

Greetings, Fellow Veterans of the Geodetic Survey Squadron and Geodetic Survey Group!

And welcome to fall! Although the exact moment of the autumnal equinox is 10:29 pm, EDT, 22 September, Labor Day weekend usually marks the end of summer and the beginning of fall activities. This year Bonnie and I spent the last few days of August, Labor Day weekend and my birthday celebrating a special event in our lives---*our first grandchild!* Son Brad and his wife gave birth to a baby boy in late August in California, so we flew cross country to visit family, meet our new grandson, and to help out for a week. He's a beautiful baby, and he looks just like his dad did at that tender age. All is well and we are elated grandparents.

Another GSS Veteran Falls...

We received word that GSS veteran **Dave Baber** (Survey, Orlando, Minot, Grand Forks Det 3, 1961-65) passed away on July 15th of a heart attack. Dave was stationed at Orlando after attending topo school at Ft Belvoir, then Minot AFB, reporting there at the height of Cuban Missile Crisis in Oct 1962. He made several TDYs out of Minot---Roswell, NM, Vandenberg AFB, CA---then was reassigned to Det 3, Grand Forks AFB in 1964. He was discharged in March 1965 and married Donna Kovarik from Garrison, ND, in June 1965. Wife Donna adds:

“...I know he would want all of his old buddies to know. I miss him terribly, but we had 49 years together, so I have to be grateful for that. Bless you all, Donna”

Ron Nesti, our Webmaster and former Det 3 colleague, has added Dave's name to our online list of deceased GSS veterans. Condolences or memorial gifts may be sent to the Baber family at 235 Myersmere Lane, Sugar Hill, GA 30518. Read Dave's obituary at: <http://www.byarsfuneralhome.com/obituaries/David-Baber/>.

Reunion Good News

If you attended the reunion in 2012, you may recall that three volunteers---all civilian lady veterans of the Squadron/Group---stepped forward to help organize the 2015 reunion. They are **Merilou Miller** (Operations, FEW, 1969-77; Admin, FEW, 1980-88), **Liz Starr** (Budget Office, FEW, 1980-93) and **Anita Rakestraw** (Orderly Room/Personnel, FEW, 1978-87). They have since recruited additional help, including **Mark 'Ty' Warner** (Doppler/IPS/Survey Reduction/Logistics, FEW, 1978-92). Ty is currently the Deputy Chief of Protocol for the 90th Missile Wing at FEW and has lots of contacts for hotels and Cheyenne-area activities. Last time, Anita came up with the idea for our first wildly successful wine & cheese social, which we plan to include again, as well as a few more surprises.

Our reunion volunteers have been busy. When I got back from California, I asked Merilou for a progress report for this newsletter, and **I am pleased to report that we now have a hotel and dates for our next reunion! We will be returning to the Cheyenne Holiday Inn, where we held the previous three reunions, and the dates are Friday Saturday and Sunday, 31 July – 2 August 2015.**

In future newsletters I will provide additional details about room rates, meals, planned activities and other costs as the contract is fleshed out. ***Get your party hats on, folks---we are less than 11 months away from our next fun reunion!***

New Commemorative Coin

The commemorative coin we offered with the previous reunion was a sell-out success. **Gordon Barnes**, former acting GSS commander, Deputy for Operations and a coin aficionado, designed the 2012 coin. (He had also earlier designed the coin for the Air Force Photomapper Association.) We minted the 2012 coin in a limited number of 150, and regrettably, some of you missed out. We therefore decided to offer a new coin for this reunion. I will soon coordinate with the Northwest Territorial Mint, which produced our previous coin, to review design options and costs for a new limited-edition coin. More on that in the next newsletter...

News from the Field

It's nice to get feedback from fellow veterans. I recently received this note from **Leroy Clark**, a Washington state resident, (Survey, Det 1, 1963-67):

“Just a note to wish you and your family a happy Labor Day weekend. I hope your health is improving after your recent procedure. I miss your fine newsletters and enjoy the news on our

former colleagues. My only regret is that, back in that day, i.e., mid 1960s, I did not get to know more of them. One difference that is notable, in my little view, is the addition of women into the [geodetic] work. Since they represent over half the population, and also have mathematical abilities like the rest of the group, I think it is and was a wise move to include them in the work.”

Let's hear it for the ladies, men! Leroy is also helping to recruit other GSS veterans, as I hope all of you are doing too. He adds:

“I have yet to meet **MSgt Harvey Barber**, nearby in Oregon, to get some of his stories. **Ray Petre** sent me a note a few weeks ago describing his pleasure at reading the newsletters I forwarded to him - darn, I wish he would contact you guys with some of his stories of his experience in Det 5.”

