

VINH LONG OUTLAWS ASSOCIATION

VINH LONG OUTLAWS NEWS

October – December
4th Issue 2003

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IN MEMORY

Shirley Hall passed away suddenly on September 15, 2003, after a short illness compounded by post surgery complications. She was 73 years of age and was married to Ray Hall for 53 wonderful years. Twenty-one of those years involved numerous separations due to military commitments. Shirley was always a true military spouse who supported her husband. She managed to raise a family of four children, often alone for long periods. Needless to say the family was her pride and joy. She is survived by her husband Ray, daughters, Barbara and Ramona, sons, Jeffery and Phillip, nine grandchildren, two great grandchildren and one sister. Memorial services were conducted at the Memorial Chapel, Valhalla Cemetery in St Louis County on September 19, 2003. Shirley was a third grade teacher for over twenty years in the Pattonville School District of St. Louis County. One of her most recent enjoyable periods of her life was her association with the VLOA Newsletter. She took great pride in making the newsletter an outstanding publication. The contribution to the Fort Rucker Outlaws Memorial fund, in her honor, was greatly appreciated by the Hall Family.

Ray Hall

Editorial Postscript: Since May 1999, VLOA has produced 15 newsletters! We have had three Editors; Tony Clemente, Frank Estes and Ray Hall, each ably assisted by their wives, Rose Ann, Ann and Shirley. During each of their tenures, the newsletter blossomed and matured into a first rate publication for a fledgling association of our size. The past three issues were produced under Ray's guidance with Shirley's journalistic talent and computer savvy. Most may not have realized at the 2002 San Antonio Reunion, when a volunteer was solicited for the Editor position our erstwhile First Soldier, Ray Hall immediately jumped to his feet at the urging of a sharp jab to the ribs by Shirley. It was Shirley's passion for writing and creativity which was the key ingredient in the successful publication of these recent newsletters. Ray's admitted forte was in the administrative matters of the newsletter, printing, postage, mailing lists, finances, etc. They were a class act! WE MISS YOU SHIRLEY! Our condolences to Ray and the Hall family.

NOTES FROM THE VOLA DIRECTOR

Linda and I hope that all of you are having as good a year as we are having. We visited Tom and Pat Anderson and Olen and Mary Thornton at Tom's and Pat's home in North Carolina in early October. Wonderful weather, great friends, and great golf. The Andersons are marvelous hosts.

While there Tom shared with me some of his efforts in helping survivors in the matter of estate and financial planning. He has prepared a checklist for use when someone dies. It covers all manner of things such as phone numbers for Army Retirement Offices, Army Finance offices, Veterans Administration, National Cemetery procedures and phone numbers, wills issues, trust ideas and a myriad of other things. We plan to have something like this for everyone's use and make it available in the future.

These things are important to all of us because each of us will die. In fact during these past few months we have had several deaths among members, two of which were sudden. Shirley Hall, Ray Hall's wife died suddenly and Bill Hampton died earlier this year. Lois Hampton asked that I assist her in arranging for Bill to be buried in his uniform. I was able to obtain the appropriate medals and decorations and arrange them on his uniform for the funeral. If any of you plan to be buried in uniform, I suggest that you ensure that you set up an appropriate uniform with decorations. My wife is very helpful, but she does not know how to arrange my uniform, does yours?

Another subject in the general area of remembrance is the issue of a memorial plaque and possible monument for the Outlaws et al about which Frank Estes has been gathering information. At the 2002 reunion the membership present voted to create a committee to explore the idea of an appropriate memorial to be placed at Ft. Rucker, AL. VLOA has collected well over \$1,000.00 toward this action and Frank has obtained a proposed design that looks great. Plan on participating at the dedication ceremony as part of the 2004 reunion.

