



# 483RD BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION

(1943) Ephrata, WA – MacDill Field, Tampa, FL – Sterparone, San Severo-Pisa, Italy (1945)

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## President's Message

Dear 483rd Members,

The Oklahoma City, OK reunion for 2018 turned out to be great. We were able to have a range of activities from Cowboy Heritage Museum and National Oklahoma Memorial Museum to touring Tinker Air Force base to Memorial service and Banquet dinner. The number of people attending has been gradually getting less and less each year but, even so, it was an opportunity to reconnect with old friends and make new ones. Jay Clifton did a wonderful job organizing the reunion. Many thanks to him for all the hard work he put in. Jay has gracefully accepted being reunion chairman for the 2019 483rd reunion. He is exploring the possible option of combining with the 15th AF for the reunion to be held in Dallas, Texas. It would provide an opportunity to meet more veterans and make new friends with them and their families. Having the reunion with another group would help the 483rd, since the number attending is getting smaller (that is, better economics of scale.)

As the year and holiday season come to a close, a few thoughts come to mind. The reunion saw the passing away of Velma West, mother of former Presidents, Dennis and Sandee. She had been active member right up to the end. She will be missed and it is a sober reminder of how the number veterans alive and able to attend are fewer and fewer each year.

The 483rd Bombardment Group Legacy fund Board of Directors is working hard in generating funding, such that the 483rd veterans who served and gave so much will be remembered in lasting tribute by providing scholarships and support for the Museum of Aviation in Warner Robins, GA.

**Mark Halebsky**

## Dues, or Lack Of!

*By Leon Waldman, Treasurer*

In November 2004, the Board of Directors voted to increase the annual dues from \$15 to \$25, the first since inception 26 years before. At the same time, the Board decided to retain the life membership at \$100 but proposed that all life members could volunteer donations to the treasury. Since my term as treasurer, I have volunteered a couple of additional \$100 life memberships, which I credit to my longevity. If everyone would donate an additional \$100 periodically, this would help us continue the Warner Robins Museum Fund, cadet scholarships, and other business of the 483rd. All donations will be greatly appreciated! You may send donations to me at the address listed on the last page of this newsletter

## 2019 Reunion - Save the Date

Our association is considering joining other bomb groups of the 15th Air Force to reduce costs of future reunions. Dave Raffel recently met with Dave Blake (15th Air Force Reunion Committee Chair) and Reunion Chairman Jay Clifton had a phone conversation with him. Their 2019 reunion is planned for September 19-22, 2019 in Dallas, Texas and they will stay at Wyndham Garden of North Dallas. If we decide to join the 15th Air Force Reunion, the 483rd logo will be added to the group's logo. We'll have more information about this decision in the March 2019 newsletter.



<b>TAPS – Deceased Members Not Previously Reported in Newsletter</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Squad</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Reported By</b>
BEARDSHAW, SIDNEY E	817	9/23/2018	GUY VENIER (OBIT)
HENRY, LEON R	817	10/10/2018	GUY VENIER (OBIT)
PERNAK, TED	815	11/8/2018	GUY VENIER (OBIT)
TORRES, CARMELO A	815	11/11/2018	GUY VENIER (OBIT)

## Membership News

Comrades:

The month of November 2018 was the worst month that I have seen in many years. There was not one member who renewed his standing from the Inactive rolls to the Active status rolls of our Association. Unfortunately, the inactive members will not see this statement since they do not receive the newsletter, so if you know any inactive person, please pass this information to the person or persons, that we will not be able to continue as we have been. Please, we need your help.

*Guy*




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### Bernard Eder receives a gift from Austria

Bernard Eder, pilot in the 815<sup>th</sup> squadron is now living near St. Louis. After flying only a few sorties, his crew was MIA on a daylight “lonewolf” mission to a benzol plant at Linz, Aurstira on November 15, 1944. His plane experienced mechanical problems but the crew was able to drop their bombs on the target. Continuing to lose power, Eder ordered a bail-out near Neumarket, Austria. The crew parachuted out of the plane to survive the crash. He suffered a head injury when he bailed out, and upon landing he was face to face with a German-Austrian alpine troop member who spoke to him in German saying, "For you the war is over". The entire crew was captured and taken to Dulug Luft West, except for two crew that were taken to the hospital. The officers were later taken to Stalag Luft III, north compound, and the enlisted men were taken to another camp.

