

Greetings 6918thers,

January 2009

I've been told that 2009 is the year of the OX in China. Well, I'm thinking that in the United States of America, 2009 is the year of the DAWG! To the entire Dawg Flight family and to our dear comrades, Able, Baker and Charlie Flighters, I hope you all had a blessed Christmas and will have a healthy and prosperous New Year.

The big news, this time, is that the 2009 Dawg Flight Reunion is set up. Pinky has been busy at crossing the "T's" and dotting the "I's" and is now ready for you to begin making your reservations at Harrahs.

2009 6918th Dawg Flight Reunion

-Arrive: 9/27/09(Sun) & Depart 9/30/09(Wed)

-St. Louis, Missouri

-Harrahs St Louis Casino and Hotel

-Room Reservations---Call Beverly at 1-314-770-8383 or Call 1-314-770-8100 or 800-599-6378 (press 0) and ask for Beverly in reservations. She is the only one that can make these reservations. Her office hours are Monday - Friday 8am - 4pm. You may also contact her through her email which is rsvp@harrahs.com

-ID yourself as '6918th Dawg Flight Reunion' for discounted room rates. Use Group code S928DFL

-Dawg contact: Pinky Mink/Stan Freymuth/Troy Powell/Dave Bethard

-Check in time 4:00 PM/Check out time 11:00 AM

- Deadline for blocked rooms 9/16/09

-\$100.00 registration per person (to Pinky)

You may begin making your own reservations **NOW** using the above information. The room rate is \$89.00 plus 14.325% tax to equal \$101.75 per day, payable to Harrahs.

Harrah's is offering a \$109.00 Single/double room rate (\$124.61 after tax) to any guest wishing to come in on Friday or Saturday prior to the event, and \$89.00 (101.75 after tax) for the Thursday before or Wednesday after the event.

We also will have a \$100.00 per person, one time “registration fee” payable to “6918 Dawg Flt. Reunion”, as we did in Vegas, to cover hospitality room rental, banquet room rental, audio and visual equipment rental, banquet meal, open bar expense, reunion expense such as mailings, name tags and so on. The larger our attendance is, the larger this fund is, obviously. Pinky is our resident treasurer, and a damn fine one, I might add. Last reunion he made the deposits on his personal credit card, so the sooner the better for us to get our “registration” check to him!

Make check to: 6918 DAWG FLT. REUNION

**Mail to: BILL MINK
10 CROSS TREES ROAD
BRICK, NJ 08723**

Able, Baker and Charlie Flights, of course, you can reserve in Dawg Flight's name for the negotiated rates and room “block”. Just use the above information when you do. We not only invite ALL 6918th members to attend the reunion, we encourage you all to come. The long range plans are to eventually have a 6918th Reunion rather than a Dawg Flight reunion “with guests”. Our banquet program is geared to Dawgs now, but with the audio and visual program that Dave Bethard graciously puts together for us for every gathering, is generic enough that you will probably want a copy of it. Ask Carl Aegler and Terry Durei (Charlie Flt) who were at the 2007 Vegas reunion. I do not think they felt like outsiders at all. We are all 6918th brothers, so come on down to St. Louis in September! You truly have to be there to experience the rush when one of your friends from forty years ago enters the room for the first time.

Bill Mink and Dave Bethard, what an outstanding job you are doing for us! By my last count, The 6918th current roster stands at: Located Able's, 25; located Baker's, 20; located Charlie's, 61(thanks Wayne); located Dawg's, 103: located Day's, 12; located departed Dawg's, 14; located departed 6918, not Dawgs, 20; just names but not located Dawgs, 76; just names but not located other 6918, approximately 175. There is still a lot of work to be done on locating, but look what these two have done (with help). The "departed" list is now beginning to grow faster than any of us would like to admit and there lies the urgency: The urgency to have a reunion every eighteen to twenty four months while we're still here: The urgency for the Able, Baker and Charlie Flights to find a member or members of their flight to do what Dave and Bill has done for the Dawgs. Each of us has old orders; pictures, contacts and memories of the past that will help find your friends. Dave and Bill have the "know how" and will be glad to share that with you. The problem is, Dave still has a full time job, a family and spends a lot of time and expertise helping with reunion functions. Bill has set up two 6918th websites, maintains them, has family responsibilities, maintains our roster, is our treasurer and does the majority of the reunion location planning. They both have their hands full. They both have a direct interest in and knew the Dawg Flight members, explaining the 103 + 14 roster count. Now it is up to you, A, B and C. Find your tomadachi, call him and ask him to join you in St. Louis in September. Ask him to help you find others. I can only say that all of the time and effort you put forth will be forgotten when he walks in the hospitality suite at the reunion, gives you that "it's been a long time" handshake and probably a hug. Ask any of the eighty-eight that were in Vegas in 2007 and the twenty-two that were in Kansas City in 2008, they will agree. Bill and Dave have already found a lot of your flight friends, so your load will be lighter. The rest needs to be done by you. Take One Step Forward!

