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RUSTIC Rustic News



www.rustic.org



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PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE.

First, a big thanks to **Doug Aitken** for his Rustic leadership and tenure over the last two years. I hope I can come even close to serving as well as he and **Claude Newland** have unselfishly done for over twenty years.

For those of you who attended our recent Reunion in Ft Walton Beach, I think you will agree it was one that will be hard to top. Laura and I much enjoyed seeing all of you again. The complete Reunion agenda, to include presentations, museum, sunset cruise, seafood, banquet, and more, was great. Almost a hundred Rustics, family members, and friends attended the 20th Annual Rustic Banquet. We owe a big thanks to **Claude Newland**, **Lendy Edwards**, and **Tom Wolford** for all of the work and planning that made the Reunion a huge success.

As usual for our biennial Reunion, the Rustic membership elected a new

Board of Directors. We welcome **Rog Hamann** as the newest board member and the Rustic FAC Association Vice-President. Thanks to all who have served and continue to serve the Rustics on the Board.

As mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter our next Reunion will be in Las Vegas in 2019. I encourage everyone to begin making initial plans to attend. The possibilities for our agenda during this Reunion are many. More information is to follow as we make the Reunion plans over the next many months. And, as always, we solicit any suggestions for our Reunion Banquet speaker. Please be thinking about it.

One of the main reasons for selecting Las Vegas as the site of our next Reunion is that the 19th Weapon Squadron "Rustics" are headquartered at Nellis AFB. We hope the 19th WPS to be a major part of our reunion agenda, to perhaps include a mission presentation and base tour. I also look forward to having the squadron members attend our concluding reunion banquet.

Claude Newland has over the many years closed out his Rustic correspondence comments with a VERY applicable Rustic FAC "Cleared Hot!" That is my favorite! But for copy right considerations to him, I close below with another. I used it daily (tongue-in-cheek) with my Undergraduate Pilot Training students as I briefed them for their daily missions. I also coined the phrase in my Learjet Squadron and other later flying assignments. But most importantly, I think it applies to those who served the Rustic OV-10/O-2 mission, ...pilots, interpreters, intel, maintenance, ordinance, medical, and admin. I think the extended Rustic Family members can also relate.

Laura and I wish the Rustic Family a Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and VERY prosperous 2018!!!

Johnny Drury, Rustic 04.... *"Keep the Pointy End Forward."*

ASSOCIATION MEMEBERSHIP. If you're not a member of the Rustic FAC Association and would like to join, the cost for a Life Membership is \$100. We no longer require annual dues. Send your check, payable to "Rustic FACs," to our treasurer, **Jim Nuber**, 1439 Evening Shade, Prescott, AZ 86305-6432.

NEXT REUNION. Las Vegas, Nevada. Date TBD, Fall 2019. **Shad Kimbell** has the lead on this one. Start making plans now to attend. Events may include a visit to Nellis AFB and the 19 Weapons Squadron "Rustics," a trip to Hoover Dam and

the Valley of Fire State Park, and possibly a local show. If you have any suggestions for the reunion, or which hotel to use, please pass them along to Shad at shadkimbell@gmail.com or call 417-207-2777.

ELECTION RESULTS: Congratulations to **Johnny Drury** and **Roger Hamann** who were respectively elected as the association's president and vice president at the reunion business meeting. Johnny was formerly our vice president. He also planned and hosted our 2013 reunion in Colorado Springs. Roger has been our "Rustics Lost" sleuth and the creator of the Rustic Facebook page. The remaining Board members have all agreed to continue serving in their respective positions and were unanimously re-elected. Our thanks go to **Doug Aitken** who has ably served as our president for the past two years. Doug commented, "It's been great serving as your President Thanks, and carry on!!"

2017 REUNION REPORT -- "BEST EVER!" Claude Newland. Many proclaimed this year's reunion as the best ever. When hearing this comment, I am constantly amazed because that is usually the very comment we hear after every reunion. No doubt this year's reunion was very special, but I think the "best ever" comment once again reaffirms the strong bonds of camaraderie and kinship that exists between Rustics (and their family members) at every reunion, and how much we enjoy renewing these friendships every two years.

Kohn Om's attendance at the reunion, as well as the fact that five Rustic widows attended this year's reunion, speaks volumes about the closeness we share in the Rustic family. Other special moments of the reunion included meeting six members of Col Oum's family for the first time, and the attendance of five members of the 19th Weapons Squadron "Rustics" from Nellis AFB.

Our thanks go to all of you who donated funds to help bring **Kohn Om** and the **Oum family** to the reunion. Due to your generosity we were able to cover all of our expenses for our Cambodian guests. Special thanks also go to **Claude & Tona Newland** who hosted the six Oum family members at their home during the weekend.

Wednesday and Thursday. The weather for the reunion was perfect--sunny days and cool evenings. The weekend began with a rousing pre-party with 29 attendees on Wednesday evening at **Claude and Tona Newland's** home in nearby Destin. The reunion officially kicked off on Thursday with registration, and a Welcome dinner at the next-door Crab Trap restaurant.

Friday. Friday's main events included a morning tour of the USAF Armament Museum at Eglin AFB. Following a brief introduction by the museum staff, the group toured the museum and roamed the grounds to view quite a collection of aircraft that included one venerable O-2A aircraft and the USAF's very first production C-130 ever built, the "Gray Lady." The museum certainly provided a greater appreciation for the many weapons systems Eglin has help develop and test over the years in order to keep our nation strong. A replica of the MOAB (Mother of all Bombs) was on display as well as a host of other "smart" weapons that have greatly increased the accuracy of our current aircraft weapons' inventory.



Following the museum tour, we received three great mission briefings at Eglin's Bayview Club which overlooks Choctawhatchee Bay. The briefings included an overview of the many varied units that are based at Eglin AFB. The 96th Test Wing is the host unit and the 33rd Fighter Wing trains future F-35 pilots. As many of you know, Eglin is the largest USAF base and range complex worldwide which makes it an invaluable resource for our national defense. An Italian buffet meal immediately followed the three briefings--with the three briefers and Public Affairs' personnel joining us as our guests.

Friday afternoon was spent taking a Sunset Cruise of the beautiful Destin Harbor, East Pass, and Choctawhatchee Bay aboard the Southern Star dolphin cruise ship. At our invitation, approximately 25 Eglin base personnel and their spouses or dates joined us as our guests for the cruise. The dolphins did not disappoint as they were jumping the waves just outside of the East Pass jetties and also appeared in the bay. Afterwards, everyone gathered at AJ's Seafood House and Oyster Bar on the Destin harbor for dinner. At **Diane Seibold's** suggestion, a number of Rustics took it upon themselves to host an Eglin couple for dinner at AJ's as a way of saying, "Thank you for your service."



Saturday. Saturday morning was reserved for optional activities or free time. **Lendy Edwards** coordinated a golf game at Eglin AFB. **Claude Newland** took the Oum family members to the Hurlburt Field Air Park to see the FAC aircraft, FAC memorial, and Special Ops aircraft that were used in the

Southeast Asia war. **Tona Newland** led a group to the Destin History and Fishing Museum for a brief tour. Others relaxed around the hooch and pool and got caught up with their buds.

Saturday afternoon, the commander of the 19th Weapons Squadron, **Ltc Eduardo "Easy" Pires**, gave a succinct 30-minute briefing on his squadron's mission. The 19 WPS has adopted the Rustic callsign for their unit and is looking to help promote the heritage of the 19th TASS and the Rustics FACs. The squadron is one of 16 squadrons assigned to the USAF Weapons School at Nellis AFB. Their courses are designed to increase intelligence officer's familiarity of the capabilities and limitations of friendly and enemy forces and hone their skills to a razor-sharp edge. Accompanying Ltc Pires was Major "Torn" Thompkins and three former students of the 19 WPS who are currently attending schools at Maxwell AFB. The reunion business meeting immediately followed Ltc Pires' briefing.



19 WPS "Rustics", Nellis AFB

Elliot Stump

Torn Thompkins

Dan Diamond

Elyse Crimm

Clearly, the highlight of the weekend was the Rustic banquet Saturday evening. **Roger Dodd** provided keyboard musical magic during the Happy Hour while **Jim Seibold** took photos of attendees as they



arrived. Smooth talking **Doug Aitken** once again served as our master-of-ceremonies. He regaled the crowd with his customary jokes and got a rousing thumbs-up from the crowd on one of the favorites...the punchline..."Oh, no. He's going to become a pilot." After introducing our many guests, the Rustics took time to remember our POW/MIAs. **Roger Hamann** gave an explanation of the POW/MIA table and it's symbology. This was followed by a reverent and silent "Rustics Remembered" slide

show put together by **Doug Aitken** which included a photo of each Rustic who has taken his final flight West. Such good friends, brothers-in-arms, and loved ones are greatly missed.