My thanks for a job well done to Frank Estes and all of you who support the organization. Chuck Wren keeps up with the secretary and treasurer's duties and now Al Iller has stepped forward to temporarily handle the newsletter for an interim period since Shirley Hall was such a key person in helping Ray Hall. If any of you are able and willing to assume the helm of the newsletter please let me or Al know. (See the "Classified Section" of this newsletter)

The best of holiday wishes to each of you. Ernie

VLOA INCOME AND EXPENSE REPORT 3rd Quarter (7/1/03 to 09/30/03)

Beginning Balance	\$ 9,864.32
Income:	
Dues collected	280.00
Ft. Rucker Memorial Fund: In Honor of Shirley Hall	125.00
Total Income	\$ 405.00
Expenses:	
Outlaws Newsletter Publication Check # 136 (08/27/04)	265.16
Total Expenses	\$ 265.16
Ending Balance	\$10,004.16

(Total Amount Committed to Ft. Rucker Memorial Fund \$1,435.00)

Submitted by: Chuck Wren, Treasurer, VLOA

REUNION 2004 (R2K+4): IT'S A Fort Rucker Homecoming ! September 30 – October 3, 2004

Mark your calendar!!! R2K+4 is rapidly approaching!!! We have had great reunions in Branson (R2K 2000) and San Antonio (R2K+2 2002), so plan to be with the rest of the Outlaws, Mavericks, Roadrunners, 28th Signal, door gunners and other attachment members when we have a grand reunion and homecoming at Fort Rucker, Alabama. Plan to arrive Thursday afternoon September 30 and depart mid-day Sunday October 3, 2004. Provision for "Early Bird" arrivals on Wednesday will be available. All rooms in the newly renovated Quality Inn and Suites in Ozark have been reserved for our reunion, with a nationally rated campground only a mile away for those who want to come in their motor homes/campers.

Since many of you were at Fort Rucker, the home of Army Aviation and the Aviation Branch, many changes have taken place. Gone are the days of the World War II wooden buildings. Brick and mortar can be seen at virtually every location on the post. High tech training is now the backbone of qualifying U. S. Army Aviators for future duties. We have planned Friday of the reunion for a busy day with a history of Fort Rucker, tour of the Army Aviation Museum, lunch at the Aviators' Landing (formerly the O'Club), visit Sanford Hall, stroll Outlaw Street and attend dedications of the VLOA Memorial Plaque at the Museum and Memorial Monument at Veteran's Park, in honor of the comrades we lost and those who served with us. We have scheduled time to visit some of the high tech simulators used in training new aviators.

Some good down home Southern cooking is on the menu for Friday night in Ozark. Saturday will be a more relaxed day for you, and will include a number of things you can do; play golf, visit a local event, spend time with friends and acquaintances you probably haven't seen in a few years and visit some of the Wiregrass Area venues at your leisure. Saturday afternoon has some time reserved for our VLOA business meeting. Saturday evening's farewell banquet will be held at the Aviator's Landing, Fort Rucker, and will be an enjoyable one. Final details are still being worked out to ensure you have a memorable reunion.

Be on the lookout for your R2K+4 Fort Rucker Reunion reservation form in the next VLOA January/February 2004 Newsletter . Included with the reservation forms will be full and final details on the schedule of activities/events and all inclusive costs of accommodations, scheduled meals, gratuities and local group transportation if required.

Contributed by Frank & Ann Estes

A POEM FOR COMPUTER USERS OVER 40

A **Computer** was something on TV, from a science fiction show of note.

A **Window** was something you hated to clean. And a **Ram** was the father of a goat.

Meg was the name of my girlfriend. And a **Gig** was a job for the nights.

Now they all mean different things. And that really **Mega Bytes**.

An **Application** was for employment. A **Program** was a TV show.

A **Cursor** used profanity. And if you had a **3 inch Floppy**, you hope nobody found out.

Compress was something you did to the garbage. Not something you did to a file.

And if you **Unzipped** anything in public. You'd be in jail for a while.

Log On was adding wood to the fire. **Hard Drive** was a long trip on the road.

A **Mouse Pad** was where a mouse lived. And a **Backup** happened to your commode.

Cut you did with a pocketknife. **Paste** you did with glue

A **Web** was a spider's home. And a **Virus** the flu.

I guess I'll stick to my pad and paper. And the **Memory** in my head.

