



President's Message

Full Speed Ahead to Branson! All the pieces of the puzzle have been completed and Branson is ready for us! Belinda and Jaime are ecstatic that the 2015 reunion date is now so close. All their hard work will come to fruition, and we're so glad that many of our members will be attending.

Horses, Hooch, and History! The team of Kay Fryman and Carol Futrell have been very busy with preparing a wonderful itinerary of tours and events for our 2016 reunion in Louisville, Kentucky. But what does "Horses, Hooch, and History" mean? See the teaser flyer in this issue. Kay & Carol will give a presentation at our Business Meeting at Branson, and will begin to take deposits then. Bring your checkbooks!

Veteran Photos! Thanks to all who submitted photos. You will see them again in the Veterans Tribute in Branson. And thanks for your and your relatives' service.

Member-Get-A-Member! Over the years of your membership in our Association, how many referrals have you brought into membership of our organization? Folks who have never been assigned to Aviano Air Base are still qualified to be a member, as long as a member refers them. Being a veteran is not required either. You may not be a silver-tongued devil like Jay Maust who

has convinced many friends to join us, but you can try. We've had a couple members actually pay the first year's dues of new members!

To help you get motivated to help increase our membership, we will hold our Member-Get-A-Member contest again. Any current member who brings us three new dues-paying members will receive one year's dues paid. Bring five new members and get two years dues paid. Bring us 10 new members and get five years dues paid. This contest will run from now through November 30, 2015. New member status will be reported at the Business Meeting at Branson! Come on! You know you have a few friends who would enjoy being members of our association. Invite them to join you! And then invite them to attend a reunion. They will be hooked for life!

ARA Website Update! By the time you read this, our website will have undergone a total update. The Louisville reunion info may not yet be on the site, but the membership roster has been updated as well as other pages. Check it out at www.avianoreunion.com

In this Issue... Member News, Branson Reunion Info, Louisville Reunion Announcement, In Memoriam, and More...

ARA Officers

Ben Catalina - President
Rodger Gracey - Vice President
Sally Ann Eaves - Secretary/Treasurer
Elaine Horton - Editor
Lisa Ringler - Webmaster

FUTURE REUNIONS

2016 Louisville, KY
Hostesses
Kay Fryman & Carol Futrell
September 12-17, 2016

WELCOME New Members

Ron and Sandra Futrell

910 Belle Arbes Dr.
Lake Charles, LA 70605-3000
Phone: 337-478- 0704
E-Mail: srfutrell@bellsouth.net
US Army
Relatives of Tom and Carol Futrell

Dave and Cherie Paulissen

549 Bender Ct
Boulder City, NV 89005
Phone: 702-293-1673
E-Mail: david_a_paulissen@hotmail.com
Aviano Era: 61-64
Friends of Catalinas

Kathy Rizzo

2403 W. Lexington #2
Chicago, IL 60612
Phone: 224-430-1944
E-Mail: krizzo1@uic.edu
Friend of Sally Eaves

Joseph Stasulli

105 Kawela Dr.
Bastrop, TX 78602
E-Mail: josephstasulli@att.net
Aviano Era: 1980s
Also a friend of Vito Altieri's

In response to the last Afterburner's article written by Signora Memoria and Signora Ricordare (aka, Ben and Elaine), Sally Eaves had a vivid response to the memory of the "Dead Bug" game the pilots used to play. At Sally's retirement dinner, the MC surprised her (and many of the attendees!) with a "Dead Bug" event. Sally reports that the MC called for a "Diseased Insect" performance at her retirement dinner! About 150 of the 180 of those in attendance fell off their chairs in unison! The Commander was reported to have asked "What's this 'lay down' stuff?" It was chaos and she loved it! GO SALLY GO! Sounds like a good time was had by all. (NOTE: For those not familiar with the "Dead Bug" tradition, we will have a great article about it in an upcoming issue.)

We also received a note from Jean Ives: Hey, Elaine, Have just opened my computer after not opening it for two months.

Report from the Secretary/Treasurer

Sally Ann Eaves

Email: saeaves@comcast.net
8708 Independence Way • Arvada, CO 80005
Phone: 303-421-2163

All of you should have received Ben's emails this summer notifying you of the passing of several of our members. Our thoughts and prayers were and still are with their families. A memoriam page is on the last page of this Afterburner.