After a delicious Destin Seafood buffet meal, a short break was taken and a surprise announcement was made. Each Rustic in attendance was told to make a short trip into the foyer where a special reunion gift was waiting for them—a personalized paperweight with their Rustic call sign. Copies are also being mailed to the five Rustic widows in attendance. **Doug Aitken** was the originator and moving force behind this special gift concept.



Following the banquet intermission, **Col. Ed Hubbard**, our guest speaker, gave an inspirational and uplifting talk about the life lessons he learned as a POW. He spent six years, seven months, and 12 days as a prisoner of war. It was an experience that truly changed his life, and as a result, the lives of countless others.



Following his release from prison in 1973, Colonel Hubbard completed five college degrees in seven years, in his spare time and at night.

In 1985 he began motivational speaking and following his Air Force retirement in 1990, he formed Positive Vectors, Inc., in order to share the lessons he learned during captivity and authenticated by his successful Air Force career results. Since, he has spoken to thousands of members of corporate America, government agencies, and non-profit groups. Ed's desire to change the attitudes of individuals through a better understanding of true, human potential remains his number one goal in life.

Colonel Hubbard, is the author of "ESCAPE FROM THE BOX", a fast moving, hard-hitting, inspirational self-leadership book in which he shares the valuable lessons he learned during 2,420 days as a prisoner of war in North Vietnam. Based on his experience as a POW, Col. Hubbard takes the most negative situation you can imagine and turns it into one of the most positive personal growth transformations you will ever read. His message is for every one in any walk of life.

To order a signed and personalized copy of his book, send a check or money order to Ed Hubbard, 423 Pelham Rd, Ft Walton Beach, FL 32547. Cost is \$30 (which includes postage). *This would make a wonderful Christmas gift for anyone.*

At the close of the banquet, **Sonica Lieou-Jackson** (Col Oum's youngest daughter) spoke briefly on behalf of all of Col Oum's family members. She gave a heartfelt thanks to all the Rustics for the critical support the family received when they immigrated to America from Thailand, and also thanked the Rustics for inviting them to this year's reunion.

Sunday. A Farewell Breakfast was held Sunday morning as everyone said their goodbyes. All agreed this reunion was one of our best and one to be remembered. Next Stop: Las Vegas in 2019. We hope to see you there.

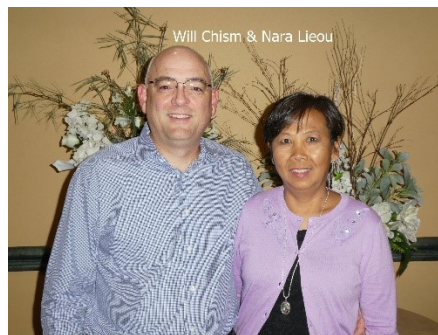
2017 REUNION ATTENDEES. Everyone knows it's the reunion attendees that make each reunion special! This year's attendees included: Doug & Carol Aitken, Bob Blair, Don & Jin Hee Brooks, Tom & Peggy Capps Tom & Lonna Clinch, Ron Dandeneau (Guests, Ron's son Joe & Lolly Dandeneau, Ron's daughters, Pam Spires & Patty Parker), Bill & Jan Decabooter, Roger Dodd & Margaret, Johnny & Laura Drury, Jerry & Roselyn Dufresne, Don Echelberger, Lendy & Sue Edwards, Don & Helene Ellis, Sharon Friedhofen, Greg & Barb Friex, Phil & Beth Frischmuth, Sally Gabel, Roger & Joan Hamann, Shad Kimbell, Dave & Cris Kurau, Mucha Larson (Guests: Don & Chun McNair, & Sun Hee Nelson), Bill & Cathy McAdams, Marcel & Denise Morneau, Claude & Tona Newland (Guests: daughter Erica Newland & friend Kirra James; grandson, Skyler Powell and granddaughter Jordyn Powell), Jim & Lynne Nuber, Steve Peffer, Jim & Marcia Reese, Kohn Om, Jim & Diane Seibold, Nancy Sleigh (Guest: Marcia Seibert), Winnie Stearns, Wayne St. John, Doc & Gayle Thomas, Jack & Anne Thompson, Nathan Van Dyke (Son of Rustic Dave Van Dyke) & wife Teri, & their children, Gabby and Chase, Ron & Janette Van Kirk, Robert & Kathleen Wheeler, Mike & Sherry Wilson, and Tom & Theresa Wolford.

Of special note, Rustic O-2A crew chiefs, and good friends, **Bob Blair** and **Steve Peffer**, were both first-time reunion attendees. This was a remarkable weekend for them as they had not seen each other since Vietnam (46 years). They had a lot of catching up to do.

In addition, **six of Col Lieou Phin Oum's extended family members** were first-time attendees.



Tony Lieou (child #1) and son, Alex



Nara Lieou (ch #4) & husband Will Chism



Sovanna Lieou (ch # 6), and Sonica Lieou-Jackson (ch #7)

RUSTIC STORE. Lendy Edwards, our Rustic Store manager, reports we have the following items for sale:

All copies of our original 265-page hardbound book, "The Rustics-A Top Secret Air War in Cambodia," published in 1999 have been sold. (Note: this book was superseded by our 488-page Second Edition book available at www.lulu.com, Search title: "The Rustics.")

Six (6) copies of Dick Wood's abridged 184-page Rustic history book, "Call Sign Rustic," published by the Smithsonian Institute, 2002. \$5.00 each, plus \$3.00 shipping.

Rustic Coins. \$10.00 each, plus \$1 shipping.

Rustic crossed flags pins are \$2.00 each.

Rustic Caps. \$16.00 each plus \$4 shipping.

Make check payable to "Rustics" and mail to **Lendy Edwards**, 11 Poplar Ave, Shalimar, FL 32579.

WITNESS TO WAR FOUNDATION. Martin Madert of the Witness to War Foundation attended this year's reunion to conduct video interviews to capture the personal histories of those who served during the Vietnam War and Southeast Asia conflict. Each interview lasted about an hour. Those interviewed will receive three DVD copies of their unedited video. These interviews may be published on the Witness to War website, found at www.WitnessToWar.org, where the public can easily access over 4,000 firsthand accounts of war from the men and women who experienced it. The interviews can also be donated to the Library of Congress' Veterans History Project as well as the 50th Anniversary Commemoration of the Vietnam War.

Our busy reunion schedule precluded a lot of free time for interviews, but a number of Rustics were able to take advantage of this opportunity.

ROSTER UPDATES. A revised 2017 Rustic Roster will be emailed to those whom we have an email address. A roster will be mailed to Association members who do not have email. Please keep **Lendy Edwards** posted (lendy@cox.net Or 850-651-6766) if you have any updates. Here are some of the latest updates:

Don Echelberger 714 Sailfish Dr., FWB, FL 32540
Sally Gabel Newemail srfgabel43@gmail.com
Jim Reese. Here is the address to contact us while we are living in Tajikistan for the next year:
 5579B Chamblee Dunwoody Rd #229, Dunwoody GA 30338
Susan Van Dyke 913-207-9047
Carl Otto Walinski 1905 K Starr Drive, Copperas Cove, TX 76522, (254) 238-8505, cotto@reagan.com
William M. Wilson 15633 E Wandering Creek Pl, Vail, AZ 85641-6098
 May 1 - Sept. 30 is PO Box 461 Alma, CO 80420
 1 Oct – 30 Apr is 15633 Wandering Creek Pl, Vail, AZ 85641-6098

BIG LOSS--RUSTICS LOSE TWO INTERPRETERS OVER THREE DAYS. **Hans George “Frenchy” Frey**, Rustic F, and **George “Lunchbox” Larson**, Rustic U, took their final flights west on June 8th and Jun 10th 2017, respectfully. Hans served as an interpreter at Ubon, Jan—Dec 72. He was an understudy of **Joe Garand**. Hans is survived by his wife, Rose, and children, Jeannette and Tyrone. **George Larson** volunteered as an interpreter fairly soon after the Rustics were first formed at Bien Hoa. His tour of duty was Aug 70-Jul 71. He is survived by his wife, Mucha. A memorial service was held for George in Orlando, FL. **Claude and Tona Newland** attended the service to represent the Rustics. **Roger Hamann** speaks for all of us when he said, “Rest in peace fellow GIBS.”



