

**“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam**  
**...keeping the memories alive**

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Phan Rang News No. 46

**“Stories worth telling”**

**In this issue:**

**Husband of Wichitan Discusses Air Strike**

**More Flying For Airmen**

**6th AC-47 ‘Spooky’ Gunship reunion**

**AF Doctors Save Sight of Koreans**

**Serving Our Country**

**Doug’s Note**

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**Husband of Wichitan Discusses Air Strike** (*Wichita Times, Wichita Falls, Texas, 17 February 1971*)

**WITH U.S. COMBAT AIR FORCES.** Vietnam — U.S. Air Force 1st Lt. **William S. Madsen** whose wife and children reside in Wichita Falls, recently provided air support for units of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) in canal-laced Mekong Delta.

Lieutenant Madsen and his, wingman on the mission are F-110 Super Sabre pilots with the 614th Tactical Fighter Squadron at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam.

Their recent strike aided troops of the ARVN 33<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Regiment who were in contact with a Viet Cong force 17 miles north of Quang Long in Kien Giang Province, Vietnam.

By the time we arrived in the target area the sun was low on the horizon, getting in our eyes, and the haze was starting to obscure things. There was a pretty good fire fight going on between the ARVN and the Viet Cong." Recalled the lieutenant.

“The forward air controller, who was flying a O-1 Bird Dog, marked the targets for us and we started our runs. We made eight bomb and four strafing passes,” he concluded.

The two pilots destroyed several enemy bunkers and an enemy sampan and inflicted enemy casualties. Lieutenant Madsen is nearing the midway point of a 12-month Southeast Asia tour of duty.

He regularly flies pre-planned strikes and close support missions in the supersonic F-110. Before beginning his assignment at Phan Rang, he was with a tactical fighter unit at Luke AFB, Ariz.

**“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam**  
**...keeping the memories alive**

---

Phan Rang News No. 46

**“Stories worth telling”**

A 1963 graduate of Mentor Ohio High School, the lieutenant was commissioned in 1968 upon completion of the Reserve Officers Training Corps program at Ohio State University where he earned a bachelor’s degree in industrial engineering.

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**More Flying For Airmen** *(The Republican-Courier, Findley, Ohio, August 25, 1970)*

**PHAN RANG AB, Vietnam** (AP) — What began several months ago when a 35th Tactical Fighter Wing F-100 Super Sabre pilot decided to make a model airplane in his spare moments has grown into the Phan Rang Model Airplane Club, a rapidly expanding group, of officer and airmen model enthusiasts.

"A few of us wanted to get together and fly our models," explained Sgt. Jerry R. Lloyd of Friona, Tex. "We really didn't expect much participation, but on the day of our 'fly-off model airplane buffs literally came out of the woodwork — and we drew at least 50 spectators, too." The radio controlled versions, Sergeant Lloyd admits, sometimes have their drawbacks. "Recently a friend of mine launched his craft expecting to have an enjoyable session but something went haywire," he recalled. "The plane made a beeline for the base perimeter and has not been seen since. I guess 'Charlie' probably thinks we're launching some type of new weapon at him."

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**6th AC-47 Spooky Gunship reunion** *(from Don Luke’s comments on Facebook)*

(The ‘Spooky’ reunion was held September 4 in Dayton, Ohio.)

The 6th AC-47 Spooky Gunship reunion is done and planning will start for the 7th reunion during 2015.



**The 'Spooky' Men - Photo by Billy Clark**

**“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam  
...keeping the memories alive**

---

Phan Rang News No. 46

**“Stories worth telling”**

For too many years, those who spent part of their lives living the Spooky life so many years ago, had no group or reunion to call their own. Memories fade and are not always reliable but I recall someone contacting me some years ago about a get together for those who worked on, crewed and supported Spooky (and Puff). It started out small and has grown, thanks to the continued drive of those who got it all started and those who have stood up and said I can do that: I can help, we can get it done . . . .

This was my first reunion, I was unable to attend prior reunions, the reasons all different but, after recently retiring from a 35 year career, one of the primary barriers to attending has been eliminated. I had helped plan and organize a high school reunion a decade ago but that was a one day event and does not compare to what must go into a Spooky Brotherhood planning and implementation effort for a reunion of this caliber.

It was gratifying and enjoyable to meet the faces of those I have chatted with electronically over the years Harvey Wasserman stood together during 1959 and finally got to shake hands again in 2014.

