

80th FIGHTER SQUADRON HEADHUNTERS ASSOCIATION



HEADHUNTER HEADLINES



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"AUDENTIS FORTUNA JUVAT" 1 February 2016

WWII HEADHUNTERS



Craftsmanship is still our stock in trade

The rhythmic roar of the P-38 tells more eloquently than words of the superb fighting qualities built into its two perfectly synchronized engines. Foremost of the American designed and built liquid-cooled aircraft engines is the Allison, which powers several of our top fighter craft and for which we at Cadillac produce vital precision assemblies.

It was natural that Cadillac should be entrusted with this war production assignment,

because for forty years Cadillac has exemplified the ultimate in craftsmanship and precision. The long-remembered Cadillac motto, "Craftsmanship a Creed—Accuracy a Law," is far from being an empty, meaningless phrase. It is, in fact, the very credo by which we live because it calls for the fullest exercise of our highest traditional skill.

Another assignment is the production of M-5 light tanks, for which the Cadillac automotive-

type V-8 engines were adapted. This serves to keep the same Cadillac craftsmen on the same production line on which they worked in time of peace.

Thus, while serving the nation at war on a full-time basis, we are also maintaining at an efficient peak everything that the Cadillac name and crest represent in time of peace—the peace which must ultimately be ours.

CADILLAC MOTOR CAR DIVISION



GENERAL MOTORS CORPORATION



BACK THE ATTACK
WITH WAR BONDS

KIRBY GRAMS

A while back **Bwana Johnson** forwarded me some emails he'd received from **Kirby**, aka "Kirbygrams". Now at the time Kirby was fully retired, divorced and didn't have much to keep him otherwise occupied. Every day, if you were on his list, you'd get Kirbygrams and Kirbyjokes 'til your inbox clogged up. Remember that most of us were on dial-up! Sometimes he'd just ramble (a couple of toddies too many, perhaps?) and sometimes he'd bring you near tears with his tales of combat. So, I thought I'd share some of them with you in the coming (so to speak) newsletters. Kirby was definitely not Politically Correct, so if that will get your knickers in a knot just pass this section up.

----- Original Message -----

From: <LWeeks2945@aol.com>

To: <ankirby2@ltex.net>

Sent: Wednesday, December 11, 2002 4:43 PM

Subject: Kirby, In Your Opinion, Name The Greatest Dog Fight Pilot In The Past 85 Years

Kirby, in your opinion, can you name a fighter pilot .. regardless of his nationality .. Japanese, Russian and so on .. who may've been the most combat effective and victorious in 'dogfighting' enemy fighter aircraft during the 85 year world history of military aviation?

I have a very interesting and factual report to support a certain fighter pilot's 'name'. Maybe it's the one you are thinking of. Can you come up with a possibility for that single 'name'?

Cheers, Tom Weeks

-----Original Message-----

From: M.F. Kirby [<mailto:ankirby2@ltex.net>]

Sent: Wednesday, December 11, 2002 6:24 PM

To: LWeeks2945@aol.com

Subject: Kirby, In Your Opinion, Name The Greatest Dog Fight Pilot In The Past 85 Years

Tom, you pose a very difficult question...to me, there is no answer...You realize that we of the WWII vintage were the last of the true knights of aerial warfare...the one on one type of combat, with the victor take all... Then, too, there is more than one type of aerial combat. There were the Bongs and the Maguires, the Kearbys, the MacDonalds and the list goes on and on...that wanted to rid the skies of all enemy planes and would go to any extreme to accomplish this purpose... Then there were the Kirbys et al...rather than pursue the tangents we preferred to stay close to our bomber friends and protect them and see that each returned home...which was the correct way, to be perfectly truthful, I do not know...I guess it took a little of both...