Thanks! Sally, *Secretary/Treasurer*

ARA August 2015 Roster Changes and Corrections

Email Changes:

Robert and Holly Gouin
rgouin@tampabay.rr.com

Address change:

Dale and MaryNell Doan
4658 Amorosa Way
San Antonio, TX 78261

John and Pat Snelling
1873 Colonial Arms Circle, Apt 2A
Virginia Beach, VA 23454-3011
John cell: 757-639-6294, Pat cell: 757-635-6203
New email: psnelling@yahoo.com

Gene's merkel cell cancer came back again, but this time the oncologist said we will do radiation. Sooooo, Gene just finished 33 zaps and is once again on the repair. We thanks God every day! Gene had no pain and did not lose his appetite until the last few days and has regained it back again. He did have some burning of the skin, but managed that superbly. Now with water therapy getting his legs strong again – who knows?? We might be able to attend the Aviano reunions again. Just found out about Bea and Marilyn and was so sorry!!!! I'll try to send another story or two about our trials and tribulations the first year we were in Aviano. With best regards, Jean Ives.

We certainly hope to be able to see Jean and Gene again at an upcoming reunion.

Final Update – Branson Reunion

Okay, Avianonites, the fun is finally just around the corner. **Branson awaits us with open arms!**

Close to 70 ARA members and guests have signed up for the extravaganza in the Ozark Mountains. By the time this Afterburner is printed, all of you should be paid in full. Thanks for getting that done.

We have checked with the Grand Plaza Hotel staff and they have confirmed that all listed attendees have made their reservations. Fantastic! The latest list is in this issue.

If you haven't yet figured out how much fun we will have in Branson, go ahead and take another look at the program of events in this issue and at www.avianoreunion.com. It is packed with great entertainment for all. Spectacular shows such as Jonah at the Sight and Sound Theater and Hits of the 60s (and 50s too), where we will relive the good ole times of that era. Some of us will be reminded of our "wild and crazy" nights in Aviano and elsewhere. We may not be as young, but we can still be a little wild and crazy...for a little while...as long as it is not past our bedtime! No doubt we will all have special memories of this reunion.

In September we will send an email to all attendees with a few final details. For example, we'll tell you the time and place in the Plaza Hotel for our "Welcome Reception" on Sept. 28. It will also include time and place to meet for those attending the IT performance that evening.

Since the May Afterburner, Jaime and I attended a family reunion over the July 4th holiday at Branson. One of our very special memories was our visit to the College of the Ozarks. The college, with active participation of the students and Branson show performers, developed an incredibly patriotic celebration of our Independence Day. Our family was deeply touched by the whole experience. We are convinced that you too will have special memories once you visit with the ARA.

Here's to a great reunion! Branson...Here we come!



LAST MINUTE REUNION REMINDERS

1. Are you driving or flying to Branson (Springfield airport)? Please email Belinda and advise.

2. If flying to Springfield airport, please email your full flight schedule to Belinda.

jaimeandbelinda@yahoo.com

IF we have enough people flying into Springfield at similar times, we may be able to arrange for a group pickup. We will advise the status in an email to all in mid-September. But we must have your full flight schedule no later than Sept. 5.

3. Dress is casual throughout the reunion. For the Thursday evening banquet, folks tend to dress nicer, and many men even wear ties. Please plan accordingly.

4. Have you found your nametag and lanyard from the last reunion? Remember to bring them with you. And for first time reunion attendees, we'll provide your new nametag & lanyard.

Springfield Airport Transportation

For those reunion attendees flying into the Springfield airport, IF you need transportation from the airport to the Grand Plaza Hotel, we recommend you contact Branson Limo. We have checked several transportation services in the area and they have the best flexible service and best prices.

If you plan to use this service, you **MUST** contact Branson Limo (Norma) in advance to arrange for the pickup at the airport. 417-331-1316 You will be required to pre-pay by credit card. The more advance you make the reservation, the better chance they will not be sold out.

They have four different types of vehicles. Prices below are for the total vehicle--- **NOT per person.**

Car service	1 to 4 pax	\$105 + tip
Suburban	1 to 6 pax	\$115 + tip
Stretch Limo	1 to 8 pax	\$130 + tip
Super Stretch Limo	1 to 12 pax	\$155 + tip

Belinda has asked each attendee to please email her their full flight schedules...now please. Once she receives those, she will be able to make a list of all arrival dates & times and then send that info to all flyers. You can then use the arrival info to call other attendees and possibly coordinate arrival times and arrange to share a car or other type of transportation.

Some people traveling together may even want to share the cost of a rental car. A mid-size car can be rented for about \$200 for the timeframe of our reunion. Enterprise seems to have the best rates, but feel free to check other rental car agencies.

