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

Happy December Solstice Day---and the best of this holiday season to you, whichever of the holidays you celebrate this time of year!

Last time I checked there were at least 10 religious holidays this month embracing the Christian and Jewish celebrations of Christmas and Hanukkah plus spiritually significant days for Muslims, Buddhists, Pagans and Zoroastrians, this latter one is the presumed religion of the three Wise Men of the Christmas story. According to the gospels of Matthew and Luke in the New Testament, like many of us GSS/GSG veterans, the Wise Men were careful watchers of the night sky. This link shows all the religious holidays being celebrated this month: https://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/12/02/december-religious-holidays_n_1126507.html

And that's just the religious holidays! There are numerous civil and secular celebrations too, not the least of which is today's celebration of the December solstice---the first day of winter for us dwellers of the northern hemisphere, and the first day of summer for denizens below the equator.

I always take cheer on this date, because the December solstice means, slowly but surely, the sun is on its way back north, and spring is only three months away!

At this cold, dark time of the year, perhaps humankind, at least those of us who dwell in the Northern Hemisphere, must have chosen this season for so many holidays and festivities to brighten up the chilly days and nights. So, light a candle, everyone, and put another log on the fire!

It is hard to face up to the reality that we are nearly at the end of another calendar year and the beginning of a new one. Sometimes the days seem to pass slowly, but the years keep on zipping by! In any case, may your 2018 be full of good health, good news and good cheer! And speaking of good news...

Reunion Good News!

In the last newsletter, in a moment of weakness, I complained about the lack of response for my repeated calls for reunion volunteers from GSS veterans who live in Cheyenne. At this time I am pleased---and greatly relieved---to report that someone has stepped forward--- **Jack Studley** (Gravity, FEW, 1971-75)! Jack is not only a veteran of GSS and a resident of Cheyenne, but also *the official Cheyenne City Surveyor!* Says Jack:

"Garrett, I have not attended reunions because of my business all the time. But that is no excuse! Best way for me to get committed to attending is to get committed to doing something regarding. So I will be happy to help with arrangements and renegotiating contract with the "Radisson Hotel" (no longer the Holiday Inn). I have good contact with these folks with my involvement in other organizations that have made use of the facility over the years. - Jack Studley, PLS, Cheyenne City Surveyor"

At the time of our last reunion Jack revealed that he had recently completed a project, in cooperation with the local Chapter of the Professional Land Surveyors of Wyoming, to locate or reestablish the historic survey corners of the original surveys of the City of Cheyenne. As you may recall, Cheyenne was established to support the workers building the Union Pacific Railroad in 1867 during the historic race to complete the first transcontinental railroad connecting the east coast to the west coast. Fort D.A. Russell was also established at that time as an Army garrison to protect the railroad workers. It evolved to become F.E. Warren AFB, the final headquarters home of our Squadron and Group.

It probably didn't escape your notice that Jack's note mentions that the Holiday Inn Cheyenne has changed ownership and is now part of the Radisson Hotel chain. I am relieved to see that Jack has endorsed it from personal experience. (By the way, *Trip Advisor* also ranks it among the top ten hotels in Cheyenne and among Cheyenne's "best value" hotels.)

Thanks to the superb record keeping of **Merilou Miller** (Ops & Admin, FEW, 1969-1977; 1980-1988), who handled arrangements for the 2015 reunion, Jack now has our previous contract with Holiday Inn. He will use that as a starting point to negotiate the deal for our next reunion.

Thank you, Merilou and Jack!

Update on Commemorative Coins

As noted in the November newsletter, the company that made our last two commemorative coins, the Northwest Territorial Mint, is in somewhat of a financial mess and has reorganized under bankruptcy protection. Although they made a high quality product for us on two occasions and also produced the commemorative coin for our colleagues in the Air Force Photomapping Association, I think it is too risky to order from them again.

Some of our veterans have stepped forward to suggest alternative sources. My thanks go to **Bob Carlson** (Survey, Orlando, 1959), **Ray Allen III** (Gravity, Data Reduction, Survey, Astro, Doppler & GPS, various locations, 1978-93), **LeRoy Clark** (Survey, Det 1, 1963-67) and **Parris Sepe** (Survey, Orlando, 1961-63). I am also evaluating other possibilities on my own.