Are you wanting to propose the name of Boyd, I think that is the name...and I am too damn lazy to get up and go look it up...Personally, I am not familiar with Mr Boyd's background...I do not have any idea how many planes he shot down or if his was all Air Show Combat...To me there is a world of difference...If you are being shot at or if you are flying precision...they are two different worlds...To me, I was the greatest aerial combat pilot...I had the distinction of every man that flew behind me returned safely to his nest...and I do not think you can improve on that...Kirby

Wait a minute, I remember...One pilot took off by himself and got the boom lowered on himself. An Australian boat picked him up and returned him safely...He was transferred to biscuit bombers (*Ed Note: C-47's assigned to the 57th Troop Carrier Squadron*) within the week. The second verse to that story, the crew of the Aussie boat was recently holding their 50th(?) anniversary and wanted to know where to find their "Hero". The reason for the transfer...Whether you realize it or not, Aerial Combat

is the greatest "Team Sport" that has ever been invented...no other activity even comes close...you protect me and I will protect you...Kirby

KOREAN WAR HEADHUNTERS



Lockheed F-80C-10-LO Shooting Stars of the 80th Fighter Bomber Squadron, 8th Fighter Bomber Wing

Interview with Harold E. Fischer: Korean War Jet Ace and POW

1/16/2007 • Aviation History <http://www.historynet.com/interview-with-harold-e-fischer-korean-war-jet-ace-and-pow.htm>

(Sorry for the small type, but I just ran out of newsletter space-Tex)

The Korean War was the era of the jet ace. Among them, Iowa native Harold E. "Hal" Fischer, the 25th pilot to achieve ace status during the conflict, was one of the most remarkable. After flying 105 ground support missions in Lockheed F-80 fighter-bombers, he wangled a second combat tour in the North American F-86 and soon began racking up Mikoyan-Gurevich MiG-15s. He became an ace on his 47th mission and got his 10th victory on his 66th. On his 70th mission, however, his luck ran out. In a fight over Manchuria, he damaged three MiGs before becoming the fifth victory for a Chinese pilot. He spent the next two years as a Chinese prisoner of war in Manchuria. Bob Bergin, who interviewed Han Decai, the MiG pilot credited with downing Fischer (*Military History*, December 2001), subsequently interviewed Fischer.

MH: What sparked your interest in aviation?

Fischer: I was given an allowance of 10 cents every Saturday night. I would spend it all on *Flying Aces*, a magazine about World War I. On a blackboard I could draw airplanes in different attitudes, turning and banking. Later I saved my money to buy model airplanes and then climb a windmill to fly them. My first contact with a real airplane was at the state fair in Des Moines. I saw a man named Frakes crash an airplane into a house and survive. Later I saved to take a ride in an airplane, an early Waco, I think.

MH: How did you enter the Air Force?

Fischer: I worked for my parents and then went to Iowa State. After a couple of years, I wanted to enlist, and only the Army was taking anyone. I went before the board for infantry officers, was sent to Officer Candidate School at Fort Benning, GA, and trained as a platoon leader. In the meantime, I had applied for Air Force pilot training. I got my Army commission, and I had a paper that said I could go into Air Force pilot training. I took leave, got a hop to Washington and went to the Pentagon. I went to the Army Reserve office and said, "If you release me, the Air Force will take me." Then I went to the Air Force and said, "The Army will release me if you take me."

MH: Did you know you would be going into jets?

Fischer: I didn't want jets. I wanted the North American F-51, an airplane that had class and a great history. You had to be a real pilot to fly it. I was headed for the F-51 class at Nellis Air Force Base when they canceled the F-51 program. Suddenly, there I was — with the F-80.

MH: You were sent to Japan. Did the country have any special appeal for you?

Fischer: I had studied history, the Japanese people and the war. I wanted to know as much about that as I could. I still remember arriving in Japan and then driving by the park where we were told the Doolittle Raiders were beheaded. Later I got a scooter, went everywhere and met the people. You can learn a lot if you're friendly and go where no one else has gone. I was assigned to the 80th Fighter-Bomber Squadron, known as the "Headhunters," based at Fukuoka, on the island of Kyushu.

MH: What were the F-80 missions like?