I hear nobody's been killed in a computer **Crash**. But when it happens they wish they were dead.

VINH LONG OUTLAWS MEMORIAL

During our R2K+2 (2002) reunion in San Antonio, the membership present elected to honor our fallen comrades and those who served with the Outlaws by erecting a plaque at the Army Aviation Museum, Fort Rucker, and to evaluate the possibility of emplacing a granite monument in the Fort Rucker Veteran's Park. A committee was established for this project and initial contributions accepted at the reunion totaled \$1,015.00. The best bid for the plaque and monument has been received from the same company who has recently manufactured plaques and monuments now emplaced at the Army Aviation Museum and Veteran's Park.

A bronze plaque design has been selected 14" (wide) X 18" (high) with an Outlaws emblem in color and three smaller emblems (Maverick, Roadrunner and 28th Sig Det) without color. The cost of the plaque will be \$1,390.00 and an additional \$500.00 donation to the Army Aviation Museum Foundation, Inc. for the rights to mount the plaque at an appropriate place in the museum. The Museum Curator has already approved the Outlaws plaque to be displayed on the right front of the main structure close to the entrance where it will be very visible to anyone entering the museum's front door. Total cost for the plaque and donation to the Army Aviation Museum Foundations, Inc. will be \$1,890.00.

The memorial for the Veteran's Park is a selected granite monument 30" (high) X 24" (wide) X 8" (deep) engraved on both sides with the Outlaws emblem in color and the other three smaller emblems in engraving only. Cost of the monument will be \$1,125.00. Installation of the monument requires approval from the Fort Rucker Heritage Committee, but that will not be a problem. Total cost for the plaque, donation to the Army Aviation Museum Foundation, Inc., Memorial Monument at the Veteran's Park and installations will be \$3,015.00.

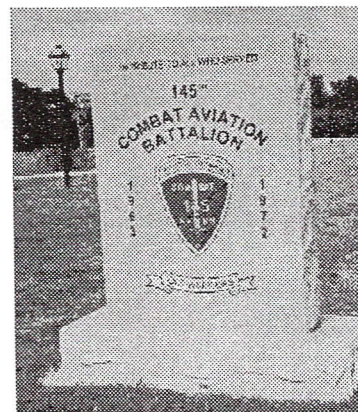
Plans for the R2K+4 Reunion September 30 – October 3, 2004 at Fort Rucker include dedication ceremonies for the emplacement of the plaque and monument. Some of our VLOA members have already stepped up to the plate and made commitments that will almost cover the additional costs above what we currently have in the VLOA Memorial Fund. However, donations are still needed to ensure we cover all the costs of obtaining the plaque and monument and donation to the Army Aviation Museum Foundation, Inc. Your past financial support of the VLOA Memorial Fund is greatly appreciated, and to those who recently have pledged major support, we will be forever indebted. Come join us at the R2K+4 reunion at Fort Rucker, and participate in a very memorable patriotic ceremony honoring our fallen comrades and those who served with us.

Those wishing to contribute to the VLOA Memorial Fund please make your check or money order payable to: "VLOA" with the notation "VLOA Memorial Fund", and mail to: VLOA, % Charles C. Wren, 20 Rozbern Drive, Eatontown, NJ 07724.

Submitted by Frank Estes



Typical plaque, designs vary



Typical monument, designs and size vary

THE TRAVELS OF TRAVIS

BY TRAVIS WILSON

Hilde and I had planned a trip to Europe scheduled to fly out of Dothan, AL on 09/14/02. Needless to say, what happened on 9/11/02, cancelled our trip. We re-scheduled the trip for August '03, called our friend Jan Smith, the lady that accompanies us on many of our trips including Outlaws reunions, and invited her along. Jan's only comment was when and how long! So off the three of us went on schedule.

Arrived in Frankfurt, picked up our rental car in a dark garage and I couldn't see how to turn things on and off. Nevertheless, we launched on our journey to Heidelberg. Coming out of the garage you immediately hit the main drag with traffic streaming by at 150Ks (94 mph) bumper to bumper. Accelerating to that speed muy pronto to get into the flow of traffic I couldn't look down to turn anything off or on. The outside temperatures were in the 100 deg range so we drove from Frankfurt to Heidelberg with the heater on and all four windows down.