For the departure trip to the airport on October 2, Belinda will use your flight departure times to see if she can arrange a group pickup at the Grand Plaza Hotel. This will of course be determined later, and will be announced by email hopefully in mid-September. **But for now...please email her your flight schedules.** Thanks.

Signed Up Attendees



Jaime and Belinda Vazquez
 Ben and Lynn Catalina
 Rodger and Betty Gracey
 Sally Ann Eaves
 Marshall Bishop
 George and Nancy Beckwith
 Jay and Jane Maust
 Chuck and Pat Miller
 Pete and Pat Gissing
 Doris Burnett
 Al and Lou Currie
 Joseph and Franca Rutter
 Raymond Walbridge
 Wendall (Lash) and Norma Lasher
 Randy and Peggy Witt
 Tom and Elaine Horton
 Jose Vazquez
 Tom and Carol Futrell
 Ken and Kay Fryman
 Alan and Linda Steele
 Nicholas and Margaret Leone
 Neil Lewis
 Vito and Shirley Ann Altieri
 Melvin and Sandy Black
 George and Gwen Hughes
 Dick and Barbara Gaskell
 Douglas and Ann Trent
 Roger Wills
 Dean and Dana Willsey
 William and Emily Povey
 Richard and LeNeille Hudgins
 Dee Davis
 Louis and Astrid Ondrusek
 Betty Farmer
 Bonnie Collier
 Gary and Verna Constantine
 Bill and Ellie Coote

MEMORIES from members of The BIG Terremoto

Bennie Fry:

I do remember that fateful evening of the big earthquake in Porcia, where we lived. Our Padrone (landlord) and his wife were at our house to go looking for snails. (They were huge in our area). Dave decided to stay at home so Marino and Mirella started looking in the ditch along side of the fence line. I should have known that something was going to happen because the dogs, tied up next door, always barked uncontrollably at anyone walking around. They were completely silent. The first quake lasted about 57 seconds. The newspapers called it "57 Seconds of Terror"! Marino fell into the ditch and Mirella sat on the top side, screaming for God to help her. I told them that it was an earthquake and it would be over soon. I was trying to maintain my balance in the driveway. I grew up in San Francisco so I was used to earthquakes. Marino crawled out of the ditch, grabbed Mirella and went to his car, parked in our driveway. By this time, Dave was in the driveway trying to calm Mirella. He tried to get them into our house but they refused to leave their car. They drove home and parked in their driveway and stayed in their car for 3 days. It seems that there had not been an earthquake in that area for many, many years. People were terrified and the churches were full night and day.

I was attending a tea at the Base Commander's home when one of the first of the big aftershocks hit. I still can see all of the ladies standing in the doorways - holding on for dear life. The chandelier wouldn't stop swinging - it went on for what seemed like forever. I remember vividly them broadcasting to keep the children indoors, not to let them play in the yard, because the tremors had startled the vipers (snakes) and they were seen in all of the backyards.

The loss of the mummies at the cathedral northeast of us, was terrible. These mummies were people whose bodies had been perfectly preserved in the clay beneath the church, hundreds of years before. They were displayed in glass cases - all 7 of them. They were all destroyed in the quake.

Dave had planned to fly back to the U.S. to attend our son's graduation from Auburn University. Due to the catastrophe, he could not leave. Times never to be forgotten, while living in Porcia, Italy.

Elaine Horton:

The night of the BIG terremoto, my husband, Tom had just given his final oral presentation for his Master's Degree at the O'Club. Afterwards, everyone involved had gone into the dining room to have a celebration dinner. After a few minutes, the walls across from me started waving left-to-right. Since I had been an elementary school teacher in California, I had learned to tell the kids to get under the desk, so I was working to get under the table. Tom kept saying "Elaine, get under the table!" as he continued to stay seated above the table (something I have never understood!). Crashing was heard in the kitchen as the plate racks all fell onto the floor. Bepi (our wonderful waiter who became a friend to so many!) was yelling and the cook was scared to death, almost to the point of panic.



Civil engineers and volunteers from Aviano AB clear debris in Forgia, Italy. Air Force photo.

There were also "alert pilots" at one of the dinner tables and their communication "bricks" (huge mobile phones) started ringing. Apparently, a C-130 was just landing at the base had reported seeing a "fireball" coming from somewhere near Venice. At that point, the pilots all leaped up to get to their planes to prepare for some kind of defense against some unknown attack. All the other officers there quickly took the cue to leave for their posts as well. Meanwhile,

(Continued on page 7)



(Continued from page 5)

one of the pilots was yelling, "STOP, everyone, haven't you ever been in an earthquake before??!!" That, btw, stopped none of them, so he threw up his hands and left with them. It turned out that the fireballs were the gas refineries in Mestre "belching" after the quake!