As you may recall, we decided last time to mint coins that commemorate the Squadron's various designations during its history from July 1959 to October 1993. Our unit went by five different designations, and consequently, had five different emblems:

- 1381st Geodetic Survey Squadron (Missile), 1959-64
- 1381st Geodetic Survey Squadron, 1964-68

- 1st Geodetic Survey Squadron, 1968-72
- Geodetic Survey Squadron, 1972-89
- Geodetic Survey Group, 1989-93

We already minted the first version (Missile) and sold all of them before the 2015 reunion.

If it's not too outrageously expensive, my plan is to mint the next four coins at 50 coins each. I would have to personally front the money to go ahead with production and hope to recoup my outlay later by selling all of the coins at cost plus shipping and handling. If that up-front investment turns out to be too prohibitive, I will just go with the next two versions of the emblem and then the final two for the reunion in 2021.

I shall soon choose among the numerous alternative vendors and make that announcement soon after the New Year. Having mentioned the plan for minting the next coins in the previous newsletter, a few of you jumped the gun and started ordering coins!

Please hold off until I have selected a vendor and made a general announcement in a future newsletter with details on which coins are available and how to order them!

Messages from the Field:

It has been a while since I shared some of the feedback I get from our veterans. I always appreciate your comments, suggestions and things you like to share. Here are some I received following the November newsletter.

From **Boe Borchardt**, who shared some of his special, down-home cooking recipes for Thanksgiving:

"Mr G, Nice newsletter as always. Thanks.

I roasted our turkey today. Making 18 quarts of Turkey Bone Gumbo on Friday. It takes me 3 days to make my kind of Gumbo. It is not very cheap to make, I only do it once a year. We share with neighbors and friends. Of course the roux takes me an hour to make. I use bacon grease in making the roux. Louisiana Trinity-onion, bell pepper and celery. Of course, lots of garlic and okra. Meat-wise I use turkey, a smoked turkey leg, Tasso (Louisiana smoked pork), Andouille sausage and shrimp. And of course all the spices and the "Kitchen Sink." Smile.

Everyone has a different way of making it. I did some major modifications from a recipe from one of the oldest Louisiana Plantations near Natchitoches, Louisiana, a town established in 1714, the oldest town in Louisiana."

From **Pat Church** (Astro, Orlando & FEW, 1964-68), who wondered how many of our veterans are over 80:

"Hi, I just read your newsletter and got to wondering, since I just turned 88 on the 20th, how many my age are left standing? All I kept in touch with are gone. Have a nice Thanksgiving. - Pat"

I know we have a few seniors out there, some of them going back to the original members of the 1381st in Orlando. **Bob Carlson** recently turned 80, and I was pleased to attend the 90th birthday party of **Chuck Finley** last summer. His old friend, **Chuck Whalen**, was also in attendance, and he is probably also pushing that milestone. Others include **Gordon Barnes** and **Jim St. Clair** in their young eighties.

How many other octogenarians or nanogenerians are reading this newsletter now? We all would like to hear from you, especially Pat Church!

Bill Carter (Astro, Orlando, 1961-63 & FEW, 1965-67) commented on my thoughts about the original Thanksgiving in Plymouth colony:

"Happy and safe Thanksgiving to you and your loved ones.

My wife and daughter have traced one of my ancestors back to the Mayflower. He was 12 years old that first winter and his mother and father died the first winter. His uncle was a doctor on the ship and took care of him. In tracing this history we learned that the pilgrims raided uninhabited Indian residences and graves, helping themselves to several bushels of corn that helped them keep from starving. Not a very good start at making friends with the locals!

Regards, Bill Carter"

Bobby Walters (Survey, Orlando, 1960-65; Det2, Malmstrom, 1969-72; FEW, 1975-80) commented on the Skyspot article from late last year coauthored by **Gordon Barnes**, **Julian Higgins**, **Larry Hootman** and myself. He also gave a nice "attaboy" to Julian. If you missed the Skyspot article, you can access it on our GSS website at http://geodeticsurvey.mysite.com/images/Moore/Photomapping_support_of_SkySpot.pdf

"Hello Garrett, Always look forward for your newsletter. Thank you for doing this. My wife and I now live in an assisted living facility, in Columbus, Ga. Our son wanted us to get closer to him and his wife, in case we needed help. Very nice of them to take on an added responsibility. Finally got around to reading the SKYSPOT Report. I ran in to Ben [Billings] and Larry [Hootman] at Clark AB on their way home [from the LS 85 project]. [Julian] Higgins was my Survey OIC in Germany. He, [Roger] Koehler and myself were in a Gasthaus in the Northern part of Germany. I mentioned to him that I had run into Ben and Larry at Clark and they had mentioned his name. I asked him if he was that Higgins. He was shocked!! He was a very good officer and nice to work with. – Bob"

Dick Winslow, our Webmaster, and I also received this unusual request from a grandson doing research on his grandfather, who was a veteran of the Squadron, both in Orlando and Cheyenne.