Fischer: From Japan it was a long way. We could make a few passes, and then we'd refuel at Taegu. It was all ground support, attacking Communist troops, vehicles, trains if you could catch them. Actually, during the day the trains went into tunnels, and we would try to close the entrances. We carried 500-pound bombs, napalm and rockets, and we had our six .50-caliber machine guns. The most effective was napalm — you didn't exactly have to hit the target.

MH: Where did you go after your tour ended?

Fischer: I volunteered to go back to Headquarters, Far East Air Force, in Tokyo to work in combat crew assignments. To get another combat tour, you had to go back to the United States first or go to a squadron and wait a year. I got one of the 80th pilots assigned as commander to a squadron in Japan. We agreed that if I got this done, he would recommend that I go back to combat.

MH: You were assigned to the 39th Fighter Interceptor Squadron. Did you find life in an F-86 squadron different from your previous assignment?

Fischer: In my F-80 squadron there was a lot of experience, even people who flew original jets, but they hardly talked. With the F-86 squadron it was different. You could evaluate who was successful and who was not, who wanted to fight and who did not, and who was there for political reasons — to do the thing you needed to do for your career. You learn from other people. You could learn a lot at the bar. I didn't always know enough to ask.

MH: You became a flight leader after only a few missions. Why?

Fischer: Because I had a combat tour where I was assigned to Douglas Lindsay, an exchange officer from the Royal Canadian Air Force. Doug taught me everything I knew about combat flying. He flew Supermarine Spitfires in Britain during World War II and became an ace. He was an outstanding flight leader. He ignored all the rules that really did not have much to do with combat and concentrated on what got the job done.

MH: What was your first victory like?

Fischer: I moved up into lead, and when I saw the MiGs — they were everywhere — I called that I was going to make a bounce. So I took this bounce, and actually I didn't have a target in sight. Then two MiGs started going north. They were a long distance away, and I used Kentucky windage and tracers, and just fired short bursts. Eventually, one of the two started a descent to the left. So I fired again, and then moved up beside the aircraft. I saw the canopy gone and no pilot. I

turned around and started climbing out, and there was the pilot in a parachute. I didn't have time to pull the circuit breakers to deactivate the guns, so I just moved to the right and fired a few rounds to activate the camera. I flew right by him and waved. He had a ribbon parachute like the Germans used in World War II, and a lot of cold weather flying equipment. Doug had told me you'll never sleep the first night you get a kill. And he was right — you keep reliving it.

MH: How did you score your ace-making fifth victory?

Fischer: When I first fired on him, the MiG was a long distance away, flying toward China. He started to burn. He slowed, and I was able to go up alongside. I saw the pilot, beating on the canopy. He couldn't get out. I didn't want him to burn to death, so I dropped back, intending to shoot him down. I was behind and very close. The burning MiG was streaming molten metal back on my aircraft and caused one of the rounds in my guns to explode. That severed the rudder cable, and I thought I'd been hit. I lost pressurization. It became a question of whether I could get back or not. I came back at 43,000 feet, as high as the F-86 could get, and I got the bends because there was no pressurization. I felt sad about the MiG pilot. I had felt no animosity toward him.

MH: Was there much speculation about who was flying the MiGs?

Fischer: There was speculation, but that was mostly for the public. There were security services monitoring enemy pilot conversations, and they knew who was flying. That information was never passed on to our pilots. We knew the Russians were the ones who had the MiGs. The North Koreans didn't have them, and initially the Chinese weren't trained in MiGs. There were North Korean aces, but they were mostly flying Yaks.

MH: Which of your opponents was the most dangerous?

Fischer: I started an attack on a MiG, and my wingman called me free. You're clear, he said. Suddenly I had all these golf balls going by my cockpit. I guess the MiG behind me was too close. If I had been farther out he would have hit me. He couldn't get me without hitting the guy in front, but he kept firing and they were going all around me. Finally we went through a cloud. The MiG in front turned left, and I followed. When I finally thought I was clear, I fired and he went down burning. The pilot bailed out. When I got back I had some words with the wingman for calling me free.