Visiting our friends in Heidelberg we had a few cold ones while settling our nerves from the speedy trip. Our friend informed us where the controls were on the steering wheel and dash. I had driven 54 miles not daring to look down to locate the controls, while trying to maintain an almost 100 mph pace with the flow of traffic.

A four day tour bus trip took us to destination Praha (Prag), Czech Republic. Praha is the most beautiful city in Europe. While in Praha we visited Hilde's cousin who lives there. She took us on a short trip to Liberec (Richenberg), on the border of Poland, Hilde's hometown which she left 62 years ago. We were able to locate Hilde's Grand Mother's house which is still standing and the person now living there had a complete history of the town. We were able to find a listing in that history indicating both Hilde's father and uncle who operated the Post Office. Our continuing journey took us to other interesting cities and sights among which in Germany were Munich, Kempten, Mittenwald and the Porzellan (porcelain) factory in Staffelstein.

The three of us had a grand time, even with the temperatures in the 90's and above with no air conditioner. It was nice to arrive home to air conditioned comfort.



Hilde and Travis, Liberec Town Square, Czech Republic

BACK PEW

Wanting to encourage her young son's progress on the piano, a mother took him to a Paderewski concert. After they were seated, the mother spotted a friend and walked down the aisle to greet her. Seizing the opportunity to explore the wonders of the concert hall, the little boy quietly got up and eventually explored his way through a door marked "NO ADMITTANCE".

When the house lights dimmed, the mother returned to her seat and discovered the child missing. Suddenly the curtains parted and the spotlights focused on the impressive Steinway on stage. In horror, the mother saw her little boy sitting at the keyboard, innocently pecking out "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star." At that moment, the great piano master made his entrance, quickly moved to the piano and whispered in the boy's ear, "Don't quit. Keep on playing." Then leaning over, Paderewski reached down with his left hand and began filling in the bass part. Soon his right arm reached around the other side of the child and he added a running obbligato. Together, the old master and the young novice transformed a frightening situation into a wonderfully creative experience. The audience was mesmerized.

That's the way it is with God. What we can accomplish on our own is hardly noteworthy. We try our best, but the results aren't exactly graceful flowing music. But with the hand of the Master, our life's work truly can be beautiful. The next time you set out to accomplish great feats, listen carefully. You can hear the voice of the Master, whispering in your ear, "Don't quit. Keep playing." Feel his loving arms around you. Know that His strong hands are there helping you turn your feeble attempts into true masterpieces.

Remember, God doesn't call the equipped. He equips the called. And he will always be there to love and guide on to great things.

---Author Unknown

BOLDNESS is not the ABSENCE OF FEAR but the PRESENCE OF OBEDIENCE TO GOD.

Provided by John Doyle

*****WANTED*****

EDITOR, VLOA Newsletter: Retired or otherwise unemployed, uncommitted, VLOA member with time on his hands willing to volunteer for this important and vital position. Computer skills desirable, but not necessary; OJT experience will get you there. No pay, no retirement or health benefits; references and resume not required; just willingness to help out with two to three issues until R2K+4 Ft Rucker 2004. Contact Ernie Isbell, 972-539-4528 or Email: l.isbell@comcast.com