"I'm not sure if either of you can help, but I found your email addresses on the website and thought it was a good place to

start. My name is Jason Schreck my grandfather was Master Sergeant **Thomas Schreck**, who according to his service records served with the 1381st from at least 1963 until his retirement in 1967. I know he served in both Orlando and Cheyenne. My grandfather passed away in 2013 and over the last few years I've been piecing together his military service from a combination of official records, a journal he kept, and family oral and written histories. I would love to find out if anyone in the group remembers him, has any stories about him, or knows what specific projects he may have been involved with as part of the Squadron. If it helps I have attached a photo of him from those days. Would love to hear back from anyone. Please feel free to post the email and photo to the website or newsletter as well. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely

Jason Schreck

The photo will be placed on our website, but we need some help from our audience! Jason did not mention what his grandfather did, so we are not sure whether he worked in Survey, Astro, Gravity, Stellar Camera or in some other capacity. Regrettably, we have no current record of Thomas Schreck on any of our lists of living or deceased GSS/GSG veterans.

Do any of you recall working with MSgt Thomas Schreck in either Orlando or Cheyenne in the mid-1960s? If so, please reply to me and Jason: garrettmoores@verizon.net and lb206@aol.com .

And finally, one bit of not-so-good news from **Tom Swart** (Survey, FEW, 1966-68; Malmstrom Det 2, 1968-70), who is recovering from cancer treatment. Tom has established a GoFundMe site to help defray his medical and other expenses.

"I've got to say that this is getting scary. I'm back in the hospital, been here for a week, haven't worked in 2 weeks. Last week the bike in the picture was stolen... Finally home after a week in the hospital for dehydration. No more hospital food... It hasn't been a great month... I haven't worked for two weeks and it looks like at least two more. Getting really concerned about bills."

We wish Tom a speedy and full recovery. At this time of charitable giving, consider helping out a fellow GSS veteran by going to his GoFundMe site to make a donation. https://www.gofundme.com/6kd9xt-cancer-surgery?viewupdates=1&rcid=r01-151126901136-4f25d24fd3744ecb&utm_source=internal&utm_medium=email&utm_content=cta_button&utm_campaign=upd_n

Losses and Updates

Jason Schreck forwarded the obituary for his late grandfather, MSgt **Thomas Schreck**, so we will add that name to our online list of deceased GSS/GSG veterans.

We were also pleased to receive an update of contact information from CMSgt **Kelly Callantine** (Survey & Data Reduction, FEW, 1975-78; Det 4, 1978-82; FEW, 1982-86), which you may read by logging into our GSS/GSG Veterans website.

Photo Calibration Survey

In earlier newsletters we have been following up a request from Myke Weiskopf of radio KCRW in California, who stumbled upon some old photo-calibration sites in the Mojave Desert near Edwards AFB. A brass disk with the 1381st label embedded in the concrete pad of one of these calibration sites led Myke to us. As you may recall, those sites were positioned by the 1381st GSS during a two-year survey by our geodetic surveyors in the mid-1960s. I was recently surprised to see the following article posted on Facebook regarding those same sites, used for many years to calibrate overhead cameras used for reconnaissance. See the story and photos at this link:

https://www.atlasobscura.com/places/edwards-afb-satellite-calibration-targets?utm_source=Atlas+Obscura+Daily+Newsletter&utm_campaign=a9dd469926-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2017_12_07&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_f36db9c480-a9dd469926-62912473&ct=f%28%29&mc_cid=a9dd469926&mc_eid=ba5016b572

Early next year I will release the personal stories and photos of that important survey, as related by the surviving GSS veterans who did the work.

Final Notes:

That's all for this newsletter.

From our house to yours, Bonnie & I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and much good health and happiness in 2018!

If you are on Facebook, I invite you to be my Facebook friend. Find me at <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100009342009837>

There is also a Facebook page for the Squadron/Group at <https://www.facebook.com/1381GeodeticSurveySquadron/>

Garrett

Field Survey Branch & Astronomic Positioning Branch

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 and Philosopher