Some of the events that are still in the early planning stages for the reunion are: (1) A tour to the Jefferson Barracks Cemetery to visit Dot Dorcey's and flight crew's grave. Dot, as you remember, left Japan in 1968 and was shot down over Laos on February, 1969. (2) A walk through tour is being planned of the Anheuser Busch brewery with complementary samples at the end. It was recently bought out by Inbev, so I'm assuming the tours are still intact. They are still on the internet. (3) A tour of the St. Louis Gateway Arch is being planned. There you may visit the museum, watch a movie of the building of

the Arch and take a tram ride to the top of the Arch. Look up these three on the internet for a preview before your visit in September. There are several other things being discussed, however, our intention is not to book something for every minute you here, but to offer the sites of St. Louis and still leave time to visit with each other. There will be more details as they are planned. Some have already said they are coming before or staying after the reunion dates to enable them to see more of the area. If that's you, check with the hotel when you make your reservation. Tell them you want the reunion rate. I'm not sure they will give it to you, but it will not hurt to ask. I do know that Friday and Saturday rates are higher than the rest of the week.

Since the last newsletter, I have visited with several Dawgs about the following health items:

Miller Farr, Dawg 69-72, shortly after the 2007 Vegas reunion, had triple by-pass heart surgery. He and Carol made the 2008 Kansas City Mini Reunion. The last time I talked to Miller he said *"I'm doing good. The doctor said I could have an occasional beer, so I'm having one now!"*

Marshall Gregory, Dawg 68-69, after the 2007 Vegas reunion, was diagnosed with prostate cancer. Marshall says: *"My health is very good. I continue to get a monthly infusion of a bone density increaser and every three months I get a hormone shot to stall the cancer. On January 2nd we are going on a 10 day vacation to the Caribbean for some scuba diving and goofing off. Our kids are going also as it is our Christmas present. I'm looking forward to the newsletter."*

Terry Herman, Dawg 64-66, after the 2008 Kansas City Mini reunion, found that he has bone cancer. Terry says: *"Thank you so much for the very kind words. You can't realize how very much notes such as these mean to us. They are real boosters during what can be some difficult days. Fortunately I've been having more good than bad, so that is great. My dosage of Thalidomide was doubled again this week to 200mg/day, and it does seem to be helping. According to my oncologist, the 'bad numbers' are down, which is why he's taking a more aggressive approach to my chemo (all by pill). If things continue to work, and I have no more side effects than I already do (some tingling in my left hand and swollen ankles), it is hoped that within 3-4 months or so, the numbers will be low enough so that we can entertain the thought of stem cell bone marrow transplant, using my own stem cells. That is the goal. As I noted, this type of cancer is incurable, but VERY treatable. Geraldine Ferraro has lived with it for 9 years, and*

hell, I'm German, so I should be able to tough it out for at least as long as an Italian. I'm not giving in, even though some days the thought of it does become almost overwhelming. But again, I'm a Kraut, and we're stubborn as hell. We hope to see everyone in September....Terry and Annette."

Roger Miller, Dawg 66-68, was not able to attend the 2007 Vegas reunion because of triple by-pass surgery. Roger, I'm sorry I failed to call you before this publication. We hope you are doing well by now and will be able to join us in St. Louis.

Freddy Breslford, Dawg 68-70, as was reported in the July newsletter, passed away on February 27, 2008 after a long battle with bladder cancer. Lee, (Freddy's wife), we would so much like to see you in St. Louis in September. We consider you one of our fine family even though we have not yet had the pleasure of meeting you. I'm not sure how this pack of Dawgs lucked out in finding our mates, but we have a group of gals that we are truly proud of. You would fit right in, they'll see to that. Come see us and meet some of Freddy's friends. We would love to see you.

There have not been many Micro-Mini reunions since the last newsletter, or if there has been, the reporters have not filed them with the editor!



Seed & Stan

Seed and Stan at fishing trailer some time 2008. Seed and his sweetie, Sharon, came to visit on several weekends this summer. It's always a treat when two roomies get together.

This weekend we flew planes, see table, (young Dawgs) and drank coffee (old Dawgs).



John and Troy in Fukuoka, 2007, still doing what they do in Fukuoka, DRINK Asahi. An old picture of 2007, but I just recently acquired it from the Japanese police. (Young at heart Dawgs)

And if you think micro-mini reunions are a recent idea, look what Dave found in his archives. A mini reunion held in 1980 at Seed's resort on Table Rock Lake near Branson, Missouri.