MH: When you headed out on what was to become your last mission, you had a problem before it started.

Fischer: Yes, I accepted an airplane I shouldn't have. It hadn't been bore sighted after its last mission. When I made my first attack on four aircraft, I fired at about 1,000 feet and found I was about 100 feet to the left. Then I saw four other airplanes and initiated an attack on them. I allowed for the problem with the guns and hit two of the MiGs, both Russians. Years later I talked with the Russian pilots. One of them said I had hit him 14 times, right behind the cockpit in the wing root. He had to land with his wheels up. The second MiG I hit was also a Russian aircraft. And there was a third MiG that I hit really hard, and it crashed. When I bailed out there was this one MiG that was floating around. He had no power and was burning. I thought he was coming toward me, and all I had was my .45. I think he was Chinese, but I'm not sure.

MH: You had hit three MiGs, then in the middle of this fight you suddenly found yourself with a dead airplane.

Fischer: Here was the thing. With the MiG where I saw the numbers 341 on its side, I had this bad feeling about getting ahead of the target. In this case, all kinds of debris was coming off the MiG in front of me — the third one — and I pulled up through it. And there, right over the top of him, my engine died, the throttle came back in my hand and the warning lights came on. We were told that when you have fire warning lights, you've got 30 seconds to bail out. I was just high enough so there was an opening shock when I ejected. I came down on the side of a hill. I didn't have a hard landing because my parachute got caught up on some shrubbery.

MH: What kind of shape were you in when you landed? What did you do?

Fischer: I lost my helmet, and my ear was bleeding. I just walked and walked. Finally I sat down, and here came an old Chinese. I had a choice, I could shoot him, but I didn't know — there were insurgents there who worked with us. I didn't know if he was on their side or our side. Anyway, he motioned me to follow him, and I followed, right into a group of Chinese with hatchets and farm implements. I tried to play the part of a Russian and just walk away, but then the Chinese soldiers came.

MH: You were held for two years in Manchuria. You managed to get in contact with other POWs, and at one point you actually escaped. Tell us about that.

Fischer: They tried to keep us from knowing it, but through manipulating a guard, I found out other POWs were being held in the same place and made contact with them. Two were in a room next to me. I had also made contact with Andy McKenzie, who claimed he had been accidentally shot down by an F-86. Andy was saying he was going home, but we thought they were going to do away with him. To protect him, we told the Chinese that we knew there was another prisoner. Through a code system I had also made contact with Ed Heller. Because of this, I was declared an “activist” and placed in a separate cell where I could have no contact with anyone. After a while, I decided to become a model prisoner so they wouldn’t watch me as closely. At the end of the bed I had found an outside wall. I started digging with a nail until I had a brick I could push out. I chose the holidays to do it, when the guards were not looking in on me as much. I pushed out feet first, and it was a really great feeling. I headed for the MiG base to steal a MiG. I meant to play a Russian, but the guard stopped me. So I just turned around and walked away. My next plan was to reach the water, maybe steal a boat. Crossing a river I got wet and froze my feet. Then I drank dirty water and got really sick. I followed the railroad to town. My idea was to get on a rail car headed south. But reports of my escape were out. I got grabbed and really hurt, put in handcuffs and taken back. The guards were really hostile then. For at least a month I was forced to stay in one place and not move. Finally I was taken back with the other prisoners.

MH: You were not released until May 1955. Looking back, how do you feel about your time in China?

Fischer: I feel I was lucky to be a prisoner of the Chinese. They treat their prisoners the way they treat their troops, in the way they feed and house them. It was not the way the North Koreans did it.

MH: Official credit for shooting you down was given to the Chinese ace Han Decai, as his fifth victory. How did you feel about the claims?