Kevin McKenzie, who's father was there for us young guys away from home in a hostile environment - finally getting to shake his hand. Junior, Mike, Bernie, Bob: Don, Bruce, Billy, Al and more. Thank y'all for a wonderful reunion and experience. A giant thank you to those who have planned, organized, and done all the work to make the reunions happen, it is a LOT of work. Thank You - Don Luke: Danang, Nov 68-69, grease monkey (maintainer).



**The 'Spooky' Women - Photo by Billy Clark**

**“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam  
...keeping the memories alive**

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Phan Rang News No. 46

**“Stories worth telling”**

**AF Doctors Save Sight of Koreans** (*Pacific Stars & Stripes*, April 8, 1968)

**PHAN RANG** (01) — Quick action by Air Force medical personnel at the 35th U.S. Air Force Dispensary, Phan Rang AB, recently saved the sight of two Republic of Korea soldiers temporarily blinded when a Viet Cong fortification exploded near them.

Antibiotic drops needed to prevent permanent eye damage were not available in the dispensary of the soldiers' White Horse Div. unit, so the two were rushed to the Air Force dispensary.

When they arrived, the only function retained by their eyes was light perception. After nine hours of treatment and rest, the vision of the Korean soldiers returned to normal, and they went back to their unit.

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**Airman 1.C. George D. Cooke**, son of Mr. and Mrs. George E. Cooke of Seaford is on duty at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. Airman Cooke, a machinist, is a member of the Pacific Air Forces. (*The Sunday Times, Salisbury, Md. August 18, 1968*)

**TSgt Kenneth P. Richardson**, son of Mrs. Beulah Willey of Cambridge, is on duty at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. He is a jet engine technician. (*The Sunday Times, Salisbury, Md. August 18, 1968*)

Receives Medal - **Master Sergeant Rowland F. Barnes Sr.**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Germain C. Barnes, 1726 Mable St., Ottumwa, receives his second award of the U. S. Air Force Commendation Medal at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam, from Colonel Gregg P. Noland Jr., commander, 35th Tactical Fighter Wing. The sergeant was cited for his outstanding professional skill, leadership and devotion to duty as a supply superintendent at Vandenberg AFB, Calif. The

**“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam**  
**...keeping the memories alive**

---

Phan Rang News No. 46

**“Stories worth telling”**

sergeant served at Tuy Hoa AB, Vietnam before arriving at Phan Rang. He is a 1952 graduate of Albia High School. His wife, Mary, is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Earl A. Johnson, Albia. (*The Monroe County News, Monday, June 14, 1971*)

**Airman first class David E. Parmentier**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Earl Parmentier, of Shingle Springs, is on duty at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. Parmentier, a jet engine mechanic, is assigned to the 35th field maintenance squadron, a unit of the Pacific Air Forces, headquarters for air operations in Southeast Asia, the Far East and Pacific area. He previously served at Nellis AFB, Nev. The airman is a 1968 graduate of Ponderosa high school. (*The Mountain Democrat Times, Placerville, Calif., Thursday May 28, 1970*)

**A1C Rodger W. Lewis**, son of Mrs. Gloria Lewis, RFD Myersville, is on duty at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. Airman Lewis, a transportation specialist, is assigned to the 35th Transportation Squadron, a unit of the Pacific Forces, headquarters for air operations in Southeast Asia, Far East and Pacific area. previously served at Kirkland AFB, N.M. (The airman is a 1969 graduate of Middletown High School. (*The New, Frederick, Maryland, October 7, 1970*))

**Lt. Col. Joseph Henry**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Eugene M. Henry of 406 S. Third St., Clearfield, Pa., receives the U. S. Air Force Commendation Medal at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam, from Colonel John W. Pauly, 315th Special Operations Wing commander. Colonel Henry was decorated for his outstanding duty performance while assigned to the Arnold Rocket Test Center, Tullahoma, Tenn. The colonel, a C-123 Provider pilot, is now at Phan Rang with a unit of the Pacific Air Forces. A graduate of Clearfield High School, he earned his B. M. A. degree and commission in 1949 upon graduation from the U. S. Military Academy. Col. Henry also holds an M. B. A. degree from the University of Chicago. (*The Progress, Clearfield, Pa., September 4, 1968.*)

**Col. C. P. Nolen** is assigned to fighter wing, with U.S. Combat Air Forces, Vietnam — U.S. Air Force. Col. Cregg P. Nolen Jr., whose wife, Roberta, is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. S. J. Rodrigue of 2930 12th St., Port Arthur, has assumed the position of vice commander of the 35th Tactical Fighter Wing at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. Col. Nolen served at the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., prior to his appointment at Phan Rang. His new unit is a part of the Pacific Air Forces. The colonel, who was commissioned in 1944 through the aviation cadet program, holds the aeronautical rating of command pilot. He is a veteran of World War II and the Korean War. Col. Nolen, a 1943 graduate of Thomas Jefferson High School, received his B.G.E. degree 1964 from the University of Nebraska at Omaha and his M.S. degree in 1966 from George Washington University, Washington, D.C. (*The Port Arthur News, December 1, 1970*)

Sgt. Steger Is Decorated in Vietnam

APPLETON — **Chief Master Sergeant Richard G. Steger**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Steger, 1415 W. Washington St., Appleton, has been decorated with his second U.S. Air Force commendation Medal at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam.