While in the POW camp, all Eder had was a journal he wrote in daily. In fear he may never return home to his wife, he wrote on the front of the journal, "If by chance this book should roam, box its ears and send it home", and included his home address.

In April of 1945, 7 months later, Eder's prison camp was liberated and he was sent back to his home in St. Louis to be with his wife and they started a family.

Last Christmas he was surprised to received a gift from the country that once held him captive. He received a package in the mail from an Austrian skier named Christian Merl. In May 2016 when Merl was in the area of the Austrian Alps where Eder's plane crashed, he found the gauge. Through some research, Merl connected the guage to Eder's B-17G. He mounted the historic plane part into a plaque and sent it to Eder. He etched on the plaque, "If this gauge should roam, box it's ears and send it home." Eder now has new friend in Austria.

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### From the Fundraising Coordinator

This Holiday season we give thanks for many things in our lives --- including our freedom & democracy. Without the courage of the American armed forces in World War II, including the 483rd Bombardment Group, we may not be here to enjoy this wonderful holiday season.

The 483rd Bombardment Group Legacy Fund is dedicated to preserving the memory & the legacy of the heroic men who bravely comprised this B-17 bomb group during World War II. Without their determination and sacrifice the World War II may not have had the same outcome as it did.

We are asking you to consider making an end-of-year contribution to the 483rd Bombardment Group Legacy Fund to help us continue their legacy.

The 483rd Bombardment Group Legacy Fund is an IRS recognized 501(c)3 organization that will provide a long-term vehicle to continue the goals and purposes of the already existing 483rd Bombardment Group (H) Association. These goals and purposes include, financially supporting the wonderful 483rd display at the Museum of Aviation at Warner Robins Air Force Base in Georgia and providing annual scholarships to college students who are pursuing a future career in military aviation.

Please help us perpetuate the memory of the 483rd Bombardment Group! There are two ways that you can make a charitable contribution:

- You can write a check for the 483rd Bombardment Group Legacy Fund and send it to: Mr. David Raffel, 5951 NW 63rd Terrace #1415, Kansas City, MO 64151.
- You can also go to [www.gofundme.com/483rd-bombardment-group-legacy-fund](http://www.gofundme.com/483rd-bombardment-group-legacy-fund) and contribute using your credit card.

If you have any questions, or want more information, contact David at 913-709-3382. Also, please feel free to share this appeal with your family and friends thru e-mail and social media.

THANK YOU, and HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

\*\*\* Donations are tax-deductible. \*\*\*

### **YOUR 2018 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

#### **PRESIDENT**

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818-905-9466

#### **SECRETARY**

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#### **PUBLICITY DIRECTOR** *(vacant)*

#### **REUNION CHAIRMAN**

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#### **WEB SITE**

[483rdBombGroup.org](http://483rdBombGroup.org)

