

## SATURDAY EVENING BANQUET

*BY: Kim Coryat*



It was a beautiful balmy October evening for our Saturday banquet. The crowds started gathering early because a) the Country Store was open, b) the bar was open, and c) it was the last chance to buy those coveted raffle tickets (I'm not so sure that last one is really true). Some

folks who hadn't made it to any other function were here for the banquet and it was a good thing, too – they had a pair of real treats in the guest speaker and the food!



Bill Allen was our venerable MC once again and kept the crowd amused with the fact that people couldn't hear him at first. We got the microphone situation straightened out and moved right into the program. The Hurlburt Field Color Guard posted the colors and the invocation and introductions were made. Standing as

crew for the POW/MIA Table ceremony were Barry Wilkins, Duane Spencer, Art 'Hump' Humphrey, Bill 'Worm' Warner, and Dennis Paul. Toasts were toasted and believe it or not, some people actually already WERE toasted at this point!



find fault with the service or the food.

The meal was served quickly and wonderfully by the Four Points staff, and the food was fabulous. I didn't hear a single complaint, and I was sitting with a bunch of people known for their whining (mostly other board members). They were too busy eating and saying 'are you going to finish that' to



The guest speaker, Medal of Honor recipient Navy Lieutenant Tommy Norris, was literally and absolutely spellbinding. He had this crowd holding its collective breath for each sentence as he described in detail the rescue of BAT-21's Lieutenant Colonel Icael Hambleton and Captain Mark Clark and then followed with

a narrative of the mission in which he received his own near-fatal wound. He downplayed his own role in all cases, giving the credit to others and calling his own success 'lucky.' I had the opportunity to speak with Lieutenant Norris over the course of the reunion leading up to the banquet and found him to be a really great guy, friendly and down-to-earth, so his self-deprecating attitude during the speech came as no surprise. He finished to a well-deserved standing ovation.

The scholarships this year went to Anthony Hofius, grandson of George Deliduka , and Morgan Clayton, daughter of Bill Clayton. Congratulations to this year's winners!



Barry Gossman and I worked hard selling raffle tickets over the course of the reunion and it was well worth it to be able to contribute \$705 to the Spectre Scholarship Fund. The raffle items ranged from a big bullet (105mm shell) with a nice engraving on the side solicited by Barry Gossman, a beautiful plaque

detailing the specs for the AC-130 donated by Chuck Kaczmarczyk, a booze cooler donated by our Association, and a pair of glass eagles donated by yours truly. I was sort of in a wine-induced haze by the time the winners were called and I remember my name coming up, but I gave the glass eagle I both donated and won to the guy who actually bought the ticket, Neil Fletcher.



One thing I do remember clearly – the Promiscuous Pachyderms assignment for the coming year. Roger Betterelli said his wife Chris were glad to be rid of the constant trumpeting and banging around in the living room at night, not to mention the half-empty beer bottles lying around every morning (oh, wait a

minute, those were Roger's). The next responsible Spectre selected by the playful pachys to hang out with was Chuck Kaczmarczyk! Chuck and MarthaAnn are planning a lot of travel for the next few months – these smart animals knew who was moving and who was just gonna sit around the house. It's as I've been suspecting all along, the elephants actually make the selection themselves; and we humans simply obey.

The evening was a roaring success for all who were present. As I went to bed I could hear the celebrating continuing at the Hospitality Room on the other side of the pool. Those a\*\*holes just wouldn't shut up.