Sgt. Steger was awarded the medal for meritorious service as a supply systems superintendent

**“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam**  
**...keeping the memories alive**

---

Phan Rang News No. 46

**“Stories worth telling”**

at Amarillo Technical Training Center, Amarillo AFB, Tex. He was cited for his outstanding skill, knowledge and duty performance. (*Daily Northwestern, February 15, 1967*)

**SSgt. Bobby E. Webb**, son of Mrs. Mary E. Miller of Quinwood, serving with the U.S. Air Force (USAF) at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. (*Beckley Post-Herald, Beckley, W. Va., May 29, 1969*)

John A. Locklair JR. With U. S. Combat Air Forces, Vietnam - **Staff Sergeant John A. Locklair Jr.** is among communications personnel who share honors with the 35th Tactical Fighter Wing at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam, In earning the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Palm.

Sergeant Locklair, son of Mr. and Mrs. John A. Locklair 10207 N. 27th St., Tampa, Fla. is an air traffic controller and provides essential support to wing F-100 Super Sabre Fighter bomber operations at the coastal installation.

The 35th was cited by the Republic of Vietnam for flying more than 53,000 missions during a two-year period in support of U. S. and Vietnamese ground operations. The wing was also recognized for its community service programs which included a medical dispensary for treatment of villagers and orphans in the area.

Sergeant Locklair, assigned to Phan Rang as a member of the Global Air Force Communications Service, will wear a distinctive service ribbon to mark his affiliation with the 35th.

The sergeant is a 1968 graduate of King High School. His wife, Betty, is the daughter Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Amrnons of Fort Pierce, Fla. (*News Tribune, Fort Pierce, Florida, June 3, 1971*)

With U.S. Combat Air Forces, Vietnam — **Sergeant Paul D. Munson**. son of Mr. and Mrs. Paul C. Munson of 204 Greenwood Street. Redwood City, is a member of the F-100 Super Sabre wing at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam, that has been selected as having the best maintenance complex in the U.S. Air Force.

Sergeant Munson is a security policeman with the combat proved Tactical Fighter Wing that has been named to receive the 1967 Daedalian Maintenance Trophy. The award is presented annually to the organization chosen as best by the Air Force chief of Staff on the basis of maintenance effectiveness and efficiency in being operationally ready. The trophy was established by the Order of Daedalians, an organization founded by World War I pilots.

Wing personnel earlier won top honors for maintenance effectiveness and efficiency in the U.S. Seventh "Air Force" in Vietnam that led to similar recognition throughout Pacific Air Forces and then Air Force-wide. The Phan Rang flying and maintenance crews and support personnel in diversified areas were cited for their close teamwork in keeping three squadrons of the supersonic jet fighter wing combat-ready around the clock.

**“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam**  
**...keeping the memories alive**

---

Phan Rang News No. 46

**“Stories worth telling”**

Sergeant Munson was graduated from Sequoia Union High School. (*The Times, San Mateo, Calif., May 10, 1968*)

**Airman Patrick L. Guzaldo**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Philip M. Guzaldo of 656 N. Trumbull, on duty at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam.

An aircraft mechanic, he is a member of the Pacific Air Forces. He is a 1967 graduate of Holy Trinity High School. (*Humboldt Journal, January 24, 1968*)

**Airman 1. C. Roderick M. Allen**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Allen of McArthur Route 1, is on duty at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam, serving as a pavement specialist with a unit of the Pacific Air Forces. (*The Messenger, Athens, Ohio, January 14, 1968*)

**Sgt. Ralph D. Cunningham**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Hollis B. Cunningham of Millfield Route 1, is on duty at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam, serving as a construction equipment operator as a member of the Pacific Air Forces. (*The Messenger, Athens, Ohio, January 14, 1968*)

**Army Private 1.C. Johnny Smith**, 20, son of Mr. and Mrs. Johnny M. Smith of Graceville, has been assigned to 1st Battalion, 327th Infantry of the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division's Brigade near Phan Rang, Vietnam. (*Panama City Herald, Panama City, Florida, Thursday afternoon, November 23, 1967*)

**Tech. Sgt. John D. Godwin**, brother of Jimmie L. Godwin of Blountstown has received the U. S. Air Force Commendation medal at Tyndal AFB, Florida. Godwin was decorated for his service as an aircraft maintenance technician at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. He is now at Tyndall with the Air Defense Command.