MORE ON LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

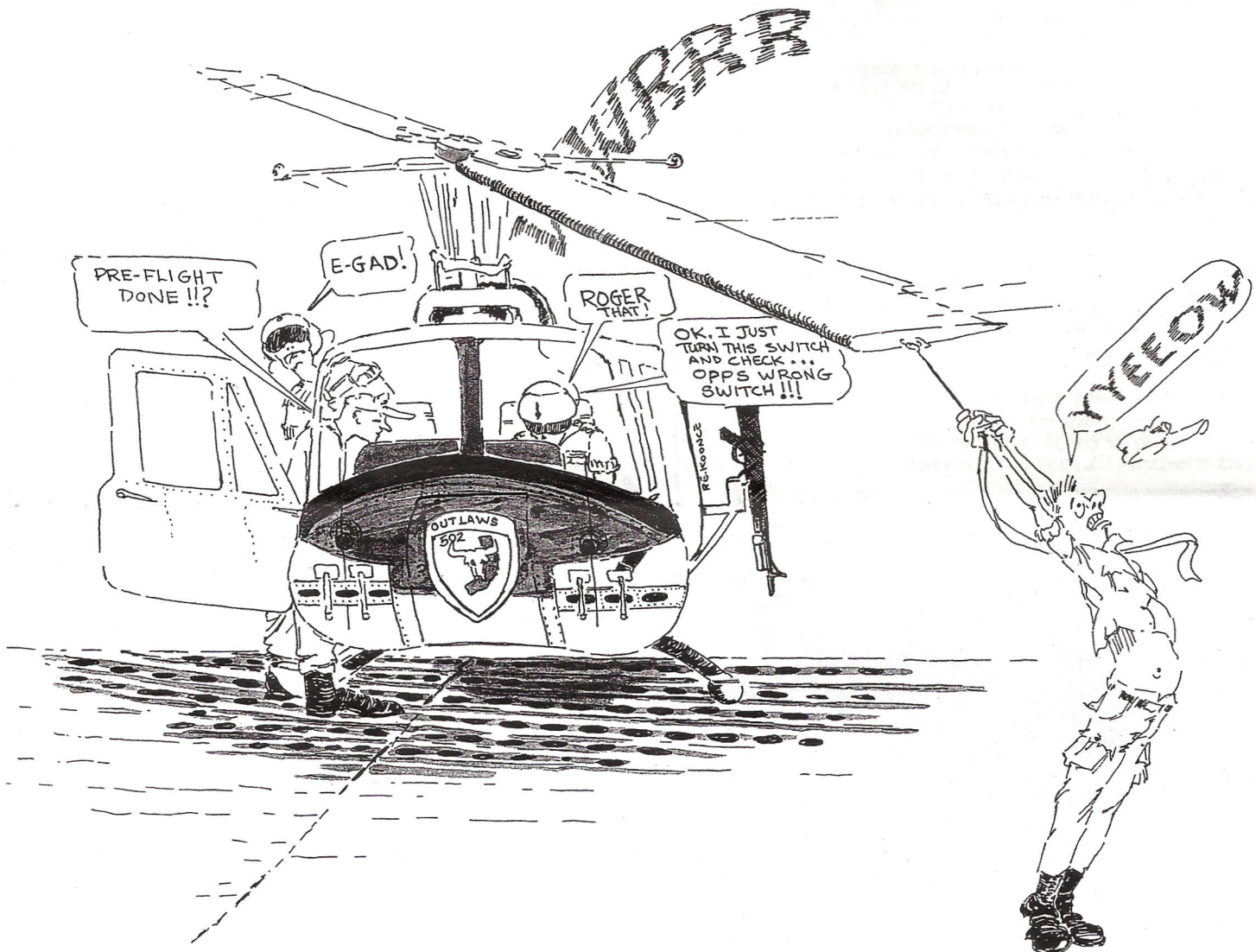
Extracted From: MOAA Legislative Update, November 7, 2003

DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION AGREEMENT REACHED

Concurrent Receipt of Retired Pay and VA Disability Compensation. On January 1, 2004, all military retirees with at least 20 years of service and VA disability ratings of 50% or higher will see their military retired pay offsets phased out over a ten-year period. **Combat Related Special Compensation (CRSC)** will be expanded to include all combat- or operations-related disabilities from 10% to 100% ratings, also effective January 1, 2004. Currently, only those qualifying disabilities rated 60% or higher or have a disability associated with a Purple Heart are eligible. In both cases, Guard and Reserve retirees with 20 qualifying years of service (including those with less than 7,200 retirement points) will be eligible.

Editor's Note: As of November 17, 2003 the House and Senate have both passed the 2004 National Defense Authorization Agreement (Act) which contains the concurrent receipt and CRSC provisions. The President has agreed to sign the bill and is expected to do so shortly.