Hans Frey, Rustic F, Jan-Dec72.



George Larson, Rustic U, Aug 70-Jul 71.

DON BROOK’S REMEMBERS GEORGE LARSON. During **George Larson’s** memorial service, a family friend read the following letter from **Don Brooks, Rustic 02:**

I know most of you have never heard of the Rustics or know what they were. They were a very special group created under the direction of President Nixon during the late phases of the conflict in Southeast Asia. At the time, their mission was absolutely Top Secret. President Nixon had decided to provide US Air Force support to the Cambodian government in their struggle against the Communist forces trying to take over their country. The Rustics were created to work with the Cambodians to control and direct this effort. The Rustic mission was to fly slow, lightly armed observation aircraft over the enemy forces and, in coordination with the Cambodian soldiers, bring air support as necessary to the friendly forces.

An obvious requirement for this to work was a means of communication with the Cambodians troops on the ground. Since none of the US pilots spoke Cambodian and very few Cambodians spoke English, a real problem existed. However, many of the educated Cambodians spoke French, so an immediate request for volunteers was generated throughout all of the US installations in Southeast Asia for anyone fluent in French. They weren't told what the job might entail, only that they were asked to volunteer for a special mission that was highly classified and could be quite dangerous.

George was one of the individuals that volunteered. Just imagine, if you will, an enlisted man in the US Air Force that had spent his entire time working in administrative jobs, shuffling paper, etc., then all of a sudden you find yourself strapped into the back seat of a small plane flying secret missions over enemy territory and getting shot at almost every day!

To add a personal touch to this account, I was one of the pilots flying the Rustic missions. I flew many combat missions with George. I quickly learned what a wonderful and talented individual he was. I was always delighted to have him ride in my back seat, serving as my interpreter with the besieged forces on the ground. George wasn't just an interpreter, he quickly became an essential addition to my job of locating the enemy on the ground; he was another set of eyes. Many times, he would spot things that I had missed, and would add immeasurably to our overall effectiveness. He was, without doubt, one of the best crewmembers I ever had the honor of flying with. George was a great example of the very best we had. I can never forget how much I appreciated working with him. I am happy to call him my friend.

I can't leave a story about George without telling about how he got his nickname within the Rustics. Our flights over Cambodia usually lasted about five hours. Most of us could endure those flights without too much hunger, but not George. He would always order a box lunch to take along with him. Consequently, he gained the nickname of "Lunchbox." As long as there is a Rustic alive, they will always remember Lunchbox Larson! Of course, I must admit, whenever there was a lull in the action, it was nice to hear a call, "Say, major, how would you like a half of a sandwich?"

George Larson was indeed a very special person and a friend to all of the Rustics. He will be missed.

Most sincerely, **Don Brooks**

SHORT BURSTS.

New 0-2A paint job. **Jack Thompson** reports the Ft Worth Aviation Museum has recently put a fresh coat of paint on it's 0-2A aircraft.

OV-10 Video. Check out the video **Roger Hamann** posted on the Rustic FAC facebook page. Universal Studios in California is using a modified OV-10 in their Waterworld attraction. The OV-10 makes a spectacular water landing in a lagoon using pontoons attached to its underside. Hmm...Roger also recently posted another OV-10 video "OV-10 in Perspective." It was made after the Viet Nam war so it more accurately shows some of the missions.



Uber Driver. **Chuck Manuel** reports he is now an Uber driver. *Wonder if he has any war stories to tell yet?*

Yet another Video. **Jim Hodgson** (Executive Director of the Fort Worth Aviation Museum) has recently made an informative video that shows the public a "Bronco Walk Around." He explains little things about the aircraft that will bring back memories to many of us. He uses our own Rustic Tail #825 to tell the story. Check it out at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jWi7xYE2JWg>

Rustic Bar Sign. **Ron Dandeneau, Rustic F**, wants to know: What happened to the "Ye Old Rustic" sign that was hanging behind the Bien Hoa OV-10 Rustic bar? A friend of mine at the Tan Son Nhut AB Graphic Arts made the sign. Did the sign make it to Ubon? Notify me at: RusticFox-trot@aol.com.



NOTE: *The picture to the right shows the sign hanging on the wall behind Claude Newland, Walt Friedhofen, Bob Burgoyne, and Roger Blais.*

This is the sign Ron Dandeneau is inquiring about.

RUSTICS CONTINUE CAMBODIAN CHARITY SUPPORT. One of the charter goals of the Rustic FAC Association is to help support charitable efforts in Cambodia. Now that the Association has minimal annual operational costs due to our newsletters going out via email, we project additional funds are now available that can be put to good use in helping the Cambodia people. After thoroughly reviewing several options, the Rustic Board decided the association will continue to support the charitable efforts in Kompong Cham by Sunrise Ministries that provide multiple medical and social programs for those in dire need. To that end, the Association will annually provide \$2,000 toward these charitable efforts for each of the next five years. Additionally, in conjunction with our latest reunion, the Rustics received donations of over \$800 for Cambodian Charity efforts which will go to Sunrise. One Rustic has committed a gift of \$2,000 as a challenge to fellow Rustics to contribute additional funds to help this amazing care organization.

Finally, **Colonel Ed Hubbard**, our 2017 reunion guest speaker, has offered to donate his \$10,000 speaking fee to the Rustics for transfer to Sunrise if we are able to refer him to any organization/corporation that will pay his speaking fee and expenses. **Col Hubbard** can be reached at: ehubbard@gnt.net or (H) 850-862-5273.

The Rustics first became acquainted with the staff of Sunrise Ministries when **Don Mercer** made a solo trip to Cambodia. Following Don's trip, a group of Rustics made a return visit to Cambodia in 2000 and also met them. **Tom Capps** has visited Sunrise in 2005, 2007 and 2009 and has established a close tie with **Darany Hang**, Sunrise Director. The Rustics have continued a close working relationship with Sunrise and are confident our contributions are put to good use -- 94% of all contributions go directly toward helping the Cambodia people. Additional information about the work of Sunrise Ministries is available in reports posted on the Rustic website, www.rustic.org.

Here is Tom Capps' Perspective on the Ministry and Management of Sunrise. During my three visits to Sunrise, both before and after Darany Hang became director, I have been thoroughly impressed by **Darany Hang's** total commitment and capacity to care for HIV/AIDS patients and their families. She is the catalyst for all the good work to patients, children and prisoners in the local jail. As a result of Darany's strong leadership, Sunrise is known to the community to be the go-to place for important care. Anything that Rustics as a group or individual Rustics can do to support Sunrise Ministry will result in life-changing outreach to the most-needy Cambodian citizens. Of the HIV/AIDS patients in the local hospital, 90% die. In contrast, 90% of the HIV/AIDS patients under the care of Sunrise get to go home to their families. I encourage every Rustic to consider a recurring gift designated to Sunrise so that we can augment the annual \$2,000 gift from the Rustic organization.

MIKE THROWER -- PROUD OWNER OF AN SKS RIFLE. **Bill Ernst** (Rustic 04 and Nail 09). In July 2017 I decided to create a raffle for a SKS rifle that I received during my FAC tour. During the early part of 1973 a group of USAF and Royal Cambodian Air Force officers landed in a USAF C-47 at Ubon RTAFB. They created plans to use United States resources for locating the enemy and attack using U.S. aircraft.

The Rustic FACs were authorized to land and rearm at Phnom Penh Airport in March 1973. The second sortie then returned to and landed at Ubon. U.S. Navy and U.S. Air Force fighters were used to attack targets within Cambodia. The OL was stationed at Ubon RTAFB and was supporting the Cambodians with daily FAC flights, and using U.S. Navy and U.S. Air Force fighters.

On one of **Colonel L. Oum's** visits to Ubon RTAFB he brought many items captured from the enemy and gave them to the Rustics. I was given an SKS rifle. I think it's time to share some things with others. I decided to have a raffle and find a new owner for the SKS. The beginning of the raffle began with 23 Rustics asking to be considered. I selected **Mike Thrower**, Rustic 34, to receive the rifle and **Roger Hamann**, Rustic Yankee 72, a GIB, to be the back-up recipient. The rifle has been delivered to Mike who lives in TN. Mike is in the process of sending a substantial donation to the Rustic's Cambodian Charity Fund.

This exercise was interesting and a chance to say hello to many of you. Best wishes to all, **Bill Ernst**.