That left the wives sitting there wondering where our children were and how they had fared. Remember, none of us had phones, either land-line or cell! A friend ours, Margaret Hoit, went with me to find our children. They had been at the babysitter's house, but when I got there, no one was home. Oh, dear. We went to our house to see if they had gone there. I think we passed them on a street someplace, and we all finally ended up at our house.

Everyone was safe. No one was being attacked. The dogs were now howling. Tom got home not too late. And we slept in relief.

AFTER the Terremoto

The relief from the quakes was not permanent, however. The aftershocks began the next day (some of them were huge!) and we all learned that sometimes things like clothing were simply not important! We heard lots of stories where people were taking a shower (or in some other state of undress!) when an aftershock came, and they ran into their street just to find that other neighbors had done the same thing. Interesting way to meet your neighbors! After hearing these types of stories, Tom and I thought we had it figured out. We planned that when an aftershock came, I was assigned one twin and Tom was assigned the other. We would each grab the assigned kid, and run outside and put them into the car in their car seats. Sounded like a great plan... on paper!

When one big aftershock came, we were getting ready for bed. I was filling out some kind of insurance forms and had them spread out all over the bed. Tom was reading. I had some flimsy nightie on and Tom was dressed "commando". The shock comes. We glanced at each other, and then, without words, we jumped up, grabbed our assigned child and ran out the front door to the car where we promptly THREW the kids into the car seats. If it had been today, we probably would have stopped to take a cell phone photo of their faces... they did not cry or say anything, but looked at us like "What part of your minds could you possibly have left?"!

Since our house was the last house up the mountain behind Giais, we did not have to worry about being introduced to our neighbors "spogliato" (naked!). However, we realized we could not even drive anyplace in that state of undress... not to mention that the car keys had not been on our list of things to get. So we made a new list of things we now needed: clothes, keys, family photos, cigarettes (don't judge! It was an emergency!), and Amaretto!! So Tom braved his way back into the house that we were sure might fall down any minute and returned with our "essentials." We seriously thought he was risking his life!

After a while, we decided to go back inside (probably after we finished what was left of the Amaretto!), having decided to just repeat the exercise if need be... but with new things on the list of necessary items!

TRUTH OR POPPYCOCK?

YOU BE THE JUDGE!

The Base Commander had an interesting problem concerning the earthquakes. Anyone there during the 70's remembers the "bomb range" near Maniago, and those exercises continued after the earthquake. In those days, the widows would all wear black (head-to-toe) and were often known as the "ladies in black." These ladies had very firm beliefs/superstitions/fables about what caused earthquakes, when the aftershocks would come, and many other earthquake related tales. I will admit that if it was known that the "ladies in black" had predicted that there would be an aftershock at 3:00 pm the next day, I made sure that I was NOT inside during that time and that I had my kids (AND my car keys!) with me... just in case!

These ladies decided that the airplanes on the bomb range were causing the aftershocks. They made it very well known, and because of that, it became such a cultural relations problem, and the commander suspended the exercises. This apparently displeased the USAFE Commander, who called the Base Commander to tell him to start the exercises back up. The Base Commander explained that the "ladies in black" believed that it caused the aftershocks, and it was better to keep the exercises suspended for the time being. The USAFE Commander supposedly told the Base Commander to "just tell those ladies that airplanes do not cause earthquakes!" The Base Commander is reported to have responded. "With all due respect, Sir, YOU come tell those ladies that!"

Batter Up! We are OFF to the Races!

Aviano Reunion Louisville, KY

September 12-16, 2016

By Kay Fryman & Carol Futrell

Mark your calendars, Aviano-ites! The WAGON has left the station, as the Fryman's & Futrell's are planning a fun-for-all reunion next year at the horse racing capital, Louisville, Kentucky.

Let's start by telling you a little about the place you will be resting your head each night (5 to be exact), the historic AAA Four Diamond Brown Hotel; luxury accommodations with a Kentucky twist. Louisville's Leading Hotel since 1923. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Brown's prime location offers easy access to many of Louisville's most in-demand destinations, including the Brown Theatre (across the street), the Palace Theatre (half a block) and the Kentucky International Convention Center (seven blocks).