Fischer: I found out only years later that Han Decai was credited with shooting me down. I took a lot of time to contact the Russian pilots and talk with them. I got to know them and respect them. When I found out that Han had been given credit for me, I tried to contact him through Chinese embassies. In 1996 I joined a group of AVG Flying Tiger pilots who had been invited to visit China. There, I met General Han and presented him with an F-86 model. We’ve met again since then. And we have become friends.

This article was written by Bob Bergin and originally published in the January/February 2007 issue of *Military History* magazine. For more great articles be sure to subscribe to *Military History* magazine today!

BETWEEN THE WARS HEADHUNTERS

Where are you guys???

VIET NAM HEADHUNTERS

On 8/28/2015 7:05 PM, **Victor Vizcarra** wrote:
Hi Tex,

Thank you for wanting to include the Spring High story in November’s Headhunters’ newsletter. I do think it is an important part of Headhunter history and a story not widely known. It (the article used in the November newsletter) appears to be a conglomerate of different articles put into one. The only part I wrote was the first sentence of the description of the video and the paragraph providing the career outcome of mission participants i.e., ranks achieved in their careers. The four paragraphs that follow mine were from Norm Powell’s Thunder Falcon newsletter which he authored to introduce the Spring High video to the retired F-105 community and family.

You have correctly captured the 80th pilots who flew the mission. In case you are not aware, FYI, **Phil Coll**, “**Pappy**” **Detwiller**, and “**Buddha**” **Boswell** have “Flown West.” **Art Mearns** was my flight commander and flight leader in

most of the combat missions I flew. He was KIA sixteen months after the Spring High mission. An interesting aspect of **Lou Pazel's** participation in the mission is he had just delivered a replacement Thud from Yokota the day prior to the mission and was chomping at the bit to fly a mission. Poor guy got more than he bargained for. He got thrown in as a spare at the last minute and flew with the 563rd TFS, un-briefed and not knowing who he was flying with and saw number two get shot down. A tough introduction to combat!

I've attached an article which provides the background behind the mission which I wrote and submitted to Air Force Magazine for the 50th anniversary of Spring High. The editor rejected the article after having me re-write it using their guidelines. When I say he rejected it, he really didn't even give me the courtesy of a form rejection letter, he just never acknowledged my resubmission. If you believe it would add to your newsletter, feel free to include it, if not, maybe the Air Force Magazine editor has better judgement than I give him credit for. The article is copyrighted so I give permission for its inclusion in your newsletter if you so decide. *(This article was in the November 2015 Newsletter-Tex)*

I'll send you a couple of applicable pictures in a separate message. Warm regards, **Vic**

JUVAT HEADHUNTERS

As a reminder, you can also view JL #109's (**LT COL John "NÜK" Gallemore**) monthly newsletter on the website: <https://8ofsheadhunters.org/category/newsletter/juvat-lead-newsletter/>

**80th Fighter Squadron Newsletter
DEC 2015**

COMMANDER'S WORDS

The Juvats finished Vigilant Ace in superb fashion. I would say things slowed down but we are busy as ever. In the past 6 weeks, we have added 9 new Juvats...MQT BFM CAMP! Juvat Thanksgiving was outstanding. Thanks to all of the punks for leading the charge ensuring all Juvats had a "home-cooked" Thanksgiving Dinner. Christmas is around the corner and I anticipate the Juvat Holiday Party to be legendary. Best of luck to \$wag, Quaker, Popeye and Golden!

For those who may be visiting Kunsan for the holidays, I listed the Juvat Christmas and New Years plans below. I know holidays without loved ones are an extremely difficult time...THANK YOU FOR YOUR SACRIFICES!