WHAT THE RUSTIC FAMILY, OR BEING A RUSTIC, HAS MEANT TO ME. Prior to our 2017 reunion we asked everyone to submit comments on what being a Rustic has meant to them, or what it has meant to be part of the Rustic family. Below are some of the responses. Future newsletters will contain others.

From Don Ellis, (Rustic 17, Nov 70-Jun 71). It has always amazed me that some of you have such a detailed memory of life in Viet Nam. I don't know what plane I flew on what day or how many hours I logged on which plane, or how many missions I flew while I was there.

I didn't even remember how I got into the Rustics until about 3 years ago when I read the letters that I sent to my wife while I was in Vietnam. My entry into the Rustics depended on a coin toss which I lost. For some reason, and I don't remember what it was, I did not relish the idea of being a Rustic.

Until I was. The camaraderie and mission made the difference.

Our mission was to help the Cambodians survive and they were an integral part of that. I did not feel that the Vietnamese were as invested in the fight against Communism as we were. So, it was uplifting to be part of a cause.

The camaraderie was something else. I had only been a member of military fraternities in college. What I shared with other Rustics is what I thought that social fraternity brothers shared.

And today we still share that camaraderie. Not only that but our reunions have also given me a chance to release some of the feelings I had not shared since returning from Vietnam. My wife says that she heard some new stories about my experience since we started having the reunions.

So, thank you, my brothers, for the Rustic experience.

From Mike Gagne, Rustic K (Jul-Dec 70). I always knew that sooner or later my French skills would get me into trouble! I didn't realize when I said "Yes, I volunteer" that I would be strapped in a twin prop roller coaster! Just joking! Actually, at Tan Son Nhut, working on the flight line shoving ammo, frozen steaks and body bags, I did feel, not useless, but that there would be some opportunity to use my French during my tour. I did use it a lot when I went downtown Saigon, French speaking Vietnamese and also an old French couple who had stayed over from the last war. I also used to eat at a French restaurant where the Air France crews ate. It was cool being able to have some news from my adoptive country.

Anyway, here I go plunged into uncertainty only to find a great bunch of guys at Bien Hoa. As an "enlisted" I was quite surprised how well everyone got along, officers, airmen, NCO's. I was always confident with my pilots when strapping in the OV but I must admit the first flight with Lou Currier was HELL!

Anyway, it's been one of the greatest experiences of my lifetime, being able to help our fellow Cambodians was an honor and not once did I regret joining this great group of courageous men the RUSTICS, those still with us and those who have left us...too soon.

From Roger Hamann, Rustic Y (Nov 71-Aug 72). My wife once told me that I judge myself based on what I did during my time serving in the Air Force--in particular--my tour as a Rustic. She MAY be correct.

When I enlisted in June of 1970, flying with the greatest bunch of young (and middle aged) pilots the Air Force had to offer was not something I ever dreamt I would be doing. My first assignment out of Lackland had me refueling buffs and tankers at Wurtsmith AFB. After a year of living at that remote SAC base in Michigan and having spoken with returning POL troops from Vietnam and Thailand, I decided to put in a volunteer statement for Southeast Asia.

Little did I know that the spur of the moment decision to take the language test at Lackland during basic training would prove to be the key to my chance to fly in the Air Force, a privilege most airmen never have the opportunity to do.

Given the chance to become an interpreter, flying in the back seat of an OV-10, was an option I agreed to without a second thought. It would be the challenge of my young life but it sure beat driving a truck with 5000 gallons of jet fuel!

I celebrated my 21st birthday at Phan Rang AB in South Vietnam shortly after my arrival there in October 1971. After a meeting with **Capt. Murphy**, I was chosen as one of the interpreters who would be continuing on with the Rustics who were in the process of relocating to Ubon RTAFB. On November 11, 1971, Major **Ben Atkins** took a shy and naive, two-striper on his first OV-10 ride to Thailand. It was there that I met my fellow interpreters, two of whom were also from Maine.

The next ten months would become a real eye opener. Although most of the 169 missions I flew are now vague glimpses into the past, certain missions will forever be imbedded in this old GIB's memory bank. My first mission with **Tom Clinch**, the Christmas time mission with **Wayne Wood**, the many missions I flew with Mac Le FAC, **Jerry McClellan**, who was also my fini flight driver. The racquetball games with **Doug Aitken**, the spaghetti suppers put on by **Marcel Morneau**, the card games in the GIB hooch with **Joe Garand, Ralph Dow, Doug Norman, Nick Lewis and Jean Claude Gestas**. The fini parties at the Rustic hooch, **Ting**, the bar maid, the visit by **Col. Oum and Sam**...all great memories, because of great warriors who believed in what they were doing, the mission they were tasked to perform, the comradery that kept us mission oriented. I have never again experienced anything like that time I spent as a Rustic.

I am damn proud of my Rustic tour, the highlight of my three years and eight months in the Air Force. So, yes, my wife IS right! I love my wife, yes I do, yes I do! I love her truly.

From Bob Harris, Rustic 33 (Nov 70-Sep 71). Being a Rustic has been a very positive influence throughout my civilian life. In fact, it certainly helped my career with the Department of Homeland Security. And recently I have been invited to be the keynote speaker at the MOAA sponsored Veterans Day celebration to be held in front of the Veterans' Center, Ardmore, OK on Nov 10th. All together I'll be speaking to 2,500 people. You know our Rustic story will play a major part in my remarks.

Being a Rustic represents Duty, Honor and Country to me and all that our Stars and Stripes symbolizes.

Now retired in southern Oklahoma and doing all I can to support the current conservative administration. Cheryl and I can't make the reunion but our thoughts will be with you all. Also, we certainly enjoyed our visit with the Rustic A-10 drivers at Moody AFB this last Spring.

From Jon Safley, Rustic 19 (Mar 72-Dec 72). Being a Rustic means more and more to me every year. As I look back, it's hard to believe that the Air Force leaders would give a bunch of young airmen the responsibilities we were given as Rustics. But they did, and we showed them "how to do it right."

What does being a Rustic mean to me? First, life-long friends. Second, being a proud alum of one of, if not, the best FAC units in SEA. In the grander scheme of things, being a Rustic "turbocharged" my flying and decision-making skills which helped me during the rest of my Air Force career. When I returned to the US following my Rustic tour, I knew I could fly just about any aircraft or mission the Air Force threw my way. After another tour in the EC-121 which sucked, I spent the "rated supp" as an instructor at SOS, following Doug Aitken as the section commander in D-47. Following that I went to F-111s. From oil-slinging piston engines in the ancient "Connie" to a highly sophisticated, go-fast machine that hugged the terrain as it ingresses to the target. My Rustic experience gave me the confidence and skills to do well as an "Aardvark driver" during our two tours at RAF Upper Heyford and also at American Airlines.

To say I am proud to be a Rustic is a gross understatement. It was a great mission, flown by a great group of dedicated, young aviators and interpreters who, after all these years, still know how to "raise a glass" and yet continue to respect and support our fellow Cambodian compatriots and each other.

From Tom Wolford, Rustic Alpha, Issue 10 Xray (Jul 70-Aug 71). Of all the jobs I have ever had, I have never felt the satisfaction that I got working with the Rustic FACS. I felt we were doing our very best to help people who really needed it.

LETTERS TO THE RUSTICS.

From Col Sarady Tan (son of Nady Tady), May 22, 2017

To Doug Aitken (Nady Tan's sponsor when the family immigrated to the U.S.)

I am sorry to hear about Carol's condition, but glad you're settled at your new place. My next assignment will be at the Defense Intelligence Agency in Ft Detrick, MD. I will start in early July. Once checked in, I will have a better assessment of my availability in the fall. My phone will not change.

I spoke with my dad on Saturday. He is doing okay except for some chronic medical conditions that restrict his mobility. He does not plan to visit the US anytime soon.

Give my love and hugs to Carol. Tell Danielle and her family hello from here. **Sarady**

Facebook posting by the 19 Weapons Squadron "Rustics."

Lt. Col. Eduardo Pires, 19th Weapons Squadron Commander, was front and center representing the 19th WPS at the 20th anniversary reunion of the Vietnam-era "Rustic" Forward Air Controllers in Fort Walton Beach, Fla, Oct. 19-22!

Continuing its great partnership with our 19th WPS, the Rustics invited the squadron to its anniversary events. While there, Lt. Col. Pires updated them on what his squadron is doing today and attended a celebratory banquet.

The 19th WPS' legacy stretches back to the Rustics, who were part of the 19th Tactical Air Support Squadron. The 19th TASS inactivated in 1993 and then reactivated and redesignated as the 19th WPS in 2003.

