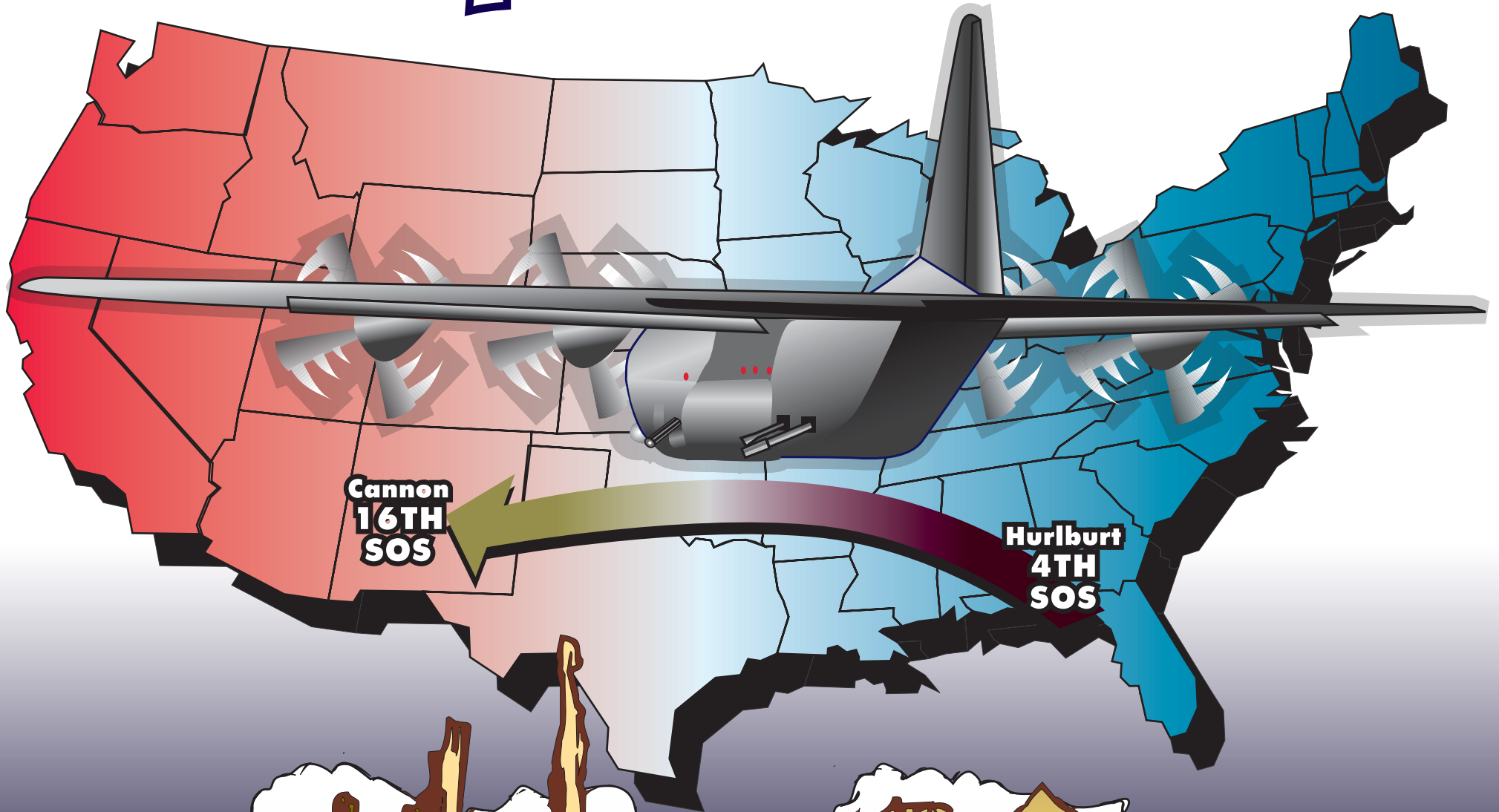


# 36th Spectre Reunion



**“Go West Young Men”**

# THURSDAY NIGHT, 8 OCT, 36<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL SPECTRE REUNION ICE BREAKER

By Dick and Shell Vancil and Larry Hickey

We threw the Spectre team a curve ball and they hit it out of the park! Instead of the usual outdoor picnic routine, your Board decided to cater the Thursday evening Icebreaker affair at a local restaurant and lounge, the Bangkok House. We also decided to move the first opportunity for registration and credentialing up to this evening as well.



Due to the lack of space and logistics of moving the store and our DJ "Stormin' Norman", it was decided to forego both on the first evening ... the store was not missed too terribly; but the lack of Spectre music was lamented as a poor judgment call. You will hear more about that in later reports; however, none of these events or lack thereof deterred the faithful from celebrating with their life-long

friends and extended Spectre family!



When we first arrived at the Bangkok House

... well before starting time, we were met by a group of die-hard Spectres, Gunner Jack among them, and their new friends at the bar who were upholding the time-honored Spectre tradition of slammin' Singhas. Some of these early starters were later gingerly carried to their hotels ...

another time-honored tradition among Spectres!



It appeared that the sign-in and badging processes went much smoother and was less problematic than in past years, and several Spectres went out of their way to compliment the efficiency. We have some ideas about ways to make it even less painful at Biloxi



in 2010. For those that were pre-registered there was little, if any, administrative mess to deal with; and if Shell remembered where she hid their name tags and goodies, everyone was on their way to the Icebreaker and gourmet food in short order. We had about 20 walk-ins and a total of 127 at the first evening's gathering. It was air conditioned, classy, and there was no required clean-up detail for the next morning.

