

86TH FIGHTER-BOMBER GROUP ASSOCIATION

FEBRUARY 2008 NEWSLETTER



REJOICE!
You gain an extra day
this year

“KI-YIP-PEE-YI,” DEEP IN THE HEART OF TEXAS

Everything is shaping up nicely for our San Antonio reunion. Our host, Al BURGOON, has been hard at work lining up an attractive program of events, and arranging for the place that will serve as the headquarters for our get together. Of the choices, he selected:

HOLIDAY INN DOWNTOWN/ MARKET SQUARE
318 W. Durango Blvd., San Antonio, TX 78204

Phone (888) 615-0725 for reservations. Our Contact: Tina Embry

The days of hotel rooms under \$100 are almost a thing of the past, but if it wasn't for city and state taxes, Al would have succeeded. Room rate is \$91.00, but the 16.75% tax brings the total to \$106.24. (Rates at the Menger Hotel where we stayed for our 1989 reunion are now in the range of \$135 plus tax.)



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Official dates of the reunion are Thursday, September 4 through Saturday, September 6, 2008. As usual, rooms will be available on Wednesday the 3rd for early arrivals. Deadline to make reservations, OR cancel them, is one month prior to the start of the reunion. That is August 3rd.

Complete details on the tours will be included in the Activities Reservation Form (ARF) that will accompany our next Newsletter in July. Briefly, they include dinner by the famed River Walk with a boat tour following, motor coach tour of the historic town of Greune, and coach tour of the "best of San Antonio." Al has also secured tee times for two foursomes at the Randolph Field golf course. So all you hackers need to confirm with Al or me ASAP if you intend to play because the reservations will not be held indefinitely.



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NEWSLETTER

Editor - Sidney B. Howard
Publisher - Martha M. Plowden

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Elected Officers ~ Board of Directors

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REMEMBERING

The stars at night, are big and bright,
deep in the heart of Texas,
The prairie sky is wide and high,
deep in the heart of Texas.
The sage in bloom is like perfume,
deep in the heart of Texas,
Reminds me of, the one I love,
deep in the heart of Texas.



The coyotes wail, along the trail,
deep in the heart of Texas,
The rabbits rush, around the brush,
deep in the heart of Texas.
The cowboys cry, "Ki-yip-pee-yi,"
deep in the heart of Texas,
The dogies bawl, and bawl and bawl,
deep in the heart of Texas.

This song was first recorded by Perry Como with Ted Weems and His Orchestra on December 9 of 1941 for Decca Records in Los Angeles, California. "Deep in the Heart of Texas" spent five weeks at the top of *Your Hit Parade* in 1942.

POTPOURRI

* I am indebted to Bill DELANTY for calling my attention to an error in the November newsletter and the In Memoriam entry on Eugene WHYTE that states Eugene flew L-4 aircraft as a front line observer for the artillery. Gene actually flew the L-5 on what were known as "Rover Joe" missions

Bill, who also engaged in these missions, explained that, because the P-47 flew too high and too fast to observe enemy ground movement, "Rover Joe" was begun. It consisted of a radio controller on the ground who was in contact with all fighter-bombers flying in the area. Its eyes were L-5's at forward bases (actually grass fields near the front) and the pilots moved at about three-day intervals to keep up with our fast moving infantry.

The L-5's were piloted by P-47 jockeys assigned to that duty for a month. With large-scale maps of the area on his lap and radio contact with the ground controller, he flew over the lines low enough to see enemy movement and report its location to the ground controller. "Mighty hot going at times" Bill says. The enemy knew our presence signaled dive bombing and strafing soon, so shot us up pretty well.

The leader of a flight of P-47's would call the Rover Joe controller after takeoff, report the number of aircraft and armament and await assignment. If the controller had no reports of enemy location, the flight could go on to the target assigned during pre-flight briefing. "On my assignment, I shared our landing fields and supplies - gas, parts, etc. - with Army pilots flying L-4's to observe for their artillery. I was the only Rover Joe man there. Rover Joe worked out well for our troops and was an interesting, if hazardous, way to see the war first hand."

* We have invited Charles DILLS, President of our sister 27th FBG and any of its other interested members to attend our San Antonio reunion. We look forward to a good representation by the only other Group in the ETO

to fly the A-36. Incidentally, our host, Al BURGOON, reports solid progress in lining up reunion activities, including the (don't miss) fabulous River Walk cruise.

* It may interest you to know that there are 317 names on our Active Roster, of whom 192 or 60% are Veterans, 81 or 26% are widows, and 43 or 14% are Family and Friends.

* The following is a poem in a Christmas card from John SORENSON (525 Pilot) that he received from a cousin on his 89th birthday. As John says, "very interesting bit of prose."