WIG?
Juvat Lead

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DEC EVENTS

- 11 Dec – Juvat Holiday Party
- 19 Dec – Wolf Pack Holiday Party
- 25 Dec – Juvat Christmas Dinner
- 31 Dec – Juvat New Year's Eve Party

LONG TERM

- Mid-Jan to Mid-Feb – No-notice ORE
- 28 Mar – 1 Apr – Buddy Wing (Jungwon AB)
- 11 – 15 Apr – 8 FW UEI
- 18 – 22 Apr – MAX Thunder
- 27 Apr – 30 May – Red Flag – Alaska / Distant Frontier



ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Birthdays (HOBS Houder – 7 Dec / Rex_DO – 21 Dec)

INBOUNDS

- Mr. Karrs – Spangdahlem

UPGRADES COMPLETE

- Blade Thornton – Instructor Pilot
- Forest Gebbs – Wingmen

DEC PAIN TRAIN

- Flight Lead Upgrade: Rex Kitchen
- Instructor Pilot Upgrade: Knight, Ogre, Twig
- MQT: Hainline, Barlow, Foster, Johnson, F., Johnson, M., Jerrell, Roberts
- FAC(A): Acid

JUVAT SWAG

- Contact Kramer Clasen for RMOs, T-shirts, Mug orders, etc.

ACRONYM CORNER

- BFM – Basic Fighter Maneuvers
- MQT – Mission Qualification Training
- ORE – Operational Readiness Exercise
- UEI – Unit Effectiveness Inspection



HEADHUNTERS DOWN

Got a heads up from **Driver Mac McNeese** and found this article on the Ratnet. I had the pleasure of having **LT COL Bill "Easy" Reiter** in my pit many times. Great guy. Great Fighter WSO! RIP, Easy.



ST. PETERS, Mo. – A 68-year-old man died in an area hospital after he was rear-ended in a crash Wednesday morning. According to a release from the St. Peters Police Department... William Reiter of Florissant, Mo told officers that he was in pain after the crash... While being evaluated at the hospital, Reiter died from an internal injury that police said was presumed to be caused by the crash.

FROM THE WEBSITE AND AROUND THE WORLD

On Nov 13, 2015, at 12:44 AM, 8oFSHeadhunters <HH01@8ofsheadhunters.org> wrote: **\$wag** you've been a great contact there (Kunsan). Good luck with the PCS. Where are you going? What will you be doing? The Association wants to know as we fly jets vicariously through you guys. (Remember that you will not be flying jets forever and that the Headhunter Association will help you connect with those who still are.) WIG? Tex , Juvat 77-78

On 11/12/2015 9:16 PM, **Michael Walker** wrote: Yea Tex I'll definitely keep that in mind. I appreciate it. I'm headed to Shaw AFB to work with the 77th as a Gambler. Looking forward to it but I definitely won't regret my time here as a Juvat! Crush em! **\$wag**

Had a nice email exchange with **Knight Prevendar**, current JBC Lead as we try to find out about supporting the orphanage at the Kun.

On 11/15/2015 7:36 AM, Alex Prevendar wrote:

Tex, Likewise, it's good to meet you! We actually just named 2 post-MQT guys, and gave 2 guys their old callsigns back on Friday. It was an epic time with a standard push to A-town. However, I am sure it is drastically different than the A-town you are used to. Times are changing that is for sure.

Unfortunately, I have never heard of the Juvats supporting an orphanage in my time here, but I will ask JL this week about it. Swag, may have some more insight into that. What is the orphanage the Juvats were supporting so I can gain some more SA on it.

\$wag (**LT Michael Walker**) just left yesterday for SOS en-route to Shaw. I'm sure he'll be down-range soon laying some metal were it is required. I just got my assignment to Aviano, and will be

leaving here in March. How's everything back in the land of the free? I was here when the guys Facetimed in to sing some songs during your last reunion which was really cool to see.

*I get so many comments about connecting with the "young guys" every time we do that even when **Tootsie** screws up the connection (sorry, Tootsie... :>))*

Crush'Em! **Alexander "Knight"** (formerly known as Squire) **Prevendar**

Tex, Been a while hasn't it? Spent a year in Germany followed by a year in Africa as the 409 AEG/CC.