Our Host and Hostess for the evening, Boone and Thoyey Punpeng, the Bangkok House owners, outdid themselves by arranging the facilities to openly seat all of the attendees and putting on a spread of outstanding Thai food fit for royalty. Manning the bar was Kay mixing and serving the drinks. Boone along with Som handled the kitchen. We Had Pad Thai (which is Stir



Fried Noodles), Thai Chicken Wings, Chicken Fried Rice, Egg Fried Rice, Thai Beef Salad, Chicken Lap Som Tom, Shredded Paypa Salad, Sweet and Sour Pork, Pepper Steak, Spring Rolls, Fried Wontons, and for Desert we had Assorted Fruits Thai Coconut Jell-O, Coffee Cake, and Coconut Macaroons.



The food was freshly prepared and replenished throughout the evening in an unending display of perfect planning and preparation. There was plenty of food remaining at the end of the evening which was offered to the attendees to take with them back to the hotel's Hospitality Room.

It was a great time for rekindling old friendships and in many cases making new ones as everyone mingled



and visited with one another until a respectably late hour. Rides were offered to the ones that needed them ... the beer keg was transferred to the Hospitality Room and the partying continued at the Four Points until the wee hours. All-in-all it was a GREAT gathering of loyal Spectres and a wonderful "Icebreaker."



## 36<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL SPECTRE REUNION COCKTAIL PARTY FRIDAY, 9 OCTOBER 2009

By Roger Betterelli

Well, "Spectres", the Cocktail Party at the Sheraton Four Points did not disappoint any of the attendees. We had a large gathering with members from all points of the world with their best handshakes and "catch-up" stories to anyone who would listen. It still seems that some "briefings" will never let go.



It was good to see "Gunner Jack" with his political views back with us after his brief illness.

"Three Finger Jack" . . . still the mark of excellence for never missing a Reunion. Bravo Jack!!!

Also, it was nice to see "Captain Spectre, Dave Burns" back in the saddle again.



We were honored with Jim and Bonnie Thrasher's two (2) sons attending while on active duty in the area, flight suits and all. It was great to talk with both of them and to hear how much the reunion meant to each of them. Bonnie, was her gracious self and party participant. Barry Wilklns and his wife flew in with his own plane from Cannon. Some people will do anything to get out of there. Just kidding! We heard that the squadron is standing up at Cannon AFB, New Mexico, like the familiar 16<sup>th</sup> SOS use to be back after their return from Southeast Asia. So tight you couldn't get an "ice pick" up there!

The Bar Tenders were very professional with over pouring our cocktails. We paid them with our trust and tips. The food was excellent, and I am very impressed with the Four Point Chefs with every event held at the Hotel. Of course, some Spectres like to just snack while others get their fill, so they can play in the "fourth quarter". I forgot if I ate???

The Cocktail Party started to "whine" done due to some people having to get their beauty sleep for the next day's events. Most of the remaining Spectres sat around the patio at the end of the "Monsoon" storm which rolled in toward the end of the party. The rain just reminded a lot of us of our travels and more TDY stories during our best career in the world of Special Ops. Fun was had by all.

Roger OUT!

**NOTE: A BIG THANK YOU TO LARRY HICKEY FOR ALL OF THE GREAT PICTURES.**

# **36<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL SPECTRE REUNION BUSINESS MEETING** **SATURDAY, 10 OCTOBER 2009**

By MarthaAnn Kaczmarczyk

The Annual Business Meeting of the Spectre Association was called to order on Saturday morning, 10 October 2009 at 0900 by our President, Pat Carpenter. After the Pledge of Allegiance to our Country's Flag, Dick Vancil, Vice President, read the minutes from last year's business meeting. They were adopted as read.



Bill Patterson has been serving as our Treasurer since Andy DeMeyer resigned this position in November of last year. Bill and Pat purchased a new laptop computer for the Association with the money that Al Dilts donated last year.

Pat presented a Proposed Budget for FY2010 in the amount of \$27,300.00 in estimated revenue and \$26,820.00 in estimated expenses. Pat also presented a report of Total Working Capital and Assets, which amounts to \$90,568.10.

When the ballots were counted to determine the location for our 2010 off-site reunion the result was as follows:

1. Biloxi, MS – 67
2. Las Vegas, NV - 65
3. Branson, MO - 61

Tommy Montgomery is in the process of getting information on hotels; and when a site has been chosen, the information will be put on the Spectre web site.

We received four (4) applications for the Spectre Scholarship and were very pleased to be able to award two (2) Scholarships this year. Gunner Jack drew the envelopes for the lucky, two (2) students. The announcement of the names of those students was made at the Saturday night banquet.



A ballot will go out before the end of the year, which will contain two (2) proposed amendments to our By-laws and a slate of officers for the Board of Directors.

There was a lively discussion about the possibility of changing the name of the Spectre Association, and it was voted to not take this step.

The Business Meeting adjourned at 1100L.

**NOTE #1: Please read the Minutes of the Annual Business Meeting for a very detailed account of this meeting.**

**NOTE #2: A BIG THANK YOU TO LARRY HICKEY FOR ALL OF THE GREAT PICTURES.**

# ***Spectre Association, Inc.***

P. O. Box 707, Mary Esther, FL 32569-0707

[www.spectre-association.org](http://www.spectre-association.org)

## **MINUTES OF ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING**

### **36<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL REUNION**

10 October 2009

Sheraton Four Points, Fort Walton Beach, FL

**The 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Business Meeting of the AC-130 Association was called to order at 0900 by President Pat Carpenter.**

**Board Members present were:** Pat Carpenter, President; Dick Vancil, Vice President; Bill Patterson, Treasurer; Roger Betterelli; Kim Coryat; Norm Evans; Barry Gossman; Larry Hickey; Mark Johnson; Chuck Kaczmarczyk; Tommy Montgomery, Quartermaster; P.J. Cook, Web Master; and MarthaAnn Kaczmarczyk, Recorder.