"It was an incredible opportunity to meet with these men whom we had read about in our Squadron histories and had done so much to battle Communism in Southeast Asia," said Pires. "We honor them today as we continue to use the 'Rustic' callsign in the 19th WPS. Though we are not FACs ourselves, as Intelligence Weapons Officers and NCOs, we carry on the legacy of finding and identifying the enemy and marking him for destruction."

Best wishes to the Rustic FACs for many more years together!

The photo is of several Rustics and 19th WPS members (current and graduates). The bell in Lt. Col. Pires' hands comes from the Rustics' squadron bar at Ubon, Thailand, from which they operated from 1971-1973.



L-R: Jim Nuber, 19 WPS Dan Diamond, Claude Newland, 19 WPS Elyse Crimm, Greg Friex, 19 WPS Ltc "Easy" Pires & Elliot Stump, Lendy Edwards, 19 WPS "Torn" Thompkins, and Bill Decabooter.

From Zot Barazzotto, Rustic 55

Claude, please send my regards to all, especially **Kohn Om**, for my not being able to attend this year's reunion. Starting a business isn't for the faint hearted but I'm a multiple failure at retirement, so here we go again. I'm putting in a WISP (Wide-area Internet Service Provider) operation to serve my country neighbors with good net connections. First tower's parts are on order and customers are waiting in line to get connected. We will see what it looks like in a few months.

Zot, keep us posted on your new adventure.

From Roger Hamann, Rustic Yankee (and our new vice-president).

It was great to see everyone at the reunion this weekend. Thanks again to **Claude Newland, Lendy Edwards, Tom Wolford** and their wives for all their hard work in making sure everything ran smoothly.

If any of our group members have pictures of **Col. Oum**, please share them with me (rusticyankee72@aol.com) as **Tony Lieou** (Col Oum's oldest son) has expressed a desire to see any and all pics that may be out there so that he can share with his family.

Two of my most memorable moments from this reunion was meeting four of Col. Oum's children who were invited guests of the Rustics and hearing **Sonica Lieou-Jackson** (Col. Oum's youngest daughter) speak to the Rustics about her family's relationship with the Rustics and what that relationship has meant to all of her family's members. It truly was a very emotional moment for this backseater.

From Joe Dandeneau, Rustic Foxtrot

'Want to second what **Rog Hamann** said about **Claude Newland, Lendy Edwards, Tom Wolford** and their wives. I've attended five reunions and this was the very best by far. Thank you for all the hard work. Also, want to say thank you to all the Rustic attendees and their family members for the care and attention they shared with my family. You gave them a fabulous experience that they will not soon forget.

From Bob Blair, Rustic 0-2A Crew Chief

Hey **Claude & Lendy**, a one word summary...WOW !!!! The banquet was awesome. You guys with your teams did an amazing job organizing it all. FYI...my hearing disability is so profound that it becomes very frustrating for me in a crowded and loud environment, so I need to involve myself only slightly in those situations. I'm sure I must come across as an odd fellow at least, but it's difficult to communicate with a 90 percent loss of hearing. I first thought about not attending the reunion at all, but I'm sure glad I did. I met a few guys that I served with over there, and that was quite rewarding, most especially **Steve Peffer** whom as you know was a hooch roomy of mine at both Bien Hoa and at Binh Thuy. Thank you both and all involved in doing a really great reunion...just awesome.



CALENDAR:

All-FAC Reunion, Settle, WA, Sep 17-23, 2018. Information available at www.fac-assoc.org.
Rustic Reunion, Las Vegas, NV, Date TBD, Fall 2019

Rustic FAC Association
4033 Indian Trail Drive
Destin, FL 32541

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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Rustic News

www.rustic.org



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Director: Jim Reese, jimboree@bellsouth.net
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Health & Wellness: Doc Thomas, shialary@msn.com
Database: Lendy Edwards, lendy@cox.net

If you are coming to the 2017 Rustic Reunion, we recommend you save this newsletter for future reference.

PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE.

Greetings Rustics, I write this with the strong hope that each of you are making plans to attend our 20th Year Anniversary Reunion in October. This is going to be a fun event. Once again **Claude Newland, Lendy Edwards, and Tom Wolford** have done yeoman work in planning the entire weekend. We are especially pleased to announce that **Kohn Om** and seven members of **Col Oum's extended family** will be joining us. Make sure you take a close look at the Schedule of Events.

Your Board of Directors had a busy Spring meeting and there are several issues which will be resolved at the Reunion.

New officers: I am not running for President due to some family health issues, so we will need to elect a new President and re-elect a new BOD. Currently, all the other BOD members have agreed to serve again. We will, of course, request additional nominations from the floor at the Business Meeting.

At the Executive Board meeting, the BOD will hear several initiatives concerning how to continue financial support for our friends in Cambodia. We have several good ideas to consider and the decision(s) we make will be announced at the Business Meeting.

I am honored to have served as your President and I am confident your new President will continue the good work started by our President Emeritus, Claude Newland, over 20 years ago. Your BOD has been a wonderful group to work with.

One last item. Please give some thought to where you would like to have our 2019 reunion. Some have suggested, Dayton, OH or Tucson, AZ. Where would you like to go? Any volunteers to help spearhead a reunion effort? I'll see you in October. **Doug Aitken, Rustic 16**



ALL RUSTICS – A SPECIAL REQUEST: Whether you are coming to the Oct reunion or not, we have a special request. After 20 years of comradery, we would like to get an update from each Rustic (or Rustic widow) on two subjects. Here's what we request you do (NLT 1 September):

- Please write a brief bio. update (max one page) on what you have been doing since Southeast Asia.
- Please write what being a Rustic has meant to you and/or what impact being part of the Rustic family has had on your life (max. one page).

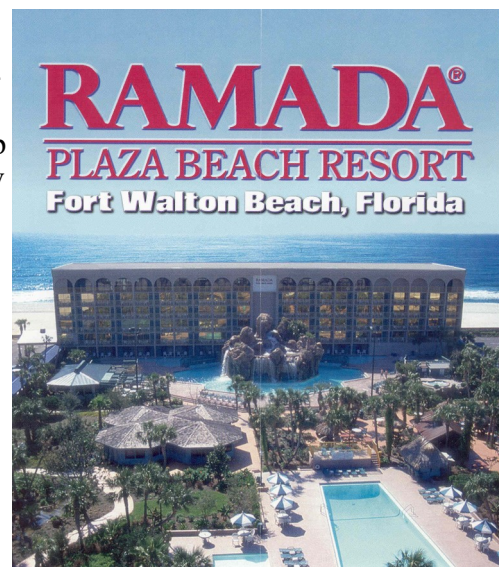
We'd like to make this information available at the reunion or in future newsletters. If you cannot make the reunion, we will try to find a way to share this information with you. Start writing.

IT'S TIME TO REGISTER FOR OUR NEXT RUSTIC REUNION. This year's reunion will be our 20th Anniversary Year Reunion. Can you believe it!?! The dates are 19-22 Oct 2017, in Ft Walton Beach, FL. To say this year's reunion is special is an understatement. You don't want to miss it! We have a full schedule of events for the weekend and a great banquet speaker, but the best part will be seeing you there!

Our first reunion was held in 1997. Do you remember that weekend, and meeting all our buds you hadn't seen in years? What memories! We've come a long way since then -- reunions, association, website, newsletters, charity contributions, return trip to Cambodia, field trips to visit modern-day Rustics, new friendships and lasting memories. Plus, more reunions. Encourage your buds and their ladies to join us this year. We're not sure how many more of these are in our future. Life is all about relationships and our ties are some of the strongest.

The Reunion Registration Form is at the end of this newsletter. We need to receive your registration NLT 15 Sept 2017, to ensure hats and shirts arrive on time. Late registrations are welcome, but no hat or shirt orders accepted after 15 Sep.

REUNION HOTEL. Our Reunion hotel will once again be the beautiful Ramada Plaza Beach Resort on Okaloosa Island, 1500 Miracle Strip Pkwy SE, Ft Walton Beach, FL 32548. Each person is to make their own hotel reservations NLT 18 Sep. Call toll free 800-874-8962, and specify "Rustic Reunion" to receive our special room rates. The discounted room rate also applies three days before and three days after the reunion dates. The room rates (below) include up to two hot full buffet breakfasts which normally cost \$10.95 each. Below rates do not include 11 % tax. (Normal room rates in Oct start at \$189/night.)