### **PAST PRESIDENTS**

Phillip A. Luetke (Deceased) 1980  
William A. Haskins (Deceased) 1981  
James V. Reardon (Deceased) 1982-83  
Lynn M. Borders (Deceased) 1984  
Joseph W. Gawthrop (Deceased) 1984  
M.L. "Bob" Hottman 1985 (Deceased)  
Harry K. Keller (Deceased) 1986  
Donald R. Speegle (Deceased) 1987  
James "Russ" Heflin (Deceased) 1988  
Evan M. "Jack" Edwards (Deceased) 1989  
Ralph H. Simpson (Deceased) 1990  
Harry P. Millnamow (Deceased) 1991  
William P. Dunn (Deceased) 1992  
Edward T. Cotton (Deceased) 1993  
Harry D. Whye (Deceased) 1994  
Ray H. Whitaker (Deceased) 1995  
Harold D. Leveridge (Deceased) 1996  
William I Jeffs (Deceased) 1997  
George F. Stovall 1998 (Deceased)  
John A. Campbell (Deceased) 1999  
Verne H. Cole (Deceased) 2000  
Benjamin H. Adams Jr. (Deceased) 2001  
Robert W. Mitchell (Deceased) 2002  
John P. Nobel (Deceased) 2003  
Curtis B. Clark 2004  
Fredric A. Hicks (Deceased) 2005  
Wilfrid Hebert (Deceased) 2006  
Stanton "Mike" Rickey 2007  
Ellis Maxey (Deceased) 2008  
Jim Ashley (Deceased) 2009  
Dennis West 2010, 2011, 2012  
Sandee West Maeda 2013, 2014, 2015  
Harold Chubbs 2016  
Dennis West 2017  
Russell Daniel 2018

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING OF THE  
483<sup>RD</sup> BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION  
40<sup>TH</sup> REUNION - OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA  
SEPTEMBER 29, 2018

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by President Russell Daniel at 9:45 a.m.

II. Invocation

The Invocation was given by Chaplain Barney Leone.

III. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge was led by President Russell Daniel.

IV. Approval of Minutes of 2017 Business Meeting

The 2017 Business Meeting were distributed and a discussion ensued. It was moved by Mark Helebsky and Seconded by David Raffel that the minutes be amended where ever they read, "Dennis accepts the report as read" be amended to "The Chair accepts the report as read". Motion passed.

V. Committee Reports

A. Treasurer's Report – Leon Waldman

As of September 15, 2018:

Vanguard Mutual Fund	\$20,361.00
Treasurer's Checking Account	\$ 3,557.00
Membership Checking Account	<u>\$ 1,409.00</u>
Total amount of funds	\$25,327.00

**Note:** This amount does not include the Reunion Checking Account or the Legacy Fund.

It was moved by Dennis West and seconded by Mike Tyler that the Treasurer's report be accepted. The Chair accepted the report as read.

B. Membership Secretary – Guy Vernier

The Membership Report will be mailed to Board Members following this Reunion.

C. Chaplain – Barney Leone

No report.

D. Clipped Wings Chair – Sheryl Norton

Sheryl reported that there were 7 correspondents (Clipped Wing writers) and 13 recipients, however, there were two (2) more recipients added at this reunion so there is a total of 9 correspondents. The Clipped Wing checking account has only \$50.00 in it because all correspondents cover the costs of their own mailings which means there is no cost to the Association.

It was moved by Dennis West and seconded by Mike Tyler that the report be accepted. There were no objections and the Chair accepted the report.

- E. Newsletter Editor – Bruce Coogler  
Bruce reported there were four (4) quarterly newsletters and one (1) Association Constitution Amendment proposal mailed out. The total cost for the mailings was \$1,836.99 There were 1,774 newsletters mailed of which 320 were via email and 1,454 sent by US Mail. There was a 54% response rate for the 378 post cards included with the December 2017 newsletter asking if the recipient wanted to continue receiving the newsletter. Of the responses, 174 wanted to continue receiving the newsletter and 26 no longer wanted to receive them.

It was moved by Dennis West and seconded by Mark Halebsky that the report be accepted. There were no objections and the Chair accepted the report.

- F. Reunion Chair – Jay Clifton  
Jay stated that there would be anticipated a deficit of approximately \$2,200 because of the contracted buses. There were 48 participants at this year's reunion, broken down as follows: Veterans (10), Wives of Veteran's (2), Widows of Veteran's (2), Friends (23) and Guests (11). Nancy Clifton was the head of the Women's Brunch and the Banquet speaker canceled the morning of the Brunch. Nancy Clifton (daughter of Ken "Hoff" Hoffman), Velma West and Elsie Tyler all stepped in to provide the program. Nancy demonstrated simple ways to construct floral designs Velma provided information about floral design from a Garden Club perspective, and Elsie read two of her poems. Nancy wanted acknowledged and thanked each for doing so.