The members of the Association stood and **Pledged Allegiance to our Country's Flag.**

#### **READING OF MINUTES:**

Vice President Dick Vancil summarized the **Minutes of the 2008 Annual Business Meeting.** (Full minutes may be read on line on the Spectre Association Website.) Bill Allen moved to accept the minutes as read, and Snake Liles seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **TREASURER'S REPORT:**

Pat reported that Andy DeMeyer resigned the position of Treasurer in November 2008 after our annual Business Meeting at last year's reunion. Bill Patterson accepted the position in February of this year.

**TREASURER'S REPORT continued:**

Pat presented the **PROPOSED BUDGET FOR FY2010:**

**\$27,300.00 TOTAL ESTIMATED REVENUE:**

Annual Dues:	\$ 800.00
Life Dues:	1,500.00
Estimated Sales:	22,000.00
Donations:	3,000.00

**\$26,820.00 TOTAL ESTIMATED EXPENSES:**

Estimated Expenses:

Membership Mailings Postage	\$ 800.00
Supplies for Membership Mailings:	200.00
Spotlight Printing:	200.00
Store Inventory Replenishment:	7,500.00
Store Merchandise Shipping:	1,500.00
Office Supplies	500.00
Web Maintenance	1,000.00
Warehouse Fee:	1,000.00
P O Box Fee	80.00
Phone Conferencing Fee	360.00
Bulk Mailing Fee	180.00

Liabilities:

Scholarships	2,000.00
Credit Card	3,000.00
Donations	1,000.00
Hotel	7,000.00
VFW	500.00

**Pat presented a report of TOTAL WORKING CAPITAL AND ASSETS which amount to \$90,568.10:**

CD Life Membership Fund #1:	\$25,265.45
CD Life Membership Fund #2:	6,000.00
CD Gunner Jack Fund:	10,499.00
Scholarship Fund:	5,760.74
Special Operating Fund:	1,150.79
Checking Account:	13,142.12
Merchandise Inventory On-Hand (approx.):	27,500.00
Computer:	750.00
Projector:	450.00
Telephone:	50.00

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

Pat reported that **over \$2,000.00 has been received in donations in memory of Jim Thrasher. Two (2) \$1,000.00 scholarships will be awarded at our banquet this evening.**

Pat reported that **the on-line store is working great, and that we continue to generate in excess of \$1,000.00 per month in web sales.** Tommy Montgomery was appointed Quartermaster after our reunion in 2007 and within a couple of months was sent PCS to Turkey. Pat and Larry Hickey took over the duties of Quartermaster and did a fantastic job. Tommy is now "back in country" and is functioning as our Quartermaster. He is open to any and all **suggestions for the store.** He requested that any suggestions be written on a slip of paper and then handed to him during the reunion or e-mail him at [tommy82965@yahoo.com](mailto:tommy82965@yahoo.com) .

Mike Hofmeister requested that we check into acquiring **Henley-neck shirts with the Spectre emblem for the on-line store.**

Grace Spencer asked about **merchandise shipping charges.** Shipping charges are applied to every order unless the order totals \$250.01 or more, and then we absorb the shipping costs. Following is a breakdown of the standard shipping charges in U.S. dollars:

Orders totaling \$ .01 to \$ 50.00 = \$10.00 shipping  
Orders totaling \$ 50.01 to \$150.00 = \$20.00 shipping  
Orders totaling \$150.01 to \$250.00 = \$30.00 shipping  
Orders totaling \$250.01 and up = Free shipping

The ballot to determine the location of our **2010 off-site Reunion** was mailed to our members in February. The ballots were counted in April, and the results are as follows:

**67 – Biloxi, MS**

65 – Las Vegas, NV

61 – Branson, MO

**Tommy Montgomery has taken over as our point-of-contact for the 2010 Reunion.** Many hotels are hesitant to quote prices for rooms and meals this far out, and the only room rates we have received for next year are with the Imperial Palace in Biloxi: \$89.95 each for Thursday and Sunday nights and \$139.95 each for Friday and Saturday nights. Tommy has family members who live in Biloxi, and he will be traveling there next week. He plans to check out some more locations.

The following selections were made for the **POW/MIA table at tonight's banquet.**

- **Pilot: Dale Faulkner**
- **Engineer: Duane Spencer**
- **Gunner: Gene Fields**
- **Sensor: Norm Evans**
- **Navigator: Tony Denoi**

**Pat announced that we received four (4) applications for the Spectre Scholarship.** He asked Gunner Jack to come forward and draw two (2), sealed envelopes. Two (2) lucky students will be awarded this year's scholarships of \$1,000.00 each, and the other two (2) students are our alternate recipients.