Leroy is looking forward to attending the reunion next summer. Meanwhile, Leroy, keep working on Harvey and Ray to send me their contact info and stories!

More News from the Field

We have been hearing about the drought and water shortage in the Southwest for several years. Groundwater losses from the Colorado River basin appear massive enough to challenge long-term water supplies for the seven states and parts of Mexico that depend on it. Now researchers from NASA and the University of California are using monthly **gravity data** to measure changes in water mass in the basin to track groundwater depletion. Read the story from the *Huffington Post* here:

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/07/24/satellites-groundwater-loss_n_5618634.html

Thanks go to **Dave Stout** (Data Reduction, FEW, 1967-71) for sending this news item, interesting, no doubt, to all you Squadron Gravity veterans---especially if you now live in California or other drought – stricken areas!

Even More News from the Field

Peter Sheats (Survey, Orlando, 1959-61) lives near Vandenberg AFB, CA, Det 1's stomping grounds. He couldn't resist trying out his new Nikon camera to record a rocket launch. Pete sent three photos and some additional links for this launch. Ron will place these photos on our website for all to enjoy. Pete says:

“Nice day for a launch from VAFB -- and only a couple minutes late. Very loud from a close point on West Ocean. Just a very little, fairly low cloud cover. Took a bunch of photos with a Nikon D3100, and an AF-S Nikkor 70 to 300 lens. The missile was an Atlas V, placing a WorldView 3 satellite into orbit for Digital Global...Here's a link to a shortened version of the official launch video. It's 9+ minutes. If you want to save some time, you can slide it forward to about 3:30, where the 10-second countdown starts.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NM_ZsUgCWk8

Here is a link to the entire, 46-minute, official launch video. I send it because starting at about 4:10, the Atlas V manufacture & configuration is described...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b76LZ0SFmps>

I'm tossing in this link to a short, amateur video simply for the noise factor.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1jXmIBQXCqk>

The video sucks because the guy didn't have a tripod or the sense to rest his arms on his car -- although, his car might have been shaking a bit at first -- but the noise is great. Pete”

Thanks, Pete---what an exciting age we live in!

New Additions to the Roster

John Blunt (Orlando, 1960-61) found us online and asked to join us. John was one of the early Orlando

crew and sent these recollections of his career and brief time with the Squadron:

"I just came across my old Squadron patch and missile badge after more than 50-years. I was a member of the 1381st from May 1960 to October 1961, when I was deployed to Ramstein AFB, Germany. [Squadron Commander] Peterson, a Lt. Col. on my arrival, was promoted to full Colonel before my departure. My first TDY was to Altus AFB for 3-months for the Atlas program. As an African American, it was quite an experience hitting the small towns around Altus and Walker AFB, New Mexico. I served 4-years to the very day in the Air Force, used the GI Bill to go to college and graduate school, and worked as a television reporter and anchorman for more than 41-years in Winston-Salem and Charlotte, NC, before moving on to Detroit and Philadelphia, where 25 of those years were spent with CBS and NBC. **My time with the 1381st was one of the greatest experiences of my life.** Cheers to those who served."

I think that last sentiment is one with which most of us would agree, John---welcome to our veterans group!

As an extra, take a look at the NBC Philadelphia's nice salute to John when he retired from TV news casting: <http://www.nbcphiladelphia.com/news/local/Saying-Goodbye-to-John-Blunt.html>.

Paul Bolain (Survey; FEW & St. Louis, 1991-94) also found us while web surfing. Paul was a civilian with the Geodetic Survey Group at the end of its days in Cheyenne, and then made the transition to the all-civilian Geodesy & Geophysics successor of the unit in St. Louis. He says:

"I was with DMA for a while...I really enjoy reading the past issues of the newsletter. I've noticed that there is no mention of a lot of the people I worked with. I was in Cheyenne when DMA made the move back to St. Louis, and there were lots of folks who didn't make the move... Sorry I missed out on the commemorative survey disks... Thanks for all your efforts!"

Paul was also kind enough to send me two pages of names from an internal office phone list from 1993 that lists all his contemporaries in Cheyenne and the detachments before the Geodetic Survey Group folded its tent. (Note: the Geodetic Survey Squadron became the Geodetic Survey Group in 1989.) This list is essentially the who's who of the Geodetic survey Group in its final days. It will be another valuable resource for checking who is, and who is not, currently among the veterans on our lists of living or deceased, and the difference will provide more names for us to try to locate and bring into the fold. Thanks, Paul!

John and Paul will be added to our online roster of GSS/GSG veterans as soon as we receive their full contact information.