It was moved by Dennis West and Seconded by Leon Waldman that the report be accepted. There were no objections and the Chair accepted the report.

- G. Fundraising Chair – Dave Raffel  
Dave reported that there were favorable responses to his articles and appeals in the newsletters for funding the 483<sup>rd</sup> Legacy Fund. The Go Fund Me program resulted in donations of \$1,200. He also reported that there is a total of \$8500 in the Legacy Fund with another \$500 coming in. There is a website for the Legacy Fund which is: [www.483rdlegacyfund.org](http://www.483rdlegacyfund.org). The Legacy Fund was opened in Missouri and Dave Raffel is the agent.

Dennis West moved the committee report be accepted and Jay Clifton seconded the motion. There were no objections and the Chair accepted the report.

VI. Old Business  
No Old Business

VII. New Business

- A. Approval of current Committee Chairs to continue.

A motion to approve all current committee chairs continue in their respective rolls was made by Dennis West and seconded by Charlene Coulsen. Motion carried.

- B. Recognition of J. D. Coogler as new Squadron Moderator for the 817<sup>th</sup> squadron.  
Recognition given.

- C. Affirm the 483<sup>RD</sup> Bombardment Group (H) Association continue as an organization.

D. 2019 Reunion

1. Discussion whether to join other reunions or to remain independent.

A discussion was held on the floor whether the 2019 reunion should continue to be independent or whether we should join another group. Jay Clifton stated that he and President Russell Daniel had been in contact with the 15<sup>th</sup> Air Force Reunion Committee Chairman. This group is a collection of B-24 Bomb groups that have joined together and have a joint reunion each year. They are interested in having our organization join them next year. Jay further stated that from their discussions with this group, we would hold our own meetings as we have always done but would go on the excursions planned. However, the Saturday Banquet would be a joint affair.

2. Site and approximate date for 2019 Reunion

After discussion from the floor, it was moved by Dennis West and seconded by Mark Halebsky that Jay Clifton would retain the position of Reunion Chair and that he be instructed to continue the exploration of a joint reunion with the 15<sup>th</sup> Air Force Reunion that is comprised of the 98<sup>th</sup>, 376<sup>th</sup>, 451<sup>st</sup>, 455<sup>th</sup>, 460<sup>th</sup>, 461<sup>st</sup>, 464<sup>th</sup>, 465<sup>th</sup>, 484<sup>th</sup>, and the 485<sup>th</sup> bomb groups. The site and date of the next reunion would be around the middle of September in Dallas if we go with a joint reunion. If the Reunion Chair is unable to work out the details of a joint reunion, the site and date for the 2019 reunion would be at the Reunion Chair's discretion. Motion carried.

3. Nomination and election of new Reunion Chair

See motion under 2 above.

E. Nomination and election of new officers.

1. President Elect

President Russell Daniel requested nominations from the floor for a President Elect. Dennis West nominated Jay Clifton. There were no other nominations made. The new President Elect is Jay Clifton.

2. Treasurer (2 year term)

3. Membership Secretary (2 year term)

4 Newsletter Editor (2 year term)

It was Moved by Mark Halebsky and seconded by Dennis West that the present Treasurer, Membership Secretary and Newsletter Editor positions all be retained by Leon Waldman, Guy Venier and Bruce Coogler respectively. Motion carried.

F. Miscellaneous

President Russell Daniels brought up to the group that the seed money the 483<sup>rd</sup> Bombardment Group (H) Association had voted to give to the Legacy Fund had never been received and that the Treasurer needed to follow through on that action. After a discussion from the floor Dennis West moved and Ken Davis, Jr. seconded a motion that because various Friend Members had given seed money to start the Legacy Fund there was no need for the Association to do so. Motion carried.

G. Change to the Constitution of the Association.

President Russell Daniel stated the proposed change to the Constitution of the Association was withdrawn because there was a strong objection to the proposal by a member and therefore the issue would not be pursued at this time.

XIII Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:50 a.m. by President Russell Daniel.