Type room:	Location:	Cost:
Standard	Faces parking lot	\$120/night
Courtyard	Faces courtyard	130/night
Pool view	Tower Bldg., faces pool	140/night
Beach Front	Tower Bldg., faces beach	150/night

ALTERNATE REUNION HOTEL. Just down the street from the Ramada is the Emerald Coast Inns and Suites at 1214 Miracle Strip Pkwy SE, Ft Walton Beach. They estimated the cost per night in Oct will be \$79.00 for two persons which includes a continental breakfast, but it could be lower. Ask for a Sr. Citizen's discount. Call 855-516-1090 or use their website: www.EmeraldCoastSuites.Reservations.com.

BANQUET SPEAKER. Our banquet will be one of the highlights of this year's reunion. Our speaker is USAF Col. Ed Hubbard who lives here locally in the Ft Walton Beach area. He is an internationally known speaker, author, and photographer, who is dedicated to helping others overcome any obstacle, handle any ordeal, and reach any goal by developing the correct state of mind. Building upon his adverse experiences during more than six and one half years of captivity in North Vietnam, Col Hubbard conveys a positive message for personal growth. After hearing his presentation, you will feel good about your country, yourself, and your own ability. His book title: "Escape from the Box – The Wonder of Human Potential" will be available at the reunion.

HAVE YOU RECORDED YOUR HISTORY FOR YOUR FAMILY? Here's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. **Martin Madert** will be attending this year's reunion to conduct free video interviews about your time in the service. The interviews take around an hour and you will receive in the mail 3 DVD copies of the unedited video. These interviews may be published on the Witness to War website, found at www.WitnessToWar.org, where the public can easily access over 4,000 firsthand accounts of war from the men and women who experienced it. Your interview can also be donated to the Library of Congress' Veterans History Project as well as the 50th Anniversary Commemoration of the Vietnam War. Appointments are limited, so please contact Martin at 770-628-0024 or Martin@WitnessToWar.org to schedule your interview, or if you have any questions, comments, or concerns. Martin did interviews at 2016 All FAC reunion and was well received. He is very professional.

Interview timeslots are the same for **Thurs, 19 Oct; Fri., 20 Oct: and Sat., 21 Oct.** Call Mr. Madert now to get the interview time best suited for you. (See reunion Schedule of Events before choosing a timeslot.)

Available interview time slots: 9:00-10:30 am, 10:30-12:00 noon, 12:00-1:30 pm, 2:30-4:00 pm, 4:00-5:30 pm, 5:30-7:00 pm, 8:00-9:30 pm, and 9:30-11:00 pm.

WHO IS COMING? Here's a list of those already planning to attend:

Doug & Carol Aitken, Zot & Judy Barazzotto, Bob Blair, Don & Jin Hee Brooks, Tom & Peggy Capps (guests, brother George & Mena Capps), Si Dahle, Ron & Rosemary Dandeneau, Bill & Jan Decabooter, Roger Dodd, Johnny & Laura Drury, Jerry & Roselyn Dufresne, Lendy & Sue Edwards, Don & Helene Ellis, Sharon Friedhofen, Greg Friex, Mike & Corinne Gagne (*from France*), Sarah Gabel, Roger & Joan Hamann, Hank & Annie Keese (*from Belgium*), Shad & Carol Kimbell, Dave & Cris Kurau, Jim Lester (*first Rustic /CC*), Chuck Manuel & Valerie Wendt, Bill & Cathy Mc Adams, Jerry & Joan McClellan, Bob & Carmine Montmarquet, Marcel & Denise Morneau, Claude & Tona Newland, Jim & Lynne Nuber, Jim & Marcia Reese, Kohn Om, Jim & Diane Seibold, Nancy Sleigh, Winnie Stearns, Doc and Gayle Thomas, Maj. William Thompkins (19th Weapons Sq, Nellis), Jack & Anne Thompson, Susan Van Dyke, Ron & Janette Van Kirk, Mike & Sherry Wilson, and Tom & Theresa Wolford.

Additionally, seven members of Col Oum's family will be in attendance. We expect this list to grow considerably. Start calling your buds now if they are not on the list.

RUSTICS TO HELP CAMBODIAN GUESTS ATTEND 2017 REUNION. WE NEED YOUR HELP. We are asking all Rustics to help us replenish our Cambodian Reunion Support Fund (*see* Registration Form). Our Rustic friend and Cambodia fighter pilot extraordinaire, **Kohn Om**, will be our guest at the reunion. We will fly him down from Virginia for the weekend. He has been our guest at every Rustic reunion since our first reunion in 1997. We are honored with his presence.

Additionally, we are pleased to learn that seven members of Col. Oum's family will be in attendance; four of his children, plus some spouses and a grandson. They will be driving from Austin, Texas and staying with **Claude & Tona Newland** in nearby Destin. To show our appreciation, we hope to be able to defray some of their reunion expenses as well.

If you would like to help bring our guests to the reunion and defray some of their expenses, please make a contribution to our "Cambodian Reunion Support Fund" on our Registration Form. If excess funds are received they will be carried over to our next reunion. *Thank you in advance for your support.*

ROSTER UPDATES:

Doug Aitken	229 Hein Dr. Clayton, NC 27527
Dave Dekoker	davedekoker@mail.com
Pierre M. Ligonde	12680 SW 144 Ter, Miami, FL 33186, peterasterl@gmail.com
Jerry McClellan	jlmccele@comcast.net
Bob Schwein	Rustic20.Nail57@gmail.com; ZIP code is 01331-1818
Nancy Sleigh	1501 Partin Dr. North, Unit 116, Niceville, FL 32578, same phone 850-897-1045
"Doc" Thomas	3919 Autumn Trace. Maryland Heights, MO 63043; (770) 853-7207
Susan Van Dyke	913-207-9047

LOST RUSTICS. We have lost contact with the following Rustics: **Mick Gibbar, John Hatfield, Walt Krueger, Mark Kuprinski, Phillip Moreault, Dave Morrison, Norm Simon, and Joe Spencer.** If you have any information on how to contact them (phone, address, or email) please send your info to our Database Keeper, **Lendy Edwards**, lendy@cox.net or call 850-651-6676.

SHORT BURSTS.

--Doc Thomas on the move. We are moving to Maryland Heights, MO in Jun, but we will be in Alaska through July and will winter in Hawaii. (*Hmmm...tough life Doc, but somebody has to do it!*) We'll be at the reunion. Gayle says that you're the only people who will put up with me. (*So True.*)

--All Bird Dog Units Reunion. There will be a reunion for ALL O-1 drivers and their support personnel, 1922 August 2017, in Washington DC. Information is available at: www.afr-reg.com/Birddog2017.

--**FAC Museum in Ft Worth. Jim Hodgson** reports, "We have just received the great news that we have been certified by the National Museum of the US Air Force and are now eligible to participate in their static aircraft loan program. We have worked for this for a very long time and this simply supports our credibility of representing all of you and our dedication to preserving our collective heritage. Now, we may see a few more air-planes in our future."

SARADY TAN UPDATE. Sarady, son of **Nady Tan**, whom Rustic **Doug Aitken** sponsored to the US, is a real American success story. Sarady is an O-6 USAF Flight Surgeon who most recently was the hospital Commander at Mountain Home AFB. He has just completed the National Air War College. He has been invited to attend our upcoming reunion and we are awaiting a response. His father, **Nady Tan**, continues to live in Cambodia after returning to Cambodia to become the Secretary General (*i.e. chief civil servant*) of the country. Nady is now retired. Sarady lived with the Aitken's for six weeks, after Cambodia fell, with his Mom (who sadly passed away last year) and Dad and two siblings, while his two older brothers were surviving the Killing Fields in Cambodia. The family's story of survival is in the last chapter of our Rustic book.

NEW MOVIE --"FIRST THEY KILLED MY FATHER." **Angela Jolie** has made a new Netflix movie which will be released in September. The movie is based on the book by **Loung Ung** who survived Cambodia's Killing Field as a young girl. **Roger Hamann**, Rustic Yankee, put us onto this book several years ago. You may want to read the book before seeing the movie. At Roger's suggestion, we sent **Loung Ung** a letter inviting her to speak at our reunion banquet, but we couldn't get past her agent who is booking all her engagements now with some sporty speaking fees.

VIETNAM DOCUMENTARY. **Ken Burns** has produced the definitive documentary about the Vietnam War, 10 episodes, 18 hours of broadcast time. Misty plays a featured role in episodes dealing with the Ho Chi Minh Trail. The show will start on Public TV the week of September 17—10 nights over a two-week period.