Mike Hofmesiter stated that he believes we should add Grandchildren to our eligible scholarship applicants. At the 2007 Reunion a proposed amendment to Article XIV, paragraph 3, was introduced to allow dependent Grandchildren to apply for a Scholarship. There was a great deal of discussion among the members present two (2) years ago, but it was not voted to submit the proposed amendment to the membership for a vote. **John Wood moved that we resurrect that proposed amendment and reword it to include grandchildren and great grandchildren of any Spectre member in good standing regardless of their dependency. Mike Hoffmeister seconded the motion. Motion carried.**

**ARTICLE XIV currently reads as follows:**

**ARTICLE XIV  
USE OF INCOMES, LOANS TO MEMBERS, ETC.**

1. Income or assets of the Association will not revert to any of its members, trustees, members of the Board of Directors or officers as such, or be distributed to any of them during the life of the Association or upon its dissolution or final liquidation. Nothing in this subsection, however, shall be constructed to prevent the payment of reasonable compensation to officers and employees of the Association in amounts approved by the Board of Directors of the Association.
2. The Association shall not make loans to its members, trustees, Board of Directors, officers, or employees.

3. The Association will sponsor a minimum of one (1) scholarship for higher education each year for dependent children of members in good standing. The selection will be from a blind draw of eligible dependent children who have been submitted by the member, prior to each yearly reunion. Eligibility shall remain in compliance with the IRS definition of dependency and the dependent shall be enrolled or accepted at an accredited University, College, Junior College, or Trade School. The student must be enrolled for a minimum of three quarter time as defined by current Veterans Administration standards. As funds allow, the Association may award more than one (1) scholarship each year. Upon selection, the member and student must notify the Association Secretary of the school address. Moneys will be transmitted to the school no later than January 15 in the name of the student.

The proposed amendment will be to change the first three (3) sentences of paragraph 3 to read as follows:

The association will sponsor a minimum of one (1) scholarship for higher education each year for children, grandchildren, and/or great grandchildren of members in good standing, with lineage of the applicant to a member provided on the scholarship application. The selection will be from a blind draw of eligible children, grandchildren, and/or great grandchildren who have been submitted by the member, prior to each yearly reunion. The applicant shall be enrolled or accepted at an accredited University, College, Junior College, or Trade School.

The remainder of paragraph 3 will not be changed. No part of paragraphs 1 and 2 will be changed.

MarthaAnn Kaczmarczyk presented an amendment to **ARTICLE VIII OF OUR BY-LAWS, REUNION POLICY**, in order to update some of our practices which will save the Association time and money. This Article currently reads as follows:

#### **ARTICLE VIII REUNION POLICY**

There will be an annual National Convention of the Spectre Association at such time and place as announced by the Board of Directors. Fort Walton Beach, Florida, will be the primary site for the annual reunion except every fourth year. At that time an alternate site will be selected based on the inputs, desires, etc. of the members. Nominations for this site will be

taken at the annual business meeting two (2) years prior to the alternate site reunion, and ballots will be mailed to the membership no later than 31 December following this business meeting. Members will return the marked ballots postmarked no later than 31 March of the following year. The Board will count the ballots, and the site will be the one receiving the most votes on those ballots. Once the site has been decided, the Board will make arrangements for a facility to host the reunion and report to the members at the next annual business meeting the site location and host facility. All reunion information including prices, the host facility (hotel) contact number, hotel reservation cutoff date, and reunion signup cutoff date will be mailed to the general membership no later than 1 July preceding all reunions.

The proposed amendment will be to change the last two (2) sentences to read as follows:

Once the site has been decided, the Board will post the site location on the Association web site and also report the site location to the members at the next annual business meeting. All information for every reunion to include the name, address, and contact number for the host facility (hotel) along with the room and meal prices, registration fees, hotel reservation cutoff date, and reunion signup cutoff date will be posted on the Association web site or mailed to any members who do not have internet access no later than 1 July preceding all reunions.

The remainder of this Article – the first five (5) sentences -- will not be changed.

Gene Eller moved that we accept the proposal to Article VIII of the By-Laws as it is written and that it be sent to the membership at large for a vote. Jerry Applebee seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Pat announced that since the 16<sup>th</sup> SOS, the parent squadron of Spectre, moved to Cannon AFB, NM, on 18 June 2009, our chances of getting new members from the 16<sup>th</sup> are very slim. He said that he has spoken to several of the 4<sup>th</sup> SOS active-duty members who are still stationed at Hurlburt AFB, and they have voiced that they would like to join our Association, but they are not Spectre. They fly the "U" Model Gunships and are referred to as Spooky. They indicated that if we change our Association's name, they would be more inclined to join.

**Pat suggested that we consider changing our name to one of the following:**

1. Fixed Wing Gunship
2. Fixed Wing Gunships
3. Side Firing Gunship
4. Side Firing Gunships

A discussion about changing the name ensued. Pat said that we are not getting very many new, young members; and he is afraid that as we die off, the Association will die with us. **Gary Thompson suggested the name of "AC-130 Gunship Association", and have both of the symbols – Spectre and Spooky -- listed with the name.** Bill Walter said that there is a new gunship on the horizon, and it is not an AC model. Bill Warner said that he does not think the 4<sup>th</sup> SOS members would join us even if we changed our name. Bill Walter said that we are viewed as having too much cliquish behavior among the Vietnam era members; and the new, younger guys are hesitant to join us. He feels that if we could get them into the Association that the new, young fellows could learn a lot from the current members. Norm Evans moved that we submit to the membership at large our changing the name of the Association and asking them to choose a name from the list of the four (4) suggested names shown above. If the name is changed, this will necessitate amending the By-Laws in all locations to reflect the name change. Tommy Montgomery seconded the motion. **Bill Allen suggested that we form one organization and have branches or squadrons from each group.** Bob Eberle thinks a name change would gain more members. Gene Eller asked what assurance we have that the new, young guys will join us if we change the name. It was noted that in 2016 the H Model is going away. It was noted that you do not have to be a member or former member of the 16<sup>th</sup> SOS in order to join the Spectre Association. The only requirement is to have an interest in the gunships and apply for membership. Grace Spencer says that she is concerned that we would lose a large number of Spectres if we change our name. Some of our members voiced that they will drop out if we change the name. Dave Burns said that he is adamantly opposed to changing the name and that if we do not get new, young members to join us and keep the Spectre Association going that he is all for allowing the last Spectre alive to turn off the lights and close the doors when that day comes. After much applause, the question was called for. The vote was taken and was resoundingly rejected.