Birthdays Are A Gift From God

Where does *time go* in its endless flight.
Spring turns to fall and day to night,
And birthdays come and birthdays go
And where they go we do not know.
But God who planned our life on earth
And gave our mind and body birth
And then enclosed a living soul
With Heaven as the spirit's goal
Has given man the gift of choice
To follow that small inner voice
That speaks to us from year to year
Reminding us we've naught to fear
For *birthdays* are a *stepping-stone*
To endless joys as yet unknown.
So fill each day with happy things
And may your burdens all take wings
And fly away and leave behind
Great joy of heart and peace of mind
For *birthdays* are the *gateway* to
An *endless life of joy for you*
If you but pray from day to day
That He will show you the Truth and the Way.

* Last year I finally got around to writing my (only slightly expurgated) autobiography. Some of you have expressed an interest in reading it. There are 2 or 3 copies circulating around, but I may not be around at the pace they are moving. It occurred to me that I could e-mail it to anyone interested. It is some 120 pages which takes about 10 e-mail transactions and some time to transmit. I would be pleased to send it to anyone interested. All it takes is your time to read the transmissions, or the cost of some paper to download it to hard copy.

E-mail addresses are intentionally omitted.

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IN MEMORIAM



BRYANT, Delph S. (526 Communications.) – Died 09/04/68 according to National Personnel Records Center (NPRC), St. Louis. He has been carried on our Not Located Record.

BURGOON, Steve (527) – Al's son passed away 12/04/07 at age 61 of acute bronchitis and pneumonia complicated by a blood disorder, after a brief illness. Steve attended four reunions and was named Reunion Coordinator at Indianapolis. Flowers were sent to the funeral in the name of the Association.

CAMPBELL, George W. Jr. (526 P-47 Pilot) – Died 03/06/59 according to NPRC. He was one of our unlocated comrades.



COLLINS, Donald E. (527 Communications) – Barbara Velletri wrote that Don's son Mike had advised her of his death on 09/19/07. He said

that Don had been in failing health since the beginning of the year. Don and his wife Greta who predeceased him, hosted a wonderful reunion in Saratoga Springs, NY in 1988, one of 17 reunions of which they were veterans. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

DAHL, James F. (527 Engrg.) – Passed away on 12/19/07 of unstated reasons according to his daughter-in-law Susan. "I know the 86th FBG meant a lot to him. He kept extensive files on all communications, pictures and newspapers, and so enjoyed attending your reunions. Thank you for the camaraderie and good times I know he shared with you." Jim was an early Lifetime Member and attended 11 reunions.

FORGET, Francis H. (526 Carpenter) – Deceased date unknown according to NPRC; another on our Not Located record.

IAVELLI, Carl A. (527 P40/47 Pilot-POW) – Died on 12/12/07 after being in declining health for the past several years. Carl was a Lifetime Member and had attended six reunions. The Association sent flowers to the funeral.



IN MEMORIAM (cont)

KYLE, Homer F. (526 Ordnance) – Deceased date unknown per NPRC. Was on our Unlocated record

MILLER, Richard G. (527 A36/P40/47 Pilot) – As reported by his son Michael, Dick "was called home by our Lord on the morning of December 20, 2007. He was a proud member of the 86th, and he will be missed by many."



At LM-7010, Dick was one of our first Lifetime Members, and was a veteran of 13 reunions. Ironically, his roommate at many reunions, "Bucky" O'Connor, died earlier in 2007.

PRINGLE, Norma (527) – Deceased 06/12/06, no other details from her son Kevin. That was two days short of 3 months since Les passed away. They were Lifetime Members and veterans of five reunions.

SMITH, Calvin G. (527 Engrg.) – Deceased 04/28/06 according to NPRC. Calvin attended three early reunions, but not since Tulsa in 1986. He had been on our Inactive Roster for some time.

SMITH, Edward A. (526 Ordnance) – Died 10/17/06 according to NPRC.

SICK CALL

Louise **HOBGOOD** (Co-host of our 1992 Myrtle Beach reunion) wrote a long note about Rex on her Christmas card: "This has been a very bad year for Rex (health wise), but he is much improved and looking forward to Christmas. He has had 3 heart attacks, prostate problems, and memory loss.

"He had prostate surgery, but the heart condition is being treated with medication. His memory is pretty good for the here and now, but he has lost so much from the past. He does remember his Air Force duty. We celebrated our 60th wedding anniversary on August 21st A REAL MILESTONE."

SICK CALL (cont)

John **SORENSON** also wrote a note with his Christmas card. "I would love to come to another reunion (*he has attended 8*), but I am not physically able to handle flying anymore with my arthritic back, so no more traveling for me. If it wasn't for that part of the carcass, I'd be OK."

ROSTER MAINTENANCE

The contents of this section are intentionally omitted.

