicable _____

I will contact the Stone Castle Hotel at (417) 335-4700 before 3 May, 2015, to make my room reservations and will identify myself as part of the 30th FAR Association Reunion. The standard room rate is \$65 per night. Upgraded rooms are available for an additional charge, and the room rate includes a complementary hot breakfast buffet.

I am enclosing a check to cover the following choices and expenses:

Registration Fee (\$20 per family, not required if only attending the banquet) _____

Williams Show (\$15 per person) 4 June @ 1400 hours _____

Haygoods Show (\$23 per person) 4 June @ 1930 hours _____

Annual Banquet (\$26 per person, \$13 for those under twelve) _____

Voluntary contribution to aid a less fortunate Hard Charger _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED _____

Make your checks payable to the "30th FAR Association" and mail the form and your check to our Treasurer:

Jim Harris
212 Brittain Court
Brentwood, TN 37027

**30th Field Artillery Regiment Association Reunion
Branson, MO 3 to 6 June, 2015**

The Stone Castle Hotel and Conference Center

417-335-4700

Our reunion home during the 22nd gathering will be the Stone Castle Hotel and Conference Center in Branson, located west of I-65 and not far from the Titanic Museum and the Pirate's Cove miniature golf attraction. The hotel features free Wi-Fi, complimentary parking, an ATM, and of course a gift shop! Standard rooms are \$65 per night, plus applicable taxes, and family suites are available at \$99 per night. To get the Reunion room rate, call the hotel and be sure to identify yourself as attending the reunion.

Tuesday and Wednesday, 2 and 3 June:

Welcome and sign in. Renew old friendships, greet comrades old and maybe not as old as you. Enjoy a cold one and check out the QM store - replace your greasy old hat, so you can strut around Branson in style. Enjoy the ever increasing volumes of the Regiment's proud history, beautifully compiled by Dan Gillotti. *The opening time for the hospitality suite will be announced NLT the next newsletter!*

Thursday, 4 June:

The General Membership Meeting will begin at 0900, followed by the Memorial Service for our Fallen. At 1400 we can take in the **70's Celebration**, the review of a decade memorable for our generation. Dinner will be on your own, then at 1930 attend as a group the **Haygoods**, Branson's most popular show. See the show descriptions on pages 3 and 6. *The hospitality suite will be open for the lounge lizards.*

Friday, 5 June:

The day will be yours to enjoy Branson's many attractions. *The hospitality suite will be open.*

Saturday, 6 June:

The day will once again be yours until the World Famous Dinner and Auction! **Don't forget to bring an item, or several, for the auction!** *The hospitality suite will be open until an hour or so before the dinner.*

Sunday, 7 June:

CSMO! See you next year at Fort Sill!

The Haygoods

The following is extracted from the Branson Travel Office's commentary about the Haygoods Show:

It's a show without rivals. Unmatched in quality and entertainment value, it's no wonder that the Haygoods Show is the most popular one in Branson! Ushering in a new era of music and showmanship to the live entertainment choices in Branson, it's a show that will get your adrenaline pumping with a cast of some of the most talented performers you will ever see!

The 8 members that make up the group will have audiences talking long after the curtain has gone down. The 7 brothers along with their sister will leave you amazed at their abilities.

Throughout the course of your time with the family, you will hear music of many different styles from classic rock to modern pop. combining special effects lighting, dancing and musicianship (the family plays more than 20 instruments) - this family has refined their show to create one of the most-talked about acts in the area, one which has become a fan favorite for the thousands who visit on vacation.

With roots in the Ozarks, the group originally performed in Silver Dollar City before venturing out on their own, and during their time in show business they have played in front of more than 4 million people. It's a show that is as versatile and diverse as the number of instruments on which they perform, and it will leave the audience wanting more at the end of each show.



On the reservation form, please indicate the shows you would like to attend, and how many will be in your party. Both shows have minimum attendance requirements for our group, and we must meet our minimum 45 days in advance of the show. It is important that you indicate/pay for your choices when you register so that the Association can sign the contracts and enjoy the price breaks being offered.



Stephen R. Esh

Dan Gillotti has discovered that Stephen Esh, one of two double Silver Star awardees* from the Regiment, passed away in 2012. Stephen was a member of the Association who had also received the Bronze Star, the Purple Heart and the Air Medal. He is interred in Willamette National Cemetery in Oregon. We very much regret losing track of this distinguished Hard Charger.

*Skip Wilfong is the other

This Good Looking Fellow is going to the Reunion!



Hope You Are Too!



Hard Chargers Guest Book Entry's of Interest

From time to time the www.hardchargers.com website receives Guest Book entries that are interesting and looking for closure.

#134 | 2/24/2015, 9:09 AM, EST | Danny Carter  | Service Time Nike Hercules 1966-1987

Hi Everyone I need your help in locating a CSM Jack Love. In 1958 he was part of the first package to setup our unit. B Btry 2nd Bn 6th ADA in Landau Germany. We would greatly appreciate any help you could give us. Thanks in advance

dcarter48@gmail.com

#133 | 2/17/2015, 1:42 PM, EST | Glenn Sellars  | Location  | Service Time Feb 14,1966-Feb 13, 1967

I was in HQ Btry 1/30th Artillery, 1st Field Forces I was a messenger for the communications unit serving under Msgt Pendleton. We traveled with our firing battery's in Bong Song, Pleiku, Oasis, Cambodian border, Phu Cat, etc...


Looking to for Darryl Herenko and Hershel Pilgrim. Long time my friends... **gmsellars@aol.com**

#132 | 11/21/2014, 7:35 AM, EST | Ricard J. Mikolajczyk 

I was with C Battery, 6th Battalion, 16th Artillery, 1st Cavalry Division. I left a previous message but did not leave my email address in the body of the message. My email address is rclpizza@wowway.com. I am looking forward to hearing from anyone in my unit that was in Vietnam on LZ Bird. **rclpizza@wowway.com**

#131 | 11/20/2014, 8:59 PM, EST | Richard J. Mikolajczyk  | Location  | Service Time Sep 65 - Sep 67

I was with C Battery, 6th Battalion, 16th Artillery, 1st Cavalry Division in Vietnam. We were overrun on December 27, 1965 on LZ Bird. I have yet to find anyone in my unit. We were a 155mm howitzer battalion. Major Ecoppi was our battery commander. Can anyone help me to get in touch with people in my unit? Time is getting short and my memory is fading.

#130 | 11/11/2014, 8:21 PM, EST | Terry Meinke 

Thank you for serving our country. This is to my cousin Frankie Coulthart and the rest of the men he served with in Vietnam. We are thinking of you on Veterans Day.

Take Care

Terry **meinket@yahoo.com**

#129 | 11/7/2014, 10:23 PM, EST | dan gustafson  | Location  | Service Time 1968 1970 | Other Information I was with the 11thpathfinder co.

I need to contact any one who was on l.z. grant 3 8 69 and 3 11 69..especially a young medic who helped get our casualties ready for evac on those nites...I was the blackhat who ran the air evac of casualties..I have reason to think this brave young medic was maybe a member of your battery...I appeal to all of you..I need to talk to any of you that remember these events..thank youall

gustafson49@hotmail.com

5435 Cedar Valley Drive
Loveland, CO 80537

NEXT ISSUE
MAY, 2015

Deadline for submissions - 24 April
jdynes5@comcast.net or address above