**Gene Eller suggested that we form a satellite chapter of our Association at Cannon AFB, NM,** in order to keep the members of the 16<sup>th</sup> SOS involved with us. Pat said he thought we should have a representative from there to dial in to our Board Meetings and give us input and updates from there.

Pat reported that **he is up for reelection to the position of President and Roger Betterelli and Barry Gossman are up for reelection as members of the Board of Directors. Mike Hoffmeister nominated Chuck Kaczmarczyk to be our next President.** Pat said that the President must reside in Fort Walton Beach. **Chuck nominated Bill Walter for a position on the Board.** Duane Spencer moved nominations cease. Motion was seconded and carried. **The ballots will go out to all members in good standing, and it was noted that we can also have write-in candidates.**

LeRoy Hutchinson "Daddy Hutch" said that at last year's reunion and again this year that **we do not have the camaraderie we had in the past...HIMS, IF YOU AIN'T SPECTRE, and the GHOSTRIDERS music.** There are very few members dropping by the Hospitality Room. There are no banners or flags displayed. There is no music. There are no snacks...only beer, soft drinks, and water. Gene Fields said that he is also disappointed and **suggested we have an Entertainment Committee for future reunions.**

**Norm Evans presented the idea of creating a Spectre Year Book.** Every member will be allowed one (1) page to list their stats, display pictures, etc. Bill Walter suggested that we also do some research and include history of the Air Force, Special Operations, and the Spectre Association in this book.

Deon McGowan, a member of the 4<sup>th</sup> SOS, made arrangements with **Kimber to have a limited edition – 105 units – 45 Commemorative Pistol to be sold only to members of the 4<sup>th</sup> as well as to Spectre members in good standing.** The cost of the pistol is \$1,040.00 and the cost of the case is \$130.00. Realizing that not everyone would be able to purchase one of these items, **The Board of Directors voted to buy one of the pistols plus a display case to raffle at tonight's banquet.** We have sold 50 tickets thus far, but we must sell at least 92 tickets in order to pay for the pistol and case plus realize at least \$1,000.00 for our Scholarship Fund. The pistols and cases have not yet arrived from Kimber. If the winner is a resident of the state of Florida and lives close by, you may go to Patriot Arms in Fort Walton Beach, pay the transfer fee and pick up the pistol and case. If one of our out-of-town members is the lucky winner of the raffle, they must arrange for an FFL transfer agent close to their home to receive the firearm for them and pay all costs

involved in shipping and transferring. As previously voted on by the Board of Directors, if we do not sell at least 92 tickets, Chuck Kaczmarczyk will purchase the gun; and the Association will not loose any funds.

The following **Announcements** were made:

1. The Memorial Service for fallen Spectres will be held at 1300 today inside the Eglin Armament Museum.
2. Following the Memorial Service, the First Lady will be open for tours and pictures.
3. Tommy Montgomery has procured quite a number of 105 MM casings for give-away on a first-come basis.
4. The "Country Store" will reopen at 1530 today and remain open until 1800. It will then open again immediately following the banquet.
5. Bring your meal tickets for tonight which are in an envelope inside your Registration Bag. Place these on the table in front of you so that the Wait Staff knows which meal to serve you.
6. We have a 0800 tee-off time at Gator Lakes tomorrow -- Sunday.
7. If anyone wants to go fishing tomorrow morning, please see Grace Spencer.
8. Remember the good-bye Pizza Party tomorrow afternoon at the VFW on Coral Avenue.

**The meeting adjourned at 1100.**

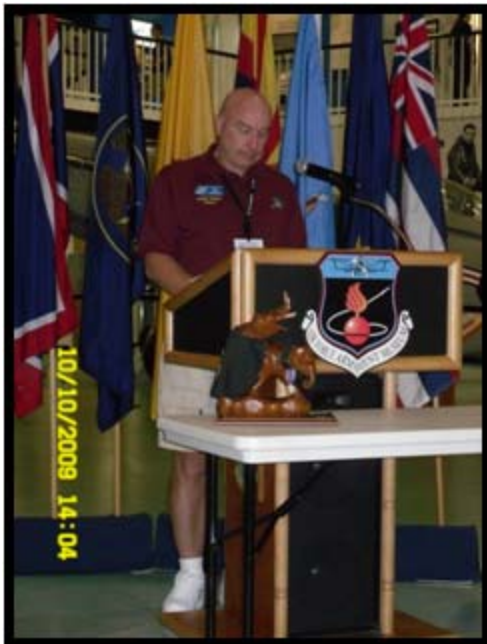
Respectfully submitted,  
MarthaAnn Kaczmarczyk, Recorder

## 36<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL REUNION MEMORIAL SERVICE SATURDAY, 10 OCTOBER 2009, 1300

By Chuck Kaczmarcyk

The Spectre Association Memorial Service was held inside of the Eglin Armament Museum at 1300 hours on Saturday, 10 October 2009.