The sergeant, who served during the Korean War, attended Altha High School. His wife, Vivian, is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joe D. Bodford of Altha. (*Panama City Herald, Panama City, Florida, Thursday afternoon, November 23, 1967*)

**Airman 1.C. William H. Melton**, son of Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Melton of Florence, is on duty at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam, as a metalsmith. (*Florence Morning News, Monday July 24, 1967*)

**Maj. Gerald B. Youmans**, whose sister, Lois R. Youmans, resides in Florence, is serving temporary duty at Phan Rang AB, as a B-57 Canberra pilot. (*Florence Morning News, Monday July 24, 1967*)

**Sgt. Franklin D. Wingo**, son of Mr. and Mrs. R. M. Wingo, 2208 13 Ave. N. Texas City, is on duty at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam.

Sergeant Wingo, an air operations supervisor, is assigned to a unit of the Pacific Air Forces. Before his arrival in Vietnam, he served at Kingsley Field, Ore.

**“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam  
...keeping the memories alive**

---

Phan Rang News No. 46

**“Stories worth telling”**

The sergeant, a 1956 graduate of Texas City High School, attended Lee Junior College. Paytown. *(The Galveston Daily News, Monday Morning, March 31, 1969)*

**Airman 1.C. Roger L. Landry**, son of Mr. and Mrs. C. P. Landry, 416 19 Ave. N., Texas City, is on duty at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam.

Airman Landry, a radio repairman, is in a unit of the Pacific Air Forces. Before his arrival in Southeast Asia, he was assigned to 4510th Combat Support Wing at Luke AFB, Ariz.

The airman is a graduate of Texas City High School. *(The Galveston Daily News, Monday Morning, March 31, 1969)*

**Sgt Virgil E. Adkins**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Raymond S. Adkins of 116 Arborland Acres, St. Albans, has received Air Force Commendation Medal at Perrin AFB, Tex. Sgt. Adkins was decorated for meritorious service as a weapons mechanic at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. *(The Charleston Gazette Saturday. April 13, 1968)*

He was cited for his professional skill, initiative and dedication to duty in loading munitions on the F-4C Phantom aircraft under extremely hazardous conditions. He is now Perrin as a member of the Aerospace Defense Command. *(The Charleston Gazette Saturday. April 13, 1968)*

**Sgt Steve E. Harrison** son of Coy D. Harrison of 1833 Lotus Dr., is on duty at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. His wife, Glenda, is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Les Hall of Rt. 3. Hurricane. *(The Charleston Gazette Saturday. April 13, 1968)*

**Airman Alfred G. Beane** son of Mr. and Mrs. G. W Beane Jr. of 207 First St., St. Albans. is on duty at Phan Rang AB. Vietnam. Airman Beane an aircraft mechanic. Is a member of the Pacific Air Forces. *(The Charleston Gazette Saturday. April 13, 1968)*

**Staff Sergeant Clyde T. Long Jr.**, son of" Clyde T. Long of Bulls Gap, has been decorated with the U. S. Air Force Commendation Medal at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam.

Sgt. Long was awarded the medal for meritorious service as an electrician at Beale AFB, Calif. He was cited for his leadership, exemplary foresight, and ceaseless efforts which resulted in significant contribution to the effectiveness and success of his unit's mission.

He is now at Phan Rang as a member of the Pacific Air Forces, America's overseas air arm in Southeast Asia, the Far East and the Pacific. The sergeant attended Bulls Gap High School. He is married to the former Winifred P. Gibbson from England. *(Kingsport News, Kingsport, Tennessee 37680, Wednesday January 18, 1967)*



**“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam**  
**...keeping the memories alive**

---

Phan Rang News No. 46

**“Stories worth telling”**

With U. S Combat Air Forces, Vietnam— **Capt. Gerald R. Beller**, son of Mrs. Adelaide S. Beller, 109 Central Ave., Whitefish, Mont., has received the Air Force Certificate of Achievement at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam.

Capt. Beller was recognized for his exceptional performance as a personnel officer at Air Training Command headquarters, Randolph AFB, Tex.