Normally the rooms average over \$300 per night. However, your Aviano Team did a superlative dog & pony show and secured your room for \$106!!! Plus, you receive free internet, free airport shuttle, free meeting & banquet room. Parking is reduced to \$10/night for either valet or parking garage.



We will spend one day in Lexington, experiencing the best of the Bluegrass Region! This tour gives you the oppor-

tunity to experience the sights, smells, and tastes of central Kentucky. Driving through the picturesque countryside, you will experience a private tour of one of Kentucky's signature thoroughbred farms.



A trip to Kentucky would not be complete without touring one (or more) of Kentucky's famous bourbon distilleries, producers of "America's ONLY Native Spirit." Here you will observe the art of bourbon-making being practiced much as it was 200 years ago. Experience for yourself the time-honored process of making fine bourbon, and learn why only Kentucky has the perfect natural mix of conditions and climate to produce the best bourbon.

A special guided tour that military families will enjoy is one that the State of Kentucky is honored to host, The General George Patton Museum and Center of Leadership. The



Patton Museum offers us a view of his life, legacy and accomplishments. We will enjoy great BBQ at Mark's Feed Store and then continue to Jim Beam distillery to enjoy a tour and tasting of great Kentucky Bourbon.

And, of course we will have a guided tour of the city of Louisville, highlighting Whiskey Row, Cast Iron District, NuLu, and Louisville Slugger Museum, Museum Row featuring the Muhammad Ali Center, Victorian Homes in Old Louisville and Waterfront Park. You will visit and have lunch at the Kentucky Derby Museum, with a tour of Churchill Downs. After departing Churchill Downs you will go over to Indiana and make a stop at the Falls of Ohio, on to Schmidt's Candy for a tour to watch candy being made on century-old equipment and enjoy browsing amidst thousands of pieces of American candy memorabilia. After Schmidt's we will return back to Louisville for a visit and tour of the Louisville Slugger Museum and Factory.

This is an Aviano Reunion you should not miss. Mark your calendar for 12-17 September 2016. Horses, Hooch, and History! There are so many fun things to do that we are having a hard time getting everything in. Count on spending 6 days / 5 nights of wonderful camaraderie like only we know how to enjoy. Total reunion price and deposit info will be available soon. We will begin taking deposits at the Branson Reunion. Hotel reservation info will also be available later. Stay tuned...

IN MEMORIAM

This has been a sad year for our association with the death of far too many long-time members.

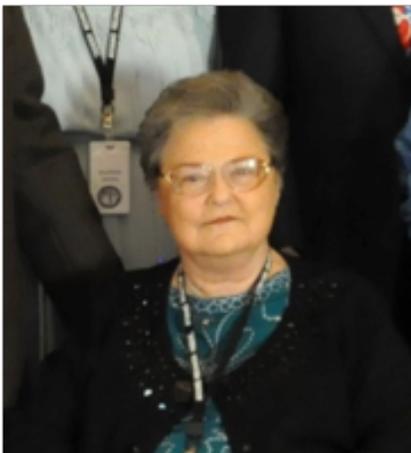


Bill Walker

Barely a year since losing his precious wife Gloria, **Bill Walker** died in early July shortly after being diagnosed with advanced metastatic lung cancer. He and Gloria left behind their one surviving son and two adorable grandchildren that they were afraid they'd never have. Instead, they enjoyed Gianna and Dario to the fullest in the time they had and didn't hesitate pulling out photos to share, and we enjoyed sharing in their happiness.

Bea Jernigan

Bea Jernigan passed away in early June after receiving her own diagnosis of advanced lung cancer just three months prior. A long-time friend and traveling companion of Pete Ross, Bea had become a regular at our reunions, especially when there was a casino involved! As a matter of fact, she asked Pete to specifically let the ARA know "how much fun I had traveling all over with them through the years."



Marilyn Walbridge

The month of June proved particularly difficult for the family of Marilyn Walbridge, and especially for loving husband Raymond. They lost their son Frank to cancer at the age of 52, and almost immediately afterwards Marilyn died suddenly in what was to be a short hospital stay and before they could even bury their son. Marilyn had battled health issues for years, but attended as many reunions as her health permitted. Although staying mostly in a wheelchair, she displayed both her spunk and love for this association of friends each time we saw her.

Rita Perkowski

Rita Perkowski was probably not as well known in the ARA, but did attend earlier reunions and was active in the Tampa area retired military wives organizations. She was a native of Bari, Italy and met her husband Edward while working at the base in Bari. Rita passed away in late July.

