



BLACK CAT NEWS

Upcoming Reunion COLORADO SPRINGS June 2010



****The Academy Hotel**** **Colorado Springs, Colorado**

**The Black Cat Reunion will be held in
Colorado Springs from June 6 to June 11,
2010.**

WIN THIS WOODEN MODEL CHINOOK

This wooden model chinook will be raffled off at the 2010 reunion. Tickets can be purchased at the reunion for \$2 each or three for \$5. (See Page 6)



Academy Hotel General Information

What to expect: Adjacent to the South Gate of the US Air Force Academy, this hotel is located on the northern edge of Colorado Springs—an area marked by rolling hills and dramatic mountain backdrops.

Amenity highlights: The Best Western Academy Hotel offers a heated indoor swimming pool located in an atrium area. The atrium itself features a 40-foot ceiling, tropical foliage, seating, and bar service. An outdoor spa tub and a fitness center are also available. Complimentary wireless Internet access is available throughout the hotel, including guestrooms. An on-site restaurant serves breakfast and lunch buffets.



BLACK CAT ALUMNI ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

The Academy Hotel

7th BLACK CAT REUNION

JUNE 6 - 11, 2010

Group rates ...call hotel 719-598-5770...mention

“Black Cats”

- ★ \$82 per night for Standard guest room
- ★ \$95 per night for Executive Tower guest room
- ★ Hospitality Room -- Sunday/Monday/Tuesday
- ★ Rate includes a full hot breakfast buffet
- ★ Free high-speed Internet
- ★ All parking complimentary

PIKES PEAK AND GARDEN OF THE GODS



ACTIVITIES IN THE COLORADO SPRINGS AREA

United States Air Force Academy

Visitors can tour this modern sprawling campus that includes the Academy, Falcon Stadium, a chapel and Arnold Hall, a museum honoring Air