Koonce's Komix



DID YOU KNOW ...

Bob Koonce (Roadrunner) retired in August from Sumner High School after a 31 year career in teaching fine arts. Bob and his wife of 46 years, Laurie, are enjoying the retired life with recent trips to Las Vegas and to Ocean Shores, WA and spending time with their five grandchildren. Future plans include a trip next year to Australia. Bob is a steadfast contributor to the VLOA Outlaws Newsletters with "Kartunz by Koonce".

Doug Wilson (Doorgunner) is now immersed in his new job as a tool and die maker. Doug has survived the California fires, the recall election, and peculiar weather patterns of that land out west. Doug has a supply of "Maverick" Red T-Shirts (SM to XXL), which he will be glad to part with for \$15.00 each including postage.

Pat Theriot and Chester Voisin (Roadrunners) with their wives, Patty and Emadel having been frequenting the Grand Casino and Casino Magic in Louisiana as of late. Reports are darn good food but no much luck on the poker slot machines. Chester says breakfasts are great. Pat and Patty Theriot have added two more grandchildren to their clan. Their total grandchildren now add up to 11.

Dennis Abella (Doorgunner) has been spending vacation time on his boat fishing on the Sacramento and Feather Rivers. Haven't heard about what luck he is having, but if he makes it to the Ft. Rucker 2004 Reunion we bet he will have a lot of fish stories.

Frank Estes (Maverick) busy, busy, busy with visiting Maine, friends and a fair; offshore fishing in Destin, FL; pheasant hunting in SD; time in Tallahassee, Crawford and Sopchoppy, FL visiting daughter and grandkids and working on their farm, a family reunion and celebrating Thanksgiving. Oh yes, and planned trip to Raton, NM for an elk hunt. Ann, Frank's wife provides the necessary logistical support and is right on his heels for all these excursions. Frank is loving his hectic retired life. All that and he is chief honcho for the reunion, plaque and memorial !! *Hey Frank, why don't you take it easy and go back to work ??*

Bischs, Lanes and Illers (Roadrunners and Outlaws) in August had an impromptu Mini-Mini Branson Reunion. Tim and his wife, Mitzi together with her sister, Viginia and brother-in law Jack enjoyed a weeks stay in a Branson time share. While there, Jack Lane, his wife Shirley with their 3 granddaughters came over from OK and Al and Marguerite Iller, from nearby NW AR joined the crew for an evening get together meal at Shorty Small's B-B-Q. Good food, conversation and visit was enjoyed by all 11 "Attendees".

Phil Horne (Outlaw) and his wife, Lynn keep a busy traveling schedule with a trip this last September rendezvousing with Duane and Jan Truman at Bob and Bonnie Sharp's home in Sleepy Eye, MN. This bunch holds regular get togethers several times yearly sparked by the Outlaws first reunion in Branson, MO 2000. Soon after Christmas, they will all meet again at the Truman's digs in Cassville, MO and while there will gel plans for their next group excursion to meet at the US Army Recreation Center in Destin, FL. Phil is now into a big home remodeling project adding two bed rooms so he and Lynn can accommodate the Trumans and Sharps when they again meet in Ranger, GA later in 2004 before attending the R2K+4 Outlaws Reunion Ft. Rucker, AL.

Don Palmer (Outlaw) after a 20 year career as a high school vocational education teacher and several years as Vocational Director at a NH State Prison has changed directions and is now a dispatcher for a lumber yard. His wife, Pat is planning on her retirement from teaching high school math in about a year. Don continues his outdoor adventures hiking nearby mountains and in August made a trip to Sturgis, SD on his BMW to visit a friend and was able to attend a motorcycle rally there. Their son is about to complete his second hitch in the US Army, but has decided not to re-enlist.

Linda Isbell, wife of Ernie (Maverick), has done it again! She slipped on the same kitchen tile floor hitting her head this time and required several stitches. Big news about Linda's romantically inclined father who will be 95 in December; he just proposed to an 89 year old lady! They will be married in January and spend a week's honeymoon on a cruise ship.