He is presently assigned at Phan Rang in a unit of the Pacific Air Forces. The captain, a 1956 graduate of Whitefish High School, received his D.A. degree in liberal arts from the University of Montana and was commissioned there through the Air Force Reserve Officers Training Corps program. He is member of Sigma Nu.

His wife, Helen, is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. E A. Therriault, 1225 X. Ave. W., Missoula, Mont.

Col. John Pauly, commander of the 135th Special Operations Wing, made the presentation. (*The Daily Inter Lake, Thursday, January 30, 1969*)

Rhett O. Webber At Phan Rang AB. The safe takeoff and landing of aircraft using either of the two runways at Phan Rang Air Base in Vietnam, is the job of **S.Sgt. Rhett O. Webber** of Knoxville.

Situated in a glass walled room atop a five-story tower it resembling a lighthouse, Sergeant Webber works to keep in communication with aircraft landing, taxiing, or taking off. If an aircraft is unable to land visually due to darkness or bad weather, he brings it in by radar with the aid of the Ground Control Approach system.

The 24-year-old air traffic controller, son of Mr. and Mrs. John L. Webber of Knoxville, is assigned to the 1882nd Communications squadron at Phan Rang.

A graduate of Brunswick High School, Sergeant Webber attended Louisiana State University at Alexandria, La. (*The News, Frederick, Maryland, Wednesday March 11, 1967*)

Distinguished Flying Cross To Clearfielder. With the US. Combat Air Forces, Vietnam — U.S. Air Force **T.Sgt. Patrick J. Beatty Jr.** son of Mr. and Mrs. Patrick J. Beatty, 3 Bigler Road, Clearfield, Pa., was recently decorated with the Distinguished Flying Cross at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam.

Sgt Beatty received the award for extraordinary achievement as a C-123 Provider aircraft flight engineer near Ban Me Thout. Vietnam. On Jan. 31, 1968, despite highly adverse weather conditions and intense hostile ground fire, Sgt Beatty participated in two emergency missions to deliver critically needed supplies to allied

**“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam**  
**...keeping the memories alive**

---

Phan Rang News No. 46

**“Stories worth telling”**

forces. The successful completion of these resupply missions contributed immeasurably to the defeat of the hostile forces that encircled the city of Ban Me Thout.

A 14-year service veteran, the sergeant is assigned to the 309th Special Operations, Squadron at Phan Rang.

His wife, Sara, is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William B Beaban, 115 S. Fourth St., Clearfield. Sgt. and Mrs. Beatty have five children, Patrick,10; Cheryl, 9; Kathleen, 8; David, 6 and Elizabeth 4. (*The Progress, Tuesday, December 17, 1968*)

**Capt. William K. Turpin**, son of Gordon K. Turpin, 1118 Magnolia Ave. has received the Meritorious Service Medal at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam.

Capt . Turpin, who distinguished himself as staff security officer and chief of the installations security division at Ent AFB, Colo., now is at Phan Rang as security police officer.

He was commissioned in 1962 through Officer Training School, Lackland AFB, Tex. A 1956 graduate of Bay High School, he received a B.S. degree in criminology in 1962 from Florida State University.

His wife is the former Sharon M. Demarest. (*News-Herald, Panama City, Fl., December 30, 1970*)

U .S. Air Force **SSgt. Donald R. Birdsong**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Birdsong, 310 Marble Street. Buchanan, has been decorated with the Air Medal at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. Birdsong, a flight engineer received the medal for his outstanding airmanship and courage on successful and important missions completed under hazardous conditions. He is assigned to a unit of the Pacific Air Forces at Phan Rang.

Birdsong is a 1959 graduate of Buchanan high school. His wife is the former Donna M. Welch. (*The News Palladium, Benton Harbor, Mich., Wednesday July 9, 1969*)

U. S. Air Force **T.Sgt. Robert V. Tomaselli**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Tomaselli of Freeman Ave. has been decorated with the Bronze Star Medal at Boiling AFB, Washington, D.C., for meritorious service while engaged in military/operations against Viet Cong forces.

Sgt. Tomaselli was cited for his performance as a security police supervisor at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam.

He is now assigned at Boiling with the USAF Headquarters Command which provides administrative support for thousands of Air Force personnel on special duty at 600 operating locations around the globe. While in Phan Rang, Sgt. Tomaselli was instrumental in helping to erect a new hospital building for sick children from the TAN Phai orphanage there.

**“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam**  
**...keeping the memories alive**

---

Phan Rang News No. 46

**“Stories worth telling”**

A 1948 graduate of Drury High School, Sgt. Tomaselli enlisted in the Air Force in 1950. After tours of duty in England and Italy, he was awarded the Air Force Commendation Medal in 1963 for meritorious service in Italy.