Eighty-five (85) Spectres, family members, and friends gathered to show their respect. We were especially honored to have Doris Nyhof, Mother of Rich Nyhof; Lisa Stokes, Daughter of Cecil Taylor, who was our first Spectre casualty during the Vietnam War, and her daughter, Bailey; and Jim Wyatt, Jr. and Marci Wyatt-Gonzales, children of Col. James G. Wyatt, 14<sup>th</sup> Commander of the 16<sup>th</sup> SOS, and their spouses.



We all stood and Pledged Allegiance to our Country's Flag. I opened the ceremony by announcing that the roll has been called and the following Spectres did not answer. They have gone before us. Kim Coryat and I read the names of all fifty-one (51) fallen Spectre heroes who died in combat operations in Southeast Asia, thirteen (13) crew members of Spirit 03 who were lost in the first Gulf War, and eight (8) crew members of Jockey 14 who were killed in Mogadishu, Finally, we read the names of the thirty-two (32) non-combat deaths who have been reported to us since the 2008 Reunion. Those are as follows:

Paul Airey, first CMSGT of the Air Force  
Steve Anderson  
Victor Blackburn  
Paddy Brainerd  
Sam Croft  
Jack Davis  
Bobby Diggs  
Hank Eiden  
Jerry Flynn  
Sal Gomez  
James Graves  
Daniel Hoppel  
Edward J. Hughes

Harold Maddux  
Vince Marrasso  
Todd R. McArthur  
Neil McCann  
Mike McGrail  
Gary Osborn  
Glenn Painter  
Donald Potter  
Robert Simmons  
James R. Thrasher, Lima 22  
Dante Tomasini  
Buddy Tripp  
James Milton West

Gary Knecht  
Roulene Knowles  
Omer Lentz

Paul Wonderly  
James G. Wyatt,  
14<sup>th</sup> Commander of the 16<sup>th</sup> SOS  
Ross Ziegenhorn

May all of these Spectres "Rest in Peace". The Spectre Association will continue to remind us all that...**All gave some...some gave All.**

We dismissed to the out-of-doors where the Floral Wreath and 104 small U.S. Flags had been placed to honor all of the above deaths. How very sad that this year we lost a Spectre brother or sister at the rate of one (1) every eleven (11) days.



The "First Lady", Aircraft 53-3129, an AC-130 Gunship on which many of us flew, was open for tours and pictures.



We thank the staff and volunteers of the Eglin Armament Museum for being on hand to allow us to sit in air-conditioned comfort and use their PA system for our Memorial Service.

We thank the VFW on Coral Avenue in Fort Walton Beach for the donation of the 104 small U.S. Flags.

We thank the Friends of the First Lady who worked so hard cleaning up our “old girl” and being on hand to answer questions and conduct tours.

NOTE: The 32 names of deceased Spectres who have been reported to us during the past year contain names of some Spectres who died in earlier years. If anyone knows of a Spectre death – past or present – who we do not have, please e-mail us at [deceased@spectre-association.org](mailto:deceased@spectre-association.org) with as much information as you can obtain. Please visit our “In Memory” page on the Spectre web site to view all of the information we post.

## 36<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL SPECTRE REUNION BANQUET SATURDAY, 10 OCTOBER 2009

By Kim Coryat

It was a beautiful evening for the banquet, no trace of the rain that was predicted. The crowd was large and the camaraderie was expansive. Sales at the raffle table and in the store were brisk. Lots of excitement for the evening ahead filled the air.

The program began with our esteemed Master of Ceremonies "Wild Bill" Allen (imagine that, Bill has now achieved esteemed status) calling us to our seats, followed by the posting of the colors by the Hurlburt Honor Guard and the Missing Comrade/POW/MIA Table ceremony.



Toasts were made and several special guests in the crowd were recognized: Bonnie Thrasher, widow of Jimbo Thrasher, and her sons Mike and Rickie, Jeri Gowdy, widow of Clyde Gowdy, Jim Wyatt and Marci Wyatt-Gonzales, children of recently deceased Lt Col James G. Wyatt, 14<sup>th</sup> Commander of the 16<sup>th</sup> SOS, and their spouses, and Doris Nyhoff, mother of SEA KIA Rich Nyhoff. Doris announced this would be her last reunion, which was very sad to hear as we are all so fond of her. She claims she is getting too old to make these trips – ha, the woman has twice the energy that I do! We will certainly miss her.



SEA KIA Cecil Taylor's daughter Lisa Stokes and granddaughter Bailey Stokes also attended the banquet and were introduced by Gunner Jack. Bailey read a poem written by her little sister Cara in honor of her grandpa who was the first Spectre casualty in Southeast Asia, called "My Hero". There was not a dry eye in the house by the time she finished. What an incredibly moving piece by such a talented young lady.

While hawking raffle tickets earlier, a very earnest, sober, and youngish suit-wearing guy (all of which would mark him as a stranger) came up to me and asked if I knew the name of the guest speaker. I was kind of distracted and couldn't remember off the top of my head, so I directed the gentleman to our MC. A minute later Chuck Kacz walked by, and I asked him if he knew who that guy was. He said, "That's our guest speaker!" Who knows why he chose to enter the banquet hall using E&E tactics. I mean, ya don't HAVE to buy a raffle ticket, you can just say no!

In spite of this unusual start and his dubious seven year stint with the Navy, 4th SOS DO (Director of Operations) Lt Col Peter McDonough turned out to be a fabulous and inspiring speaker. His presentation on the past, present, and future of the gunship was straight-up awesome and a well-deserved standing-O was given at the end.