Reminder: Send Me Your Contact Information

If you have not done so already, please send me your contact information (or updates) using the format below. Just reply to this newsletter or send me a separate e-mail with your:

NAME:

ADDRESS: (Include street or mailbox #, city, state and zip code)

PHONE:

E-MAIL ADDRESS:

MILITARY or CIVILIAN: (Answer "both" if you served the unit in both capacities)

HIGHEST RANK or POSITION in GSS/GSG:

START/END DATES OF SERVICE IN GSS/GSG: (List multiple entries, if you had more than one assignment)

ORGs: (i.e., where you worked: Admin, Astro, Computing, Data Reduction, Detachment #, Gravity, Logistics, Operations, Orderly Room, Sat Tri, Stellar Camera, Survey, etc.)

OTHER: (Whatever else you want to share here about your time in the Squadron or since then.)

If you have privacy concerns, remember that a user name and password will be provided to protect your contact information, so only other Squadron veterans with user names and passwords will be able to see it. **Ron Nesti** (Det 3, Grand Forks AFB, 1964-68), our Webmaster, will contact you with your user name and password when he loads your info onto our GSS/GSG website.

Meanwhile, check out Ron's great website at <http://www.1381st-gss.freesevers.com/index.html>. The homepage tells you what's new, what's coming, and has links to the list of our deceased veterans, photos and other useful information. There's also an archive of old newsletters in case you missed any. **If your name is already on the online roster, please log in to check your own profile and see if it's still current. If not, please send me your updates!**

If you have forgotten your user name or password, contact Ron (ron.nesti@q.com) to send you a reminder or to reset it for you.

If you have not sent yours yet, or if you have updates to your locator information, please send me your current contact information by reply right after you read this newsletter!

Speaking of Ron...

It was way back in May that **Ron Nesti** (Survey, Det 3, 1964-68) asked for a volunteer to take over as our website manager. Ron, our long-time Webmaster, wants to ease out and break in a replacement. Says Ron:

"It doesn't take a lot of tech savvy. If they can read and type, I can teach them the rest. HTML is pretty easy to learn. **They just have to want to do it.** I just renewed our Freesevers account for two more years. They won't have to worry about that until 2016."

So far, no volunteers have stepped forward! I know there are a number of you out there who already have the skill for it, so please do your part for the team! Our website is a major asset in helping us to draw in more GSS/GSG veterans. Most of our recent new additions over the last couple of years discovered us while web surfing. It would also be great for someone with IT talent to establish a presence for us on other social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc.

Don't be shy---we know that there are more than a few of you, who could take over the job and bring a fresh perspective to it. Any volunteers to take over the GSS Veterans website? If yes, please contact both Ron and me: ron.nesti@q.com; garrettmoore@verizon.net

Bounced E-Mails

The following GSS veterans have fallen off my newsletter distribution roster, most likely due to an unreported change in e-mail address or other problems with Internet service: **Larry T. Bean, Chuck Finley, Julian Higgins, Bill Honecker, Doug & Sally Journey, Lt.Col. James** (no first name provided), **Mannie A. Quintero, Ronald D. Wells and Stanley R. Zawisza.** ***We'd like to get these veterans back on distribution, so if any of you know how to contact them, please send them our way or let me know.***

Forwarded Chain Mails

Sorry to bring up this touchy subject, but every month I receive a number of forwarded e-mails, chain mails and other website items from well-meaning GSS veterans and other folks. Most of these are benign, many are humorous, some are even useful, but an occasional few are down right malicious or flat-out wrong. I seldom forward any of these e-mails to others or place them in this newsletter, especially if they are politically or racially charged or predict dire consequences if you don't forward it to seven other people. (*What a scam!*) You should do your own due diligence when asked to forward e-mails, and never take at face value anything that is in a chain mail---especially the sensational kind, like the breathless headlines you see in the tabloids at the grocery store checkout counter. ("*Shocking: Kim Kardashian has alien baby on UFO!*") The worst of these are tired, already debunked rumors or "urban legends," half true at best, and some are outright lies designed to fool the gullible or to further someone's unsavory agenda. Just because it's on the Internet does not mean that it's true or factual. If it looks too good (or too bad) to be true, embrace your inner skeptic and do some checking! Here are some good places to check: <http://www.snopes.com>; <http://www.truthorfiction.com>; <http://urbanlegends.about.com>; <http://www.factcheck.org>; <http://www.politifact.com>; <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/fact-checker/>

Final Notes:

We are now less than a year away from our next reunion in 2015 in Cheyenne. I'll remain in touch with our volunteer committee to keep things moving along and report back to you with any important news. I'll also provide more info on the new commemorative coin that celebrates the Squadron/Group as

an organization of smart and dedicated folks. Watch for proposed coin designs and ordering information in future newsletters.