O-2 BEING RESTORED. From **Noland Hargrave**. FACS, we are restoring Cessna O-2, tail # 86877, as a static display at the Wings Over the Rockies Museum in Denver, CO. I am one of the volunteers in the Restorations dept. and a Vietnam veteran, 67-69. We are working hard to keep the plane as original as possible. It did fly in Vietnam and was stationed with the Illinois National Guard in the '70s. It sat outside in the sun in Arkansas for over 30 years and took quite a beating.

If you flew this aircraft or have any history on her, please contact me and give me a brief history of your flights, etc.

We are missing only 3 or 4 gauges from the instrument panel, the gun sight, and the armament switches to the right of the gunsight. We are trying to track them down. **We also need a photograph** of any equipment that was in the rear cockpit, if any. We're not sure what went back there.

If you or your members have any contacts for parts it would really help in this project. Do you know if you have any members familiar with the O-2 in the Denver area? We sure would like some O-2 "experts" to visit and give us advice or even help! Thanks for anything you can do to make this project a success. **Nolan Hargrave**, Centennial, CO. 303-717-9494, nolan1947@hotmail.com.

BRONCOS STILL IN ACTION. From **Frank Sovich, Rustic 36.** Vice Admiral Mark Fox, U.S. Navy (retired), former Deputy Commander, U.S. Central Command reports:

The blinding flash of the two 2.75-inch Hydra rockets leaving their tubes in less than a second temporarily blinded the OV-10 Bronco aircrew in their dive toward their target. Minimizing their noise signature at high altitude, they had been quietly stalking the two small boats with four confirmed enemy combatants continuously for three hours. They were moments from beaching their canoe filled with weapons and equipment headed to the front lines. Until that moment, the enemy's resupply route across the river had been completely open, allowing a steady flow of well-trained fighters, weapons, and vital equipment to be transported by canoe and small boat.

Both rockets detonated less than a foot from the two insurgents with devastating effect. The Bronco crew immediately assessed their hits, scanned for surface-to-air threats, added power and performed a maximum G turn to set up for an attack on a second canoe in their formation 500 meters upriver from the first target. Alerted to the attack on their lead canoe, the second pair of insurgents jumped from their boat and quickly swam to shore in search of safety. They found none. After the second "cleared hot" from the Joint Terminal

Attack Controller (JTAC), the second salvo of rockets, fired only 90 seconds after the first attack, landed within two feet of the remaining enemy.

The engagement described above did not take place in 1960s or '70s Southeast Asia. These attacks were executed by naval aviators above the Tigris River in Northern Iraq in summer 2015, exactly 47 years to the day after the first OV-10 Bronco combat engagement in 1968. The contrast in similarities is astounding. In a nod to the heroic naval aviators who preceded them a generation before, the Broncos were painted in Vietnam-era Light Attack Squadron Four (VAL-4) "Black Pony" markings. The 2.75-inch rockets used during the attack were the same deployed in Vietnam, but now outfitted with the advanced precision kill weapon system (APKWS) laser-guidance kits. Even though the aircraft were equipped with the latest high-definition (HD) color forward-looking infrared (FLIR), HD large-screen color displays, helmet-mounted cueing systems, datalink and beyond-line-of-site communications and video, advanced threat warning systems, the latest infrared expendable decoys and night-vision devices, aircrew employed the same reconnaissance tactics, techniques, and procedures and light-attack mechanics perfected during Vietnam and Operation Desert Storm.

RUSTICS VISIT THE 74th FIGHTER SQUADRON FLYING TIGERS – A-10 Rustic FACs. Five Rustics (**Doug Aitken, Tom Capps, Lendy Edwards, Bob Harris, and Claude Newland**) rendezvoused at Moody AFB, Valdosta, GA on Thursday evening, 13 April. That night they enjoyed a dinner downtown with their 74th squadron host, **Capt. Charles "WAE" Cole**. The next day, they had an awesome visit to the 74 FS squadron, flew the A-10 simulator, observed an A-10 weapons loadout exercise, and toured the flight line. The highlight of the visit was briefing the 74th FS members on who we are and our Rustic mission in Southeast Asia. They are really into our Rustic history. **Doug Aiken** put together a great slide show and each of the attending Rustics had a speaking part in the presentation. Following the briefing, we presented the squadron two copies of our revised Rustic book for their archives and several Rustic challenge coins. The day concluded with a raucous time in the well-appointed and well-supplied squadron bar. It was like the good old days!

Oh, and Bob's wife, "Charlie", was also in attendance. She added a lot of class to the affair just by being there. Bob and Charlie drove from Oklahoma to attend this event. As you know, Bob recently had some serious medical issues. We're happy to report he has rebounded nicely and is looking good.



Rustic Memorabilia Wall



Flying Tigers and Rustics

CALENDAR

Rustic FAC 20TH anniversary year reunion, Ft Walton Beach, FL, OCT 19-22 2017
O-1 FAC Reunion, Washington DC, 19-22 Aug, 2017

LETTERS TO THE RUSTICS

From Bob Schwein, Rustic 20, Nail 57. ‘Still working the Import/Export business like I always have. Probably won't retire until around the 2026 - 2030 timeframe. Doing well; excellent health. Right now, I'm scheduled for other activities during the month of Oct 2017. Unlikely I'll be able to swing by the 20th reunion.

From Jerry McClellan, Rustic 14

Hello Lendy. Greetings from NW of Chicago, in Huntley, IL. I am trying to get back into what you guys are up to, and you can help me out. The Rustic website is easy to find and navigate, and I see that my name is on the list. I believe I paid the \$100 lifetime dues. Where can I see or access the newsletters? I see the next reunion is planned for Oct 19-22 in FWB. I need to know more, as we may be able to make this one. Joan and I are doing well up here, and still able to travel. We head to AZ 2 x per year to see family and her Mom who will be 90 this year. We do road trips and are starting to get more into bigger travels and cruises. We visit my two sons in VT and ME and Joan's son in TX. ‘Still very active in the local concert band and dance band as a percussionist. I haven't yet gotten over the loss of Slick...he was undoubtedly my closest and best friend overall in my entire career. We hope you and yours are thriving and prospering. Please reply and help me get back in touch...thank you! **Jerry McClellan**

From Lendy Edwards, Rustic 20

I donated one of **Dick Wood's** red Rustic history books and a copy of our original black book to the 34th SOS at Hurlburt Field so I helped spread the Rustic story in that direction. **Lt Ross** was very happy to get the books for the squadron. Incidentally, **Lt Ross** and his dad are the only father/son team we have in our local Daedalian flight.

From Doug Robertson, Rustic Control, Monday, Feb 27, 2017

Today I was able to make it to the interment for **Lt. Col. Merle Shields, Rustic 37**. The weather was perfect with a small turnout of family and friends. I was proud to represent the Rustic's and the family was very pleased that I was able to make it to the ceremony. I have enclosed several pictures that I took to share with the Rustic family. I followed our tradition and placed a nickel on his coffin for the Rustic's and one for myself. His wife was glad that I carried on the tradition. **Doug**

From Bob Clifford, Rustic 03, May 2017

Greetings Tona and Claude: Sounds like you have a great one [*reunion*] in the works. It doesn't seem possible for us to make it as we look at our schedule right now. I have a residency permit now in Denmark (making it the 6th country we have had residency since my Rustic time) and we are selling our big house on the coast and have bought a new condo overlooking downtown Copenhagen. Having reached the ripe old age of 80 it is time to look to the future.

While I enjoy the outside work at our big house right now (I'm going out to do the one hour and a half mowing job once I finish this e-mail) and have no problems with the three flights of stairs we both know that age will catch up and I'll be more comfortable in a downtown one-floor condo. The drive to Copenhagen from our present house is at least one hour and in the winter it is often icy and of course dark, dark, dark in the winter. We do really enjoy the city and all its pleasures so this is another reason to make the move.

We sold our last condo and had actually sold our Beachside 2 condo [*near Destin, FL*] but the financing just fell through so it is back on the market. So, we have not ruled out an October visit, but it looks real iffy right now. Dorte and I think of you two often and wish you the best.

From Don Brooks, Rustic 02, 12 June 2017

Rustic Uniform (George “Lunchbox” Larson) took his final flight on June 11, 2017. Burial was in Cape Canaveral National Cemetery, Mims, FL on 14 June. A memorial service was held 18 June at the Good Korean Church in Orlando. George was proud to have served his country, but particularly proud of the time that he served with the Rustics. Claude and Tona Newland attended the memorial service to represent the Rustics.