Two scholarships, each \$1,000, were announced by Mike and Rickie, one of which derived from contributions made in memory of their Dad (and my friend), Lima 22, Jimbo Thrasher. Winners were Trey Gowdy, son of Lifetime Member Clay Gowdy and grandson of the late Clyde Gowdy and Jeri, and Mark Markulis, son of Lifetime Member John Markulis. Congratulations!



The first Gunner Jack Award went to a very deserving PJ Cook, who was more surprised than anyone else. Among other criteria the award is presented to someone who goes above and beyond to support the gunship community. Additional information regarding this award is posted on the Spectre website. PJ is the driving force behind the design and maintenance of our outstanding Spectre website. PJ received a check and a personal plaque. His name, as the first recipient of the Gunner Jack Award, is engraved on a plaque that will be maintained by the Association and

put on display at all future reunions. Additional honorees will have their names added to this plaque.

The regular raffle brought in \$905, and the Kimber gun raffle cleared \$1005 which all went into the Spectre Scholarship Fund. I have only one thing to say about the results: Mike Skerrett needed to get into his car and drive straight to the nearest casino after the banquet.

## Raffle winners:

Spectre Quilt & Kimber gun raffle: Mike Friggin' Skerrett!



Booze cooler - Karen Carpenter

Engraved 105 mm brass - Alice Gonzowski



Laser etched Spectre mug - Bonnie Thrasher

Spectre picture - ended up with Jim Wyatt, Jr. after the names of two people who already have one were pulled out of the hat.



Finally, turn about being fair play, the Promiscuous Pachyderms went to the most awesomely perfect person to serve as their host for the next year: Gunner Jack! I hope they don't mind flying standby after the first class RV and cruise trip treatment they received under the protection of Chuck and MarthaAnn Kaczmarczyk. Good luck getting a good night of sleep, Jack!

In spite of a severe red wine shortage at our table and the stinginess of the bartender (she would NOT let us have another bottle unless we paid up), the food was delivered promptly for the most part and it was yummy. Kudos to the Four Points for another great event.

## **36<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL SPECTRE REUNION GOLF TOURNAMENT** **SUNDAY, 11 OCTOBER 2009**

By Barry Gossman

I woke up at the crack of dawn. We had a 0700 hrs show time for a 0800 takeoff at the number one tee box. I had it all planned out. Get up early and eat the breakfast buffet at the hotel. I invited the ringer, or I should say, my son, to play golf with us because my other ringer, my wife the "Putting Queen", was having back problems. I told my son to meet me at the Four Points at 0600 hrs, and I would buy him breakfast. I figured that it would give us enough time to eat and make our 0700 hrs show time at Gator Lakes. Well, believe it or not, my son actually showed up on time. We proceeded directly to the hotel restaurant where we were stopped by a sign telling us that they do not start serving until 0630 hrs. Damn, that plan just went down the tubes because if we waited until opening time, we wouldn't have enough time to scarf down our chow and make it to Gator Lakes on time. Well being the guy I am, who always has to be on time, especially for a golfing event, we headed out to Gator Lakes.

We arrived at Gator Lakes at 0700 hrs exactly. We went to the pro shop to pay our green fees and found out that the Spectre group was bumped to a 0900 hr tee time because some 'Supply Weenies' also had a golf tournament that morning, and they had taken the 0800 hr tee time. That really pissed me off! If I had known this, we could have eaten the breakfast buffet at the hotel instead of the sausage biscuit I choked down at the golf course. Well, I really didn't let that bother me, because we were going to kick some butt playing golf! We taxied to hot cargo and loaded up with our usual combat load of beer. If we didn't play good at least we weren't going to feel the pain.

Finally, after hitting a bucket of balls and listening to war stories that I already had heard a dozen times, we headed to the number one tee box. My group, which consisted of myself, my ringer son Barry Jr., Roger Betterelli and his lovely wife Chris were last to tee off. Our primary mission was a SAR. That's a Search and Rescue for those of you that have hit that forgetful age. O.K., where was I? Oh yeah ... I remember. We had to look out for anybody that failed to complete the mission. Teeing off in front of us was a decrepit looking bunch. They were the oldest bunch of Flight Engineers I have ever seen. It was Bobby Lea, Bob Turek, Gene Eller, and John Brown. After looking at them, we knew that we were going to have a really busy day. I almost went back to the club house to get a double combat load of beverages. I guess Bob Turek noticed that we were staring at them with a look of concern. He walked back to us and said, "I see you guys noticed who is in front of you. Yes, we are an old (really old) experienced group; but I just have to ask you guys one favor. We said, "Sure Bob, what is it?" Bob replied, "If you see one of us fall down and keel over, *please* do not administer CPR." "You can kick us, jump on us, piss on us, or just

drag us off the fairway, just don't give us CPR under any circumstances." We asked, "Well, why is that Bob?" He said, "Well, the reason is that if I am dying and leaving this world, I'll be damned if the last thing I see before I leave, is some gunner leaning over, trying to swap spit with me."

It was a beautiful day of golf. The weather was perfect, and Gator Lakes was in outstanding condition. After eighteen holes we had two birdies, one boogie, and all the rest were pars. We finished one under par. To tell you the truth, I thought we didn't have a chance to place anywhere in this event ... especially with Carpenter's stacked team. Well low and behold, I couldn't believe it, but we actually tied for first place. Boy, you other guys must have really sucked.

Here are the results:

First Place was a tie: One Under Par (71)

Bill Allen, Snake Liles, Dwight McGrath,

Barry Gossman, Barry Gossman Jr., Roger Betterelli, and

Chris Betterelli

Longest Drive: Dick "Happy Gilmore" Vancil

Closest to the Pin: Barry "the ringer" Gossman, Jr.