He married the former Marla G. Ortiz of Albuquerque, N.M., in Fairford, England, in 1953. Mrs. Tomaselli and the couple's five children are living in Fayetteville, N.C. (*North Adams Transcript, Friday, September 15, 1967*)

**Airman 1.C. Mark F. Blessen**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Walter H. Blessen, Columbus, is congratulated upon being decorated with the U. S. Air Force Commendation Medal at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. Col. Gregg P. Nolen Jr., commander of the 35<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Wing, makes the presentation. Airman Blessen, a 1967 graduate of Columbus Senior High, distinguished himself by meritorious service as a legal specialist at Loring AFB, Maine. He is now at Phan Rang with a unit of the Pacific Air Forces. (*The Telegram, Columbus, Nebraska, Friday, March 19, 1971*)

**Sergeant Granville Pitts**, brother of Henry Pitts Jr., of Gastonia, is serving in Vietnam with a special engineering-construction unit at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. Sergeant Pitts, a construction equipment operator, was assigned at Randolph AFB, Tex., before going to Vietnam. He is a graduate of Highland High School. (*The Gastonia Gazette, December 28, 1967*)

**Airman 2.C. Charles R. Deyo**, a graduate of East Syracuse-Minoa High School, has been decorated with the Air Force Commendation Medal at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. He was awarded the medal for meritorious service as an air policeman at Phan Rang. (*THE POST-STANDARD, Jan. 20, 1967*)

**Staff Sergeant Gene C. Reimert**, son of Mrs. Marie E. Heitz, 251 E. Walnut St., Allentown, a member of the F-100 Super Sabre wing at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam, that has been selected as having the best maintenance complex in the U.S. Air Force.

Sgt. Reimert is a maintenance scheduler with the combat proved Tactical Fighter Wing that has has been named to receive the 1967 Daedalian Maintenance Award.

The award is presented annually to the organization chosen best by the Air Force Chief of Staff on the basis of maintenance effectiveness and efficiency in being operationally ready.

The trophy was established by the Order of Daedalians, an organization founded by World War I pilots.

The Phan Rang flying and maintenance crews and support personnel in diversified areas were cited for their close teamwork in keeping three squadrons of the supersonic jet fighter wing combat-ready around the clock.

**“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam**  
**...keeping the memories alive**

---

Phan Rang News No. 46

**“Stories worth telling”**

His wife, Bonnie, is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Howard Metz, 1844 E. Mifflin St. (*Lebanon Daily News, Lebanon, Pa., Friday, May 10, 1968.*)

**TSgt. Samuel Otipton**, 692 E. William St., Crestview, Is on duty at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. Sgt . Otipton, an aircraft maintenance technician, Is assigned to a unit of the Pacific Air Forces. Before his arrival in Vietnam, he served at Lockbourne AFB, Ohio.

The sergeant Is a 1942 graduate of W.B. Townsend (Tenn.) High School.

**Col. John T. Parish Jr.**, son of Mrs. John T, Parish, 143 Sunset Drive, Marlanna, has assumed the position of director of training for the Twenty-First Air Force headquartered at McGuire AFB, N.J.

Col. Parish served at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam, prior to his appointment at McGuire. Twenty-First Air Force is a major component of the Military Airlift Command.

The colonel, who has more than 27 years military service, Is a veteran of World War II and was commissioned in 1945 through the aviation cadet program. He now holds the aeronautical rating of command pilot.

A 1939 graduate of Walton County High School, DeFuniak Springs, he attended Michigan Slate University, the College of Great Falls(Mont.) and the University of Delaware.

His wife, Madeleine, Is the daughter of Mrs. Effie J. Laird of Rt. 3, DeFuniak Springs. (*PLAYGROUND DAILY NEWS, Thursday Morning, April 8, 1971*)

VIETNAM - **Capt. Michael J. Speer**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Victor H. Speer of Altoona RD 4, recently received an Air Medal at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam.

Capt. Speer, an air operations officer, distinguished himself by meritorious service, displaying outstanding professional skill and devotion to duty, which contributed to the success of the Air Force mission in Southeast- Asia. He is assigned at Phan Rang with the 315th Special Operations Wing, a unit of the Pacific Air Forces.

The captain was commissioned in 1961 through the aviation cadet program. A 1958 graduate of Altoona High School, he attended Pennsylvania State University, Ohio University and Memphis, Tenn., State University.

