

## REPORT & MINUTES OF THE 2012 6<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL 3973RD CDS LOS TOROS REUNION IN BRANSON

Hello Los Toros

The 2012 Reunion began with an afternoon registration meet & greet session on Wednesday, September 12th at the beautiful Raddisson Hotel in friendly Branson, Missouri. During meet & greet the Branson Committee distributed a welcome bag containing reunion T shirts, formal name and hat badges, agendas, etc.; meet & greet is where attendees greet friends we have not seen since our last reunion and is always a fun way to begin activities.

Thursday, September 13th was the busiest day of our meeting as we opened the business meeting with the Pledge of Alligence and a remembrance of Los Toros & friends that we have lost during the last year: Mavis Barcikowski, Billy Helms and Steve Trapani. Mention was made that other veterans find it incredible that Los Toros continues to have a very active reunion program even after serving together 50+ years ago! Somewhere in mini reunions attended by W. Altemose, D. Galt, T. Grace and B. Vickery an idea of a 3973rd reunion was born. We are grateful to the first reunion committee for organizing our inaugural 2007 reunion in Savannah, Georgia. Those committee members were: Janicegail Sloan, Nona Watson, assisted by Galt, Vickery and others. Otto Kosa established our website: <http://www.3973cds.com/> and Wayne Hughart conducted searches locating many 3973rd veterans.

A history of Moron Air Base was briefly reviewed: Originally built in 1940 as a Spanish Army Air Base it became one of three strategic SAC bases in Spain during the Cold War, other SAC bases were located at Zaragosa and Torrejon. In 1958, after US Navy construction was completed, Moron Air Base became armed with B-47 bombers supported by F-100 fighter jets and KC-97 refueling aircraft. After the 16th AF Strategic Air Command mission in Spain was retired Moron had limited use under different air commands but has remained active providing support for the war in Kosovo, Iraqi Freedom, the war in Afganistan and last year was the main refueling support base for air operations in Libya.

The minutes from last year's business meeting were read. The length of our reunions (3 days), the time of year (September), voting criteria (majority vote by members present) and 2012 reunion location vote (Branson Missouri) were the primary issues resolved.

The important issue to be resolved during this reunion is the location of the 2013 reunion, members were asked to consider locations with good airport or driving accessibility and military and tourist interest; two locations have already been nominated: Las Vegas and Washington, D.C., both are very popular visitor destinations. Additional locations were solicited for discussion and vote in the upcoming Saturday business meeting with past reunion locations also eligible for nomination.

As our nation approaches a very competitive election season a suggestion was accepted that the 3973rd Los Toros email list continue to be used as intended; to provide reunion information, find new members, and keep us informed of our members' welfare and should not be used for any political announcements or views.

In other administrative issues Ralph & Esther Heath assumed responsibility for our various flags, posters and banners, if any members have a flag or banner from prior meetings please

contact Ralph or Esther. Judi Mack asked to be relieved of her duties of servicing the mailing list for those members who don't have email and are contacted only via U.S Mail; Carol Fern volunteered to assume that important function. We are grateful to Judi for her past service and encouraged by the Heaths and by Carol for 'stepping up to the plate' to help keep our group functioning smoothly.

The final part of Thursday's business meeting and a very enjoyable part of our reunions is when each member reviews his time as part of the 3973rd CDF/LE Group; his adventures in Spain, his subsequent military & civilian careers; and the sharing of wonderful family stories.

Friday, September 14th was fun day with no formal meetings or discussions. Professional photos of our very attractive group were taken, then we traveled a scenic route on buses to Table Rock Lake where we attended a brief military memorial service before boarding the Showboat Branson Belle where we enjoyed a scenic paddleboat cruise and a rousing patriotic stage show luncheon.

Saturday, September 15th was the last formal session of the Branson reunion. The first order of business was the important nomination, discussion and selection of the venue for our 2013 reunion. A person who nominates a location is asked to make a short presentation on his choice and is encouraged to participate in the reunion committee if his location is selected. Locations nominated and discussed were: Washington DC, San Antonio, Las Vegas, Orlando and Colorado Springs. San Antonio, Texas was selected as the venue for the 3973rd Los Toros Reunion in September, 2013. San Antonio fits the criteria of accessibility, military and tourist interest and is particularly special to Air Force police groups with the USAF police academy, K-9 training and USAF Security Forces museum at nearby Lackland AFB. Our 2008 reunion was also in San Antonio. The location nomination system adopted during the business meeting at Charleston worked very well and resulted in a popular choice of venue.

As a result of our 2008 reunion Dianne Hughes has good historical information which should simplify organizing a San Antonio/Lackland reunion; but a San Antonio Reunion Committee needs to be assembled soon; and nothing makes you feel more a part of Los Toros than participating in a reunion committee, and San Antonio promises to be great fun! Please contact Dianne Hughes at: [diHughes@att.net](mailto:diHughes@att.net)

Our final order of business is the annual raffle. The raffle is our only source of income, the proceeds are used for various Los Toros reunion expenses: goody bags, mailing, shipping, meeting room lunches & refreshments, raffle prizes, group bus transportation, etc. Many of our raffle prizes were crafted or donated by: Ralph & Esther Heath, Jean & Willie Altemose, Bob & Marcia Sterkenberg, Dianne Hughes, Jim Barcikowski, Wade & Judy McFarland, Sue Taylor, Billy & Sis Bowers and Marie Katrancha. \$510.00 was raised during our raffle, many thanks to those who purchased tickets and who donated gifts.

The formal session of the 3973rd Los Toros 2012 reunion ended with good feelings of camaraderie with everyone looking forward our 2013 Reunion, thanks to Bessie Baker, Dennis Galt, Dianne Hughes, Marie Katrancha, Judi Mack, Sue Taylor, Marcia & Bob Sterkenberg and Rose Vaccone for their help in making the Branson Reunion a success--- See you in San Antone!