# 36<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL SPECTRE REUNION GOOD-BYE PARTY SUNDAY, 11 OCTOBER 2009

By Chuck Kaczmarczyk

Just as we began our 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Reunion with a different type of Ice Breaker, we ended the Reunion with a different type of Good-Bye Party. We all know how tough the economic times are in which we are living and how so many Americans are seriously watching every penny they spend. In an effort to cut as much costs for the Reunion as we possibly could and still make it a fun time for all attendees, we looked at a variety of new activities for the Reunion. We decided to have a Pizza Party as our good-bye event. This was a free event for any of the Spectres and their guests who registered for the Reunion.

The VFW on Coral Avenue in Fort Walton Beach gave us their large party room at no charge for our final event. We bought twenty (20) pizzas and brought over the remaining beer, sodas, and water from the Hospitality Room at the Hotel. Anyone wanting mixed drinks ordered those from the VFW Bartender and paid as they drank.





Stormin' Norman, our Spectre D. J., set up his sound equipment and played some really great hits. When he played "Ghost Riders", Daddy Hutch and Gene Fields came forward, commandeered the microphone, and led our group in singing our theme song. Many of the participants stood and clapped in time to the music and sang along. We had a few to dance.





LeRoy Hutchinson, "Daddy Hutch", was surprised with a birthday cake for his 75<sup>th</sup> Birthday, which was on Monday, 12 October. He invited several other Spectres who had either just celebrated a birthday or had one coming up the following week to join him in celebrating all of those birthdays.



Brian Morrison, "The Spectre Protector", on 8 October; and Gene Fields on 13 October. "Daddy Hutch" said it was a great party, but it did not begin to compare with the one held in Korat for his 20<sup>th</sup> year anniversary in the Air Force. It seems that after spending several hours in the Gunner's Hooch, he and some of his buddies climbed the ladder to the water tower while hauling up buckets of paint, paintbrushes, and a stencil of the Spectre logo. After they finished their artwork and started back down the ladder, the military police who had surrounded the base of the tower turned on their lights to guide the boys down and gave them a ride over to the lock-up. Col. Wyatt once again saved the day and his boys. According to Dave Burns, "Captain Spectre", who lives in Thailand, on a sunny day our logo is still slightly visible on that water tower 35 years later!

There was good food and drink and much laughter. Everyone hated to see the evening as well as the 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Reunion come to a close. As we said our good-byes, shook hands, and hugged, we all agreed that this had been a successful event, and we are looking forward to repeating this at future reunions.



### *Message from the President*

The past year saw significant change, a squadron move, an alarming number of Spectre deaths, but through it all the association continues to grow. A hallmark of the change was the awarding of the first “Gunner Jack Award.” It was my pleasure to be able to nominate our first recipient and present the award, but I only parroted what one of our members had stated to me. With that said I want to make sure all members understand how the award is selected.

Any member can make a nomination. It can be in the form of a letter or e-mail, and should be sent to our Vice-President (currently Dick Vancil). It doesn't have to be an eloquently written submission, just statements of fact with some antidotal information. The Vice-Presidents task is to then form a small committee and consider the nominations, and submit his recommendation to Gunner Jack, who will concur or non-concur. Nominations must be submitted by 1 August so that coordination can be completed before the annual reunion. There may be years when no award is made, as was the case in 2008. I encourage each member to read the guidelines and if you think there is a deserving Spectre, nominate them. Hopefully we can nominate enough people that Dick stays real busy!

### **Our First Gunner Jack Award Recipient**



For that deserving Spectre, nominations can be sent to the association mail box at P.O. Box 707, Mary Esther FL 32569 with a notation that it's the Gunner Jack nomination. You may also e-mail Dick directly at [vancild@cox.net](mailto:vancild@cox.net).

At this writing we are making plans for our 2010 reunion in Biloxi MS. and I hope to see you there. Bring lots of money because I may have to float a loan if my luck at the tables doesn't change.

***If You Ain't Spectre, You Ain't \_-\_-\_-!***

**“THANK YOU”**  
**36<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL SPECTRE REUNION**

Wayne White: Engraved 105MM Round

Brian Morrison, our “Spectre Protector”: Spectre Quilt

Bonnie Thrasher: 16<sup>th</sup> SOS Spectre Lithograph

Norm Evans: ‘70s Era Spectre Survival Kit

MarthaAnn Kaczmarczyk: Two (2) Spectre tee-shirts and a Military Cap

Chuck Kaczmarczyk: Laser etched 20-ounce Mug commemorating our 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Spectre Reunion

Larry Hickey: All of the wonderful pictures of our 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Reunion. Go onto our Spectre web site and view all of them.

The Sheraton Four Points: The Palm Suite for the use of our “Country Store”.  
The Hospitality Room in the court yard by the swimming Pool.

The VFW: Flags for our Memorial Service.  
Use of their facility for our “Good-bye” Party

Eglin Armament Museum: Use of their air conditioned facility for our Memorial Service.  
Their Staff and Volunteers for setting up chairs, podium, and sound system for our Memorial Service.  
Their Staff and Volunteers for being on hand to welcome us and answer questions about the Museum.

“Friends of the First Lady”: Volunteering their time and efforts to clean-up 129 and being on-site to answer questions and give tours.

MeLaser: Delivery of the laser-etched mugs to the Country Store at the Sheraton Four Points and volunteering to open their shop on Sunday afternoon for Etching of mugs.

Spectre Association Board of Directors: All of their efforts and hard work to make our 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Spectre Reunion a rousing success!

**SEE YOU NEXT YEAR IN BILOXI**