Capt. Speer's wife, Sally, is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Walter L. Martz of 3M Broad Ave. (*The Altoona Mirror, Altoona, Pa., Friday October 10, 1969.*)

**“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam**  
**...keeping the memories alive**

---

Phan Rang News No. 46

**“Stories worth telling”**

**Sgt. Julian R. Lucero**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Joe D. Lucero, 800 Pecos St., Las Vegas, N.M., has received the U.S. Air Force Commendation Medal at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam.

Sgt. Lucero was decorated for outstanding achievement as a fire protection specialist at Phan Rang. He exerted skill, "knowledge and physical stamina while under attack to support and supply the fire fighting operations which helped save many valuable aircraft and ground equipment.

The sergeant, a graduate of Robertson High School, is assigned to a unit of the Pacific Air Force.

His wife is the former Palmira C. Rubio of Spain. (*Las Vegas Optic, no date.*)

Air Force **T.Sgt. James D. Hackworth**, son of Mr. and Mrs. James Hackworth. Crab Orchard, has received the Air Medal at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam.

Sgt Hackworth, an aircraft maintenance technician, was decorated for his outstanding airmanship and courage on successful and important missions completed under hazardous conditions in support of the Air Force mission in Southeast Asia.

The sergeant, a 1950 graduate of Williamson High School, is assigned to Phan Ran with the 311th Special Operations Wing, unit of the Pacific Air Forces, headquarters for air operations in Southeast Asia, the Far East and the Pacific area.

His wife is the former Barbara J. Butler from England. (*Raleigh Register, Beckley W. Va., Tuesday, December 16, 1969*)

**Major Lorain F. Hennig**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Hennig of Elkader, received the U.S. Air Force Commendation Medal at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam, from Lieutenant Colonel Randall L. Steffens, 614th Tactical Fighter Squadron commander.

Major Hennig was decorated for meritorious service while assigned to the 55th Tactical Fighter Squadron at Wethersfield RAF Station, England. He was cited for his outstanding professional skill, knowledge and devotion to duty.

The major now flies F-100 Super Sabre aircraft on combat missions from Phan Rang in support of military operations in Vietnam.

He was commissioned through the aviation cadet program.

Major Hennig, a 1945 graduate of Elkada Public High School, is married to the former Marilyn E. Olson, daughter of Mrs. Lourene Olsan of 6257. W. Highland Ave., Phoenix, Ariz. (*October 22, 1968*)

**“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam**  
**...keeping the memories alive**

---

Phan Rang News No. 46

**“Stories worth telling”**

**Airman First Class Francis P. Welnetz Jr.**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Francis P. Welnetz Sr. of 1117 Fourth Ave., Antigo, Wis., is serving on temporary duty at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam.

Airman Welnetz, an air armament mechanic, was permanently assigned at Clark AB, Philippines, before arriving in Vietnam.

The airman is a 1963 graduate of Antigo Senior High School.

His wife, Harriet, is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Earl Blose of Craigsville, Pa. (*Leader Times, August 8, 1967*)

**Staff Sgt. James D. Bulen**, son Mr. and Mrs. James L. Bulen 4512 22nd, Lubbock, is a member of the 35th Tactical Fighter Wing at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam, that has been honored by the Vietnamese Armed Forces.

The 35th has received the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Palm for its contribution to the military forces and local citizenry of the country. The wing, which operates F-100 Super Sabre fighter - bombers, was cited for flying more than 53,000 missions during a two - year period in support of U.S. and Vietnamese ground operations. The 35th was also recognized for its community service programs which included establishing a medical dispensary for treatment of villagers and orphans in the area.

The sergeant is a 1965 graduate of Lubbock High School. (*Lubbock Avalanche-Journal, May 27, 1971*)

**Sergeant Patrick F. Nichols**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Homer L. Nichols of LaBelle, Pa., is a member of the F-100 Super Sabre wing at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam, that has been selected as having the best maintenance complex in the U S. Air Force.

Sergeant Nichols is a materiel specialist with the combat-proved Tactical Fighter Wing that has been named to receive the 1967 Daedalian Maintenance Trophy.

The award is presented annually to the organization chosen as best by the Air Force Chief of Staff on the basis of maintenance effectiveness and efficiency in being operationally ready. The trophy was established by the Order of Daedalians, an organization founded by World War I pilots.

Wing personnel earlier won top honors for maintenance proficiency in the U. S. Seventh Air Force in Vietnam that led to similar recognition throughout the Pacific Air Force and then Air Force-wide.

The Phan Rang flying and maintenance crews and support personnel in diversified areas were cited for their close teamwork in keeping three squadrons of supersonic Jet fighter wing combat-ready around the clock.