I'm back in the states (Langley) running the multirole ISR division for ACC. Lots of moving parts there. Mostly glad to have the family back together. Take care and maybe we'll cross paths again some day! v/r Digger (**Lt Col Erik "Digger" Drake**)

On 12/7/2015 11:02 PM, **Chris Hayes** wrote:

Hi Tex, Retired from Delta two years ago. I do a fair amount of chauffeuring of step-teenagers, while my wife works as a psychiatrist at U of U. When the kids finish high school in 2.5 years, we should be open for new adventures. **Hannibal**

New comment on your post "Christmas 2015 Message" Author: John E-mail: stroker@embarqmail.com: Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you and Rita, Lude, Nogas and all the Headhunters and Juvats. Thank you for all you do for the group and hopefully the future of the Air Force and military. To all the Juvats worldwide, may this season bring joy and hope to you and yours. **Stroker**, Juvat Lead 87-88. (**JJ Cummins**)

Thanks, Stroker. Best to you and Anita- from The Motley Crew at HH HQ

FROM THE ORDERLY ROOM

My granddaughter invites me to her school each Veterans Day where a bunch of old pharts give a short presentation to the various classes about life in US Armed Forces. Most of the presenters are Army guys but there are a couple of squids and a Jarhead or two. I am typically the only AF guy there. Last year, in an effort to show the spirit and *elan* of Headhunter fighter pilots AND to shame the grunts (who mostly talk about Command and Control In Modern Warfare, what they ate at chow in SEA, and the latest Big Green Army Concept of Operations) I wanted to play TTL for the class and (of course) act out the song. Unfortunately, the last stanza contains a naughty word. I contacted LTM Emmitt Brooks for a sanitized version of it. He did a quick remix and VIOLA! (sic).

The fifth graders loved it- even the Asian kid! Thanks, Emmitt! So, if you need a sanitized version without the "F" word, please drop me an email and I'll forward it to you in digital format.

2016 State Of The Association Report

12 January 2016

Since Dear Leader will be giving his State of the Union address tonight, I thought it timely to write about the State of The Association. Currently, communications concerning Association business is sporadic and is mostly only disseminated at reunion business meetings. I hope to continue this now-new tradition and hope follow on Head Headhunters will follow suit.

Membership: Nominally, we have 906 members . That includes Lifetime Members (LTM), Annual Dues (AD) paying members, Honorary Members and Associate Members. Unfortunately, those numbers are a bit misleading as we have 147 AD members who have not paid dues for the 2015 period. I will be starting up the 2016 dues requests in another month or so.

Increasing membership numbers is a continually-vexing problem both for myself and for Jaybird before me. As the older Members are Flying West, we simply are not replacing ourselves. While that is a problem for almost all ageing segments of our society, it is particularly vexing to HH HQ. We should be getting a fair number of new Members from the Juvats. But even with free first-year memberships (a program started by Jaybird and continued through last year) we got few takers.

We've tried all sorts of tactics- having a Liaison Officer to pitch memberships. Ditto for using Juvat Lead at Commander's Calls. Direct emails from HH HQ, etc. There seems to be a flurry of activity at the start with 2 or 3 guys and gals joining up and then interest (or attention to the matter) seems to quickly wane to zero.

Frustration. Heavy drinking. Yelling at Rita. Kicking Beau The Wonder Dog. But all that doesn't help improve the situation either...

The reality is, we don't need numbers of members. We need members who will participate- attending reunions, posting on the website, sending in personal milestones for publication in the Newsletter and so on. We don't need money. We do need active Headhunters.

So I'm putting the onus for success back on the Membership. The Association is only as strong and relevant as your individual participation makes it. That's the no bull shit long and short of it. Your HH HQ team will stay the course- Lude, Nogas and me. Will you?

Question for the membership: The River Rats have local chapters where the members of which get together for drinks, dinner and socializing. Should the Headhunters copy them? Is there any interest? If so, how should we set them up? Would you be willing to be the local chapter CINC? Drop me a line with your input, please.