***From Bonnie and me to all of you, let's enjoy what's left of our fleeting summer days of 2014!
Looking forward to seeing you all in Cheyenne next summer!***

Garrett
Field Survey & Astro
GSS/Cheyenne
April 1967 - May 1970 and January - December 1972

Nothing makes the Earth seem so spacious as to have friends at a distance—they make the latitudes and longitudes.

--Henry David Thoreau, Surveyor & Philosopher

Where Are They Now?

The explosion of names I got from **Rick Rogers** (Survey & Sat Tri, FEW, 1972-79; Det 4, Patrick AFB, 1977-79) reported in the last newsletter, apparently tripped the memory cells of a few other GSS vets.

Stephen also recalled **Dick Steffens** from the Whiteman AFB detachment.

At this time I do not have contact information on any of these folks and I have no confirmation of the death of Chief Frank Raymond.

John DePuy, mentioned above, also weighed in with a few more new names. John writes:

"[Consider] adding the names of **Jim Will** - Det 1 and DMAHTC/Herndon; **Jerry Carlton** - Surveyor - Gravity 1967-69; **Richard Davidson**, Admin - Gravity, 1967-68; and **Bill Gibbs**, Gravity, 1967-70."

Allan Barlis (Survey, Orlando, Minot and Grand Forks Detachments, 1961-65) also dropped a new name, but also helped us *find* a veteran. Says Allan:

"**Lt. Giering** (at that time) was my commanding officer when we were doing the surveys at Minot. Had some cold winters then. We also had a Lt. **T. C. Chambers**, believe he was from Tenn. Had great times being the first to survey the Minuteman in North Dakota, and you are right--- we were very good. I know our azimuths are still good. Doing the azimuth [observations] took about 20 min. Doing the calculations took forever. Just talked to **Don Mink**; he was my recorder. His e-mail is demink@charter.net ..."

I have located **Edmund J. Giering**, thanks to **Walt Blackmer**, and invited him by snail-mail to send us his contact information, but have not yet heard back from him.

Brenda Blake Schilinski (Survey, FEW, 1975-80) also chimed in and identified the mysterious "Ace" recently cited by **Bobby Walters** (Orlando AFB, FL, 1960-1965; Det 2, Malmstrom AFB, MT, 1969-1972; F.E Warren AFB, WY, 1975-1980). Brenda recalls Ace and added a few more names from her time at the Squadron in the late 1970s:

- **George "Ace" Ashton Lafferty**: He and two other cross-training AF Captain pilots came over to the squadron for a year or two (around 1978?)... Saw that he was a U-2 pilot. Also noticed that there is a G Ashton Lafferty at Edge Cliff Dr, Alexandria, VA that is about the right age...
- **Don Reiff (?)** who went on at least one of my TDYs (~1976). Think he went to Arizona Bureau of Reclamation in the early 80's-90's. Don't have any more info than that - but do have a slide picture of him.
- **Bryan Berlin**: another one of my airmen that went TDY the same time as Don. Bryan was from New Hampshire, and then left the service to become a surveyor over in Africa (?). Don't know what became of him either.
- **Ann???**: a black airman that was going into the officer program. I took her out to Nevada for one TDY. Her last name escapes me, but may have been Blankenship???

I will follow up on Brenda's clues.

More from the deep well of **Walt Blackmer's** memory:

"Garrett, I remember three Captains arriving in Orlando. One was named **James S. Green**, who is on your roster, and another was **John Wood** (later Major.) I can't remember the third one. You ought to ask Green whether I was on something, or did the three of them arrive [around] 1964.

"**Carlos??**, GS-9 Survey Tech at Det 1, 1976-??. He was RIFed from IAGS and although, he was a Photomapper, was hired by the GSS. He went to the exposition in San Francisco in 1976 and became the proud first owner of an Apple Desktop Computer in the GSS.

That's a lot of homework for me from Walt!

Can anyone else provide info on the late Liz Large or any of Walt's other named GSS veterans?

From **Bruce Porter** (Survey, Astro and Data Reduction, FEW, 1969-78; White Sands, 1982-2000):

In reading your latest, I noticed mention of **Louis Oliver** and remembered that his name is Louis U. Oliver, Jr. I typed that into the magic answer box, and out came:

9 Boulder Ct
Belleville, IL 62221-5807

There are a couple of **Lyman W. Hawkins**, but ours might possibly be
3865 Edwards Rd
Grimesland, NC 27837-8998
252-758-8248

Cheers..., Bruce"