2017 REUNION - SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Ramada Plaza Beach Resort, Ft Walton Beach, FL

19-22 October 2017

Revised: 6/2/17

DATE/TIME	ACTIVITY	LOCATION or NOTES
WEDNESDAY, 18 OCT 2017		
1700-2200	PRE-PARTY	TBD
THURSDAY 19 OCT 2017		
0600-1030	BREAKFAST (comes with room)	Ramada Garden Cafe
1000-Noon	HOOCH SET-UP	
Noon-1900	REGISTRATION	FAC Hooch (Oasis Room, poolside)
Noon-1900	HOOCH OPEN	
1600-1730	EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING	TBA
1800-1200	DINNER (Restaurant next door to hotel) --Order from menu (Rustic seating area)	1810-Meet in hotel lobby. Depart 1810
2030-2100	OFFICIAL WELCOME	Hooch
FRIDAY, 20 OCT 2017		
0600-1030	BREAKFAST (comes with room)	Ramada Garden Cafe
0900-1045	TOUR USAF ARMAMENT MUSEUM	0815-Meet in hotel lobby to carpool; depart - 0830
1110-1215	EGLIN AFB VISIT -- Briefing on Eglin's many missions -- F-35 briefing -- 96 th Test Wing Operations	
1215-1330	LUNCH (<i>sign up on Registration Form</i>)	Bayview Club, Eglin AFB
1600-1830	SUNSET CRUISE (Destin Harbor)	1545-Meet in hotel lobby to carpool
1900-2100	DINNER (at Destin Harbor Restaurant, TBD) --Order from menu (Rustic seating area)	
2100-TILL	HOOCH OPEN	
SATURDAY, 21 OCT 2017		
0600-1030	BREAKFAST (comes with room)	Ramada Garden Cafe
0800	GOLF, Eglin AFB	0700-Meet in hotel lobby to carpool
0900	HOOCH OPEN	
0900-1430	FREE TIME --Optional visit to Hurlburt, Air Park & FAC Memorial	
1430-1630	RUSTIC BUSINESS MEETING/ELECTIONS	Hooch
1630-1700	BANQUET SET-UP	Ramada Towers Bldg-Top Floor
1800-1900	BANQUET HAPPY HOUR—CASH BAR --Individual & couple photos by Jim Seibold -- 1845-1900 GROUP PHOTOS --Entertainment by Roger Dodd & Bill Hartley	Ramada Towers - Forum Room
1900-2200	DINNER BANQUET	Ramada Towers - Forum Room
2130-TILL	RUSTIC HOOCH OPEN	
SUNDAY, 22 OCT 2017		
0600-1030	FAREWELL BREAKFAST (comes with room)	Ramada Garden Cafe
Noon	HOOCH CLOSES	

Note: Witness to War Foundation, Mr. Madert, from Atlanta, will be at the reunion to interview Rustics about their experiences in SEA. The interview lasts about one hour and will become part of the Foundation's archives.

Rustics will need to sign up for available interview slots so they can work around what time is best for them. Each interviewee will receive a DVD copy of the interview. We have done this at past ALL-FAC reunions and it has been well received. I've got my DVD.

SEE YOU IN OCTOBER!

REGISTRATION FORM 2017 RUSTIC REUNION, 19-22 October 2017

Please print all information and return with payment **NLT 10 Sep 2017**. (This will ensure time to order shirts and hats.)

Name _____ Nickname (for name tag) _____
 Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Telephone (____) _____ E Mail _____
 Spouse/Guest Name _____ Nickname (for name tag) _____
 What day do you plan to arrive at the reunion? Wed. _____ Thurs. _____ Fri. _____ Sat. _____
 Approx. time of day: _____ Coming by: Car _____ Air _____ (Flight No _____)
 I'm arriving at: Destin/Ft Walton Beach Airport (VPS) _____ Pensacola (PNS) _____
 If unaccompanied, would you be interested in sharing a room/expenses with another Rustic? Yes _____ No _____
Do you or your guest(s) require any special assistance while at the reunion? Please Specify: _____

I'm willing to help man the Rustic hooch for a couple of hours, if needed. Yes _____
 I/we will be attending the early arrival pre-party on Wed, 18 Oct., 5 pm Yes _____
 I'm bringing memorabilia for display in the Rustic Hooch. Yes _____
 I would like to be interviewed by Mr. Madert, Witness to War Foundation. Yes _____
 I won't be attending the reunion, but would like the items ordered below mailed to me. Yes _____

REGISTRATION FEES

	<u>Number:</u>		<u>Sub-total:</u>
Registration Fee: <u>Rustic \$45.00; Guest \$25.00</u> (not req'd if banquet only).	x _____	=	\$ _____
Cost:			
Pre-Party, Wed, 18 Oct, 5 PM	x _____	=	\$ _____
Eglin AFB Visit and Lunch, Fri, 20 Oct	x _____	=	\$ _____
Sunset & Dolphin Cruise, Fri, 20 Oct, PM (<i>A reunion favorite</i>)	x _____	=	\$ _____
Golf, Sat, 21 Oct, AM	x _____	=	\$ _____
Banquet, Sat, 21 Oct, PM	x _____	=	\$ _____
Contribution to Cambodian Reunion Support Fund			\$ _____
Contribution to Cambodian Charity Fund (Tax deductible):			\$ _____

Reunion Memorabilia Items:

You can pick them up at the reunion (or have them shipped to you if you are not coming.)

T-Shirts have the Rustic logo on the front and artwork on the back. Golf shirts have the Rustic logo on the front.

Men's Navy Blue Poly T-Shirt	Sm _____ Med _____ LG _____ XL _____ XXL _____	\$15.00	x _____	=	\$ _____
Men's White Poly T-Shirt	Sm _____ Med _____ LG _____ XL _____ XXL _____	\$15.00	x _____	=	\$ _____
Lady's Navy Blue Poly T-Shirt	Sm _____ Med _____ LG _____ XL _____ XXL _____	\$15.00	x _____	=	\$ _____
Lady's White Poly T-Shirt	Sm _____ Med _____ LG _____ XL _____ XXL _____	\$15.00	x _____	=	\$ _____
Men's White Poly Golf Shirt	Sm _____ Med _____ LG _____ XL _____ XXL _____	\$25.00	x _____	=	\$ _____
Lady's White Poly Golf Shirt	Sm _____ Med _____ LG _____ XL _____ XXL _____	\$25.00	x _____	=	\$ _____
Rustic Coin		\$10.00	x _____	=	\$ _____

Rustic Maroon Baseball Cap with logo. Indicate size and number desired:

(This year's hat is much better than past hats and is not size adjustable.)

S/M (6 7/8—7 1/4) _____ M/L (7 1/8—7 1/2) _____ L/XL (7 3/8—7 3/4) _____	\$16.00	x _____	=	\$ _____
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Shipping costs if <u>not</u> attending reunion: Hat(s) or shirts: \$4.00; hat(s) & shirt \$7.00	x _____	=	\$ _____
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TOTAL TO REMIT: \$ _____

Please make a file copy of this completed form for yourself. There are two options to Register:

1. Mail Registration Form and check (payable to "Rustics") NLT 10 Sep 2017 to Lendy Edwards.
2. Go to Rustic website, www.rustic.org, and lookup Rustic Reunions and fill out the Registration Form on-line. Then print the form and mail with a check to Lendy for your expenses.

If you have questions, call Lendy at 850-651-6766.

Lendy Edwards, 11 Poplar Avenue, Shalimar, FL 32579 Email: Rustic20@cox.net

Ladies Shirt Specifications



Port Authority® Ladies 5-in-1 Performance Pique Polo. L567. Quite simply, this is the ultimate easy care performance polo. With exceptional moisture-wicking and odor-fighting properties, this breathable, low-pill style also resists snags. Plus, it has a stain-release finish so it's perfect for food service uniforming.

- White is 5.6-ounce, 100% polyester for increased coverage
- Double-needle stitching throughout
- Flat knit collar and cuffs
- Elongated 4-button placket with dyed-to-match buttons
- Side seam panels
- Side vents

Ladies Sizes: XS-4XL



Sport-Tek® Ladies PosiCharge® Tough Tee™. LST320. Worthy of its tough name, this snag-resistant tee is durable, soft and smooth. Great moisture wicking combined with bleed-resistant PosiCharge technology means it will perform and endure time after time.

- 4.7-ounce, 100% polyester jersey with PosiCharge technology
- Gently contoured silhouette
- Scoop neck
- Removable tag for comfort and relabeling
- Set-in sleeves

Ladies Sizes: XS-4XL

Rustic FAC Association
4033 Indian Trail Drive
Destin, FL 32541

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED