

REPORT & MINUTES OF THE 2014 8th ANNUAL 3973RD CDS LOS TOROS REUNION IN LAS VEGAS

Hello Los Toros!

At last year's reunion in San Antonio; Las Vegas, Nevada was the city selected for the 3973rd Los Toros 2014 Reunion. Our event, from October 14th to October 18th, at The Orleans Hotel & Casino, began with most attendees arriving on Tuesday, October 14th. At our traditional 'Meet & Greet' session on October 15th goody bags were distributed which included military pins, reunion agendas, reunion T-shirts and the wonderful 3973rd Combat Defense Squadron heritage replica Air Police shields and Challenge coin sets, which were provided by Dennis Galt. Meet & Greet was a fun event as we greeted our fellow members who we have not seen since our last reunions and which established a great reunion attitude which carried throughout the balance of the week. Some cost saving adjustments to schedule were made to avoid a meeting room charge for our meet & greet event; and to avoid an additional room charge at the higher Las Vegas weekend room rates.

Thursday, October 16th was a complete business meeting day which began with The Pledge of Allegiance to our Flag and a remembrance of members of our group who we lost since our last gathering: Billy J. Mitchell, Otto Kosa and Dudley Easton, all of whom enjoyed fine military and civilian careers and who lived long lives---they will be missed by family, friends and The 3973rd.

A special welcome was directed to Fred & Michele Madden and to Ed Saiz who were based at Moron Air Base but were not in the Air Police career field; Fred was in the 3973rd Fire Department and Ed was in 3973rd Crash & Rescue, they proudly wore their 'colors', distinctive red 3973rd Fire, Crash & Rescue caps. Perhaps other veterans who served at Moron Air Base from various career fields will attend future Los Toros Reunions.

Another special welcome was issued to Nona & Nolan Watson, who, along with Janicegail & Larry Slone were the organizers of our first reunion in Savannah in 2007 where the format for future reunions was established. With help from the 3973rd website established by Otto Kosa and efforts from Wayne Huggart the Watsons & Slones contacted members and organized the best attended of our reunions, at times using their own funds to finance the successful inaugural 2007 reunion---Thank you from Los Toros!

The balance of Thursday morning was dedicated to veteran's reviews where our veterans are invited to review their time at Moron, their military and civilian careers and share stories of their families. We then enjoyed a delicious Italian buffet luncheon.

After lunch our Raffle Committee organized our annual fundraising raffle with many prizes donated by our members. As we have no dues program our raffle is very important as our source of income; raffle income and reunion registration fees are used to fund: tour transportation, meals, meeting rooms and administration expenses related to reunion activities. The committee did a great job of raising \$818.00, (last year's raffle produced \$660.00).

The final business session is very important as we must select, discuss and vote for the location for our 2015 reunion. While we have no firm standards for choice of location we consider areas which include: tourist attractions & military interest, lodging & travel expense and availability of medical facilities. Geographical area is important as many of our members reside east of the Mississippi; however, an interesting vote was taken of those who lived in the West and in the East; there were a surprisingly high number of attendees who hailed from the West.

Initial selections included New Orleans, Wakulla Springs, Gatlinburg, Cooperstown, Santa Fe and Nashville. After a lively debate and two elimination votes Nashville, Tennessee was chosen as our reunion city for 2015; Santa Fe, New Mexico was a close second choice. The last two weeks of September and first week of October, 2015 were chosen as a time window for our reunion. When asked for reunion organizing volunteers we had a very good response. Jim & Eunice Hester volunteered to lead the committee; Artie & Maria Kendrick, Ron & Barb Frankovich and Bob & Marcia Sterkenburg quickly volunteered to help. This response was very positive because as more members participate in organizing a reunion the stronger our group becomes.

Dianne Hughes presented a brief treasurer's report which included information that due to required payment upon delivery of the heritage Moron Air Base challenge coins and replica badges; payment was generously made by Dianne Hughes and Dennis Galt from their personal funds in order to announce their availability to our group; compensation to them will reflect in the next treasurer's report. The coins and badges are offered to our members at manufacturer cost, they are quite striking, if you haven't ordered them yet you will not be disappointed and the purchase will help the 3973rd account.

Friday, October 17th was the final full day of our reunion and the day of our much anticipated tour of Nellis AFB. At the visitors center we watched Nellis AFB security in action as our buses were checked for explosives by Security Forces K-9, our escorts then guided us through the guard gate as we began the tour of the base.

Appropriately, our first tour destination was the headquarters of the 99th Security Forces Group & Combat Training Squadron where we were greeted by Major Winger; he began his career as an enlisted airman and will soon be promoted to Lt. Colonel, he has done some duty time at Moron Air Base and fondly remembered visiting Sevilla. His group introduced us to several impressive weapons that active Security Forces troops are armed with. During lunch at 'The Club' we were surprised and pleased to receive Challenge coins from the 99th Security Forces Group. After lunch we watched the Nellis AFB Color Guard rehearse the folding of the Flag, the bugle playing of 'taps' and the ceremonial firing of rifles for veteran burials.

We arrived at the headquarters of the United States Air Force Demonstration Squadron----The Thunderbirds. The visit included a film presentation of the team's mission, photo ops during the tour of the hanger which contained two Thunderbird F-16 aircraft, and a visit through the site's museum; all Team personnel were very professional, the facility was very impressive and a highlight of our base tour.

Our final stop was at the Security Forces K-9 kennel and training area, where we toured the kennel and were presented with a very impressive display of Security Forces' use of K-9 to

address various law enforcement and security challenges. We were impressed with the base and all personnel on active duty at Nellis; the US Air Force 'is in good hands'----we have reason to be proud.

Saturday, October 18th all attendees began their trips home departing from a fun and successful reunion----we shared such an enjoyable time together that: "What happened in Vegas--should not stay in Vegas"!

Please make plans to be at our 2015 Reunion in Nashville, Tennessee: Music City--Home of country music.

Dan Foronda