**“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam  
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Phan Rang News No. 46

**“Stories worth telling”**

Sergeant Nichols was graduated from John A. Brashear High School, Brownsville, Pa. (*The Daily Courier, Connellsville, Pa. Monday, May 13, 1968*)

**Sgt. Rudy Hernandez**, son of retired MSgt. and Mrs. Juan Hernandez, 5656 Kensington circle, is a member of a squadron that has ended its duty in Vietnam, having been activated there in 1966.

The 35th Tactical Fighter Wing at Phan Rang, with its F-100 fighters is being redeployed in the combat zone and the fighters are being returned to the U.S.

Hernandez is an administrative specialist with the wing, and is a graduate of Andress, High School. (*El Paso Herald Post, Monday August 9, 1971*)

**Sgt. Victor Diaz**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Enrique Diaz, 3509 McKinley avenue is on duty at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam as an administrative specialist. He previously served at Holloman AFB, N.M. The Austin High graduate is married to the former Yvonne Mijares of El Paso. (*El Paso Herald Post, Monday August 9, 1971*)

Sgt. Werner, an airframe repairman, is assigned to a unit of the Strategic Air Command. He previously served at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. The sergeant is a 1960 graduate of Winona Senior High School. (*The Winona Daily New, December 7, 1967*)

**Airman 1.C. Joel E. Ellringer**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Earl J. Ellringer, St. Charles, is on duty at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. (*The Winona Daily New, December 7, 1967*)

Airman Ellringer, an aircraft engine mechanic, is a member of the Military Airlift Command in support of the Pacific Air Forces. Before his arrival in Vietnam, he was assigned to Clark AB, Philippines. He is a 1968 graduate of St. Charles High School. (*The Winona Daily New, December 7, 1967*)

**Airman 1.C. Joseph B. Rackers**, whose wife, Sandra is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Bobby L. Wilbers, Holts Summit, is on duty at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam.

Airman Rackers is a supply inventory specialist assigned to the 35th Supply Squadron, a unit of the Pacific Air Forces, headquarters for air operations in Southeast Asia, the Far East, and Pacific area. He previously, served at Richards Gebaur AFB, Mo. Airman Rackers is a 1967 graduate of Jefferson City Senior High School. (*Daily Capital News, Friday, November 28, 1969*)

**Airman 1.C. Lynn E. Shaffer**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Dwight Shaffer, New Bloomfield, has been decorated with the U.S. Air Force Commendation Medal.

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Phan Rang News No. 46

**“Stories worth telling”**

Airman Shaffer received the medal for meritorious service as an illustrator at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. He was cited for his outstanding duty performance. (*Daily Capital News, Friday, November 28, 1969*)

U. S. Air Force **Sergeant Alan D. Gjerde**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Gjerde, Emmetsburg, is a member of the 14th Special Operations Wing in Southeast Asia that has earned the presidential unit citation.

Sergeant Gjerde, assigned at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam, is an aircraft accessories repairman with the wing which has received the highest U. S. organizational award for its performance as the only USAF unit of its kind in the combat theater. The 14th is headquartered at Phan Rang and operated from nine major locations in Southeast Asia. Wing aircrews fly seven types of aircraft — including fixed-wing gunships and the Air Force's only armed helicopters — on such special missions as leaflet drops, defense of allied outposts and escort for search and rescue. The 14th was credited with the defense of more than 3,600 allied positions, hundreds of ground teams and patrols, and the surrender of more than 33,000 enemy troops.

In February, the 14th also implemented Vietnamese Air Force combat crew training in AC-119 gunships into its mission to support the Vietnamese Improvement and Modernization Program.

Sergeant Gjerde will wear a distinctive service ribbon to mark his affiliation with the wing.

The sergeant, a 1966 graduate of Emmetsburg High School, attended Luther College. (*Emmetsburg Reporter, June 1, 1971*)

**Doug’s Note:** Just as a reminder all previous editions of this newsletter is available in the files section of the “Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB Facebook group and on my [Phan Rang page](#). In some cases there may be a delay in uploading them if I’m away from home, but they will eventually be uploaded.

For reunion goers I’m happy to report that the Doubletree Hotel has agreed to supplement our transportation requirements for the Pimi Air & Space Museum on Friday so that those that could not make the base tour will have an opportunity to get to the museum and bone yard. We will still have a bus for Tour 3 on Saturday to allow for those folks that were on the base and bone yard tour to get to the museum on Saturday.

One last note for the reunion, we will have [Jay Faircloth](#) singing and playing the acoustic guitar during the cocktail hour on Saturday.