Finances: Thanks in part to the generosity of Paul Murphey's estate and many, many others our overall finances are in very good shape. We started the year with \$20,973 total cash and liquid instruments on hand and ended with \$15,597, after paying for the 2015 Reunion Hospitality Suite expenses, contributions to offset bus transportation , WWII Aviation History Museum banquet expenses and a honorarium donation to the Museum. We also paid to refurbish Kirby (actually "Peanut" Nevels') flying jacket and built our display cases for the Museum. We also reimbursed several members who reproduced copies of their historical documents, memoirs, scrapbooks and so in, in both digital and paper formats. Had we been able to collect all the AM dues, the money on hand would have been about \$17,067. While it may seem that we don't need any more dues money, I would not be doing my due diligence if I didn't keep us as financially strong as possible, and who knows where the future will lead us?

Newsletters: We've reduced newsletter costs significantly, currently mailing out paper copies to our older, non-computer-enabled Members. Total cost in 2015 was approximately \$700 versus \$2800 in previous years. As a reminder, HH HQ publishes newsletters in Feb/May/Aug/Nov and are available to anyone on the website under the "Newsletters" tab.

Annual Post Cards: Jaybird used newsletter mailings and “Your Dues Are Due” mailings to keep Member’s addresses current. Since we don’t really mail out Newsletters and have encouraged on-line payment of dues, HH HQ is losing track of Member’s addresses. To help keep updated I’ve begun to annually mail out yellow postcards to try to keep current on Members’ addresses.

Lude (your Webmaster) contends that this is now a virtual world and that snail mail addresses are not relevant any more.

What says the Membership? Would you be happy with only having an email address and telephone number to contact your Headhunter buddies?

The Orphanage: At the last reunion several Members thought it a good idea to join with the active-duty squadron in support of the Korean orphanage. After sending several emails to the Squadron, it appears that the Juvats may no longer interact with said orphanage. JL#109 is working the project from his end and I should hear from him shortly. Even if the Squadron no longer supports it, if anyone will be the POC I see no reason why we, as an Association, couldn’t support the kids. If you’re interested, please contact me and we’ll get that ball rolling.

HH01 Change Of Command: I’m planning on shaking the stick at the 2017 reunion. It will have been a great 7 year run, but I’ll be 72 and willing to let younger heads (so to speak) pick up the torch-mixed feelings at best. If you’d like a crack (so to speak) at fixing all my mistakes please drop me a line.

So, rolling into 2016 your HH HQ is still proud to serve you. The Juvat Headhunters are still the premier fighter squadron in the US Air Force and still kicking ass everywhere in the world.

How can we make our legacy stronger? Talk to us. **Tex, Nogas, Lude and Jaybird** (Emeritus)
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Speaking of dues: This is the first notice that 2016 annual dues are due. If you owe ‘em, please pay ‘em. Go here: <https://8ofsheadhunters.org/store/> The whole process won’t take over 3 minutes. Your annual dues will be deducted automatically every year until you cancel. We use Stripe, not Paypal. It is very secure and user-friendly. Your personal data is not collected and stored. In fact, even your name is not used. Rather you’re assigned a random Customer ID and that’s used instead.

I’ll be sending out snail mail and email reminders soon. Please take care of your dues as soon as you can.

If you’re an LTM and haven’t done so already, please register: https://8ofsheadhunters.org/upme_register/. Your LTM status should have already been input by your crack (STS) Webmaster Lude and you will have access to the Master Roster. If it’s not in there, just drop me an email: HH01@8ofsheadhunters.org and I’ll fix it in a day or so.

Remember the 75th Anniversary Reunion on last weekend of April or 1st weekend of May 2017. In Ft Worth, Texas. Be there or be square! More details to follow.

What is good? Best to all, Tex and Rita2

**80th Fighter Squadron
THE HEADHUNTERS
PO Box 162
St Marys, PA 15857**

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



***“TWIN TAILED LIGHTNING WAS OUR WARPLANE, AS WE ROAM’D PACIFIC SKIES...
SEARCHING OUT, THE SONS OF NIPPON, SENDING THEM TO THEIR DEMISE.”***