Ba

Second row: Takeko Bethard, Linda Freymuth, Lexie Caraway, Leeann (Tom Winter's friend), Jim Sullivan.

Third row: Kristina Bethard, Nick Bethard, Alan Freymuth.

Front row: Tom Winter, Tammy Freymuth, Linda Sullivan.

(Baby Dawgs)

At the 2007 Las Vegas reunion, held at the Imperial Palace, Pinky negotiated a free room for two nights for us to raffle off as a fund raiser for the flight. At the 2009 St. Louis reunion, being held at Harrahs, Pinky has negotiated a free room for two nights for us to raffle off as a fund raiser for the flight. The winner is required to use the prize within one year. It looks like a pattern is forming. Jim and Linda Sullivan purchased the winning ticket in Vegas. Of the trip, Jim writes:

"Hello Dawgs: Finally Linda and I got to Las Vegas to use our 2 free nights at the Imperial Palace that we won in the raffle at the reunion; and we had a great time. We arrived about 9 a.

m. on June 10 and checked into our room, which is called the "LUV TUB". This tub supposedly has a capacity of 300 gallons. This tub got me in some trouble as I thought it was to be used for ice and beer only. Later Linda said it could be used for other things, so to paraphrase Pete Bolte, I became the "BASTARD". The room had other amenities, such as mirrors above the bed and the LUV TUB. Also included with the room was a free breakfast buffet, and a show "The Legends", which we thought was very good. We also went to the luau; I don't know the spelling, sounds like Lou owl. Linda spent most of her time playing the slots, playing the slots, playing the slots; I should have known that this was going to happen, when we got off the plane I went to the restroom and when I came out Linda was playing the slots. We really did have a great time.

SJ (Jim and Linda)"

At the reunion, we will open our banquet with a flag ceremony. With that thought, Troy asked that I pass on the following news release from the Department of Veterans Affairs. "Change in federal law effective October 30, 2008: The military salute is a unique gesture of respect that marks those who have served in our nation's armed forces. Veterans and active-duty military not in uniform can now render the military-style hand salute during the playing of the national anthem and during the raising, lowering or passing of the flag." Troy, thank you! My humble opinion is: It has become increasingly important that now, and especially the next few years, those of us who love our country and our flag should no longer be the silent majority, but rather be the odd one in the crowd who salutes when the flag passes and stand up for our country and our military comrades when the news media and our peers try their best to beat us down. I know from the communication I have with you, you too feel the same. It is an honor to have served our country with the caliber of men that you are. So many of you have done so much more for our country than what was asked of you. I am proud to consider you my friend and I salute YOU!

OKAY! As reunion organizers, we have chosen the place and we have chosen the time. At everything else, we have guessed. I guess we need how many sleeping rooms? I guess we need what size hospitality room? I guess we need what size banquet room? I guess we need how many meals? I guess we can afford how many hours of open bar? I guess..... if we were worry warts we would go nuts. Help us out. For now, please respond soon. Are you going to attend? Yes or No! If "yes," how many sleeping rooms?

How many banquet meals? If “no,” let us know too. It cuts down on our guess factor. If “maybe,” we will count you as a “yes,” then alter the count with the hotel in August and September if necessary. There will be more questions as we get closer, but for now, these answers are critical. When I put it on paper, it looks pretty simple. Yes, how many or no. Let us know soon! Bill (Pinky) is handling the money and the hotel, but the rest of us are in constant communication, so let any of us know and Bill will get the message.

Reunion organizers:

Bill Mink (Dawg 65-67)
10 Cross Trees Rd.
Brick, NJ 08723
(732) 477-3761
wmink10134aol.com

Troy Powell (Dawg 66-68)
PO Box 12965
Tallahassee, FL 32317
(850) 386-7267
msgttop@hotmail.com

Dave Bethard, Ret. (Dawg 67-71)
1220 Sharon Dr.
Titusville, FL 32796
(321) 267-4844
dbethard@cfl.rr.com

Stan Freymuth (Dawg 66-68)
8 Steiert
ST. Peters, MO 63376
(636) 379-8725
sfreymuth@charter.net

Now’s the time. Let’s git-er-done. All of you non-computer Dawgs, we haven’t heard much from you. When I mail this newsletter, I will include the July ’08 edition also. Let us know if you get them. If you have not received Jan. ’08 and Mar. ’08, let me know. I have copies and will forward those too.

Gentlemen, it’s always a pleasure! If you would like anything included in the next edition, send it to me. All would like to hear from YOU. Look at www.6918thhakata.com and contact Pinky Mink for the password protected 6918th Roll Call site information. You will enjoy both. Until the next time, be safe and take care.

Stan.