SMILES

One of Gary Larson's cartoons "The Far Side" that appeared in my 12/18/87 Squadron Newsletter pictures a housewife talking to a policeman at her front door who is taking notes as she says, "When I got home, Harold's coat and hat were gone, his worries were on the doorstep, and Gladys Mitchell, my neighbor, says she saw him heading west on the sunny side of the street."

(Surely, everyone remembers that Jimmy McHugh classic "Sunny Side of the Street." It was the theme song of one of my favorite radio programs of the late 30's "Lucky Lager Hit Parade" (terrible beer but great music).

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR YEAR 2007

BALANCE AT CLOSE OF YEAR 2006 (123106)

\$8,775.86

Receipts for Year

Annual Dues (6 @ \$10.00)	\$60.00
Voluntary Contributions	\$245.00
Activities Reservation Forms (ARFs-Indy Reunion)	\$4,609.00
Sales (NL binders, Circles of Unity, shirts, autographed P-47 print) ...	\$198.00
Bank Interest.....	<u>\$61.90</u>
	\$5,173.90

\$13,949.76

Disbursements for the Year

Phone	\$84.44
Printing and Postage	\$2,020.78
Bulk Mail Permit	\$160.00
Office Supplies	\$190.69
Personalized Checks	\$10.05
Bank Charge	\$15.00
Computer Supplies.....	\$309.28
Funeral Flowers	\$243.94
Memorial Donation.....	\$50.00
Search Fee	\$39.95
Newsletter Binders Production.....	\$256.23
Reunion Tour Bus Rental.....	\$800.00
Reunion Tour Guide Fee	\$665.00
Reunion Banquet	\$1,433.39
Reunion Hotel Staff Gratuity	\$200.00
Hospitality Room	\$649.59
Reunion Group Pix	\$124.94
Personalized Pens for Reunion Handouts.....	\$175.53
Activities Reservation Form (ARF) Refund	\$72.00
Website Consulting	<u>\$300.00</u>
	\$7,800.81

BALANCE AT CLOSE OF YEAR (123107)

\$6,148.95**FOOTNOTES TO FINANCIAL REPORT**

1. \$10 Annual Dues, \$100 Lifetime (Cumulative).
2. Make checks payable to **86th FBG Assoc.**
3. Payers since last Newsletter:
Tony DOSSETT (525) VC, Perry HIGHLEY (526) VC; Patricia Mihelich (527) VC in memory of her Dad Walter Kucway; Richard ROBERTS (527) VC; Graham WEIGLE (525/526) LM-6056
4. VC = Voluntary Contribution.

ATTENTION EVERYONE

Army Serial Numbers (ASNs) are vital in locating veterans. We do not have ASNs for the following veterans on our Inactive Rosters and Missing Lists. We were able to locate one through an old roster given to me at the Indianapolis reunion.

Now we are challenging you to dig through

your own, your husband's, or your dad's WWII memorabilia for rosters, travel orders, promotion lists, medals awarded, or any papers that show ASNs for any of these former comrades. If your search is successful, please send copies of your "find" to the Secretary. We need your help, so **please do it now**

INACTIVE ROSTERS

525	526	527	GHQ
*FISCHER, Edward HEMBREY, Jesse T. KRECKLER, Richard A. *O'HARA, Raymond F. *SCHREYER, Warren C.	CALABRO, Tony *GENZ, William *JOHNSTON, Lawrence L. *KAUFFMAN, Earl G. *KNAACK, Donald B. *WEBB, Byron E. *WELP, Ronald W.	BURNS, Richard J. *DeSTEVEN, Perry J. GERDES, Harry F.	BELL, Richard *BUCKNER, John H. CLARK, Jerry T. KORBEIN, Wilbur O. *KRUCK, Charles W. *OLTMANN, Wilbert C.

MISSING LISTS

525	525	526
ANDERSON, Stephen F., Jr BLAKE, Dana S. CANN, Elvin H. CHANSLOR, R. D. COHEN, Albert COWAN, Duane E. DIEHL, Joseph, Jr. EMLINGER, Charles G. HASELRUDE, Clarence E. JENNINGS, John C. JONES, John C. LEVESQUE, Dolor H. MILLER, Richard J.	MONOHAN, Robert M. NETTLES, Clyde J. REESE, Charles H. RIDDLE, W. J. ROARK, Sherril ROSS, William C. SEELEY, Victor W. TIMMERMAN, Z. B. TISCHLER, Jacob J. WALKER, George A. WALKER, William B. WARD, Michael J. WILLIAMS, LeRoy E.	*ANDREWS, George B. *BRUNDIN, Richard T. *CAMP, Gerald A. *McLEAN, GILFRED D. *SCHILLER, Ray *SMITH, Hugh C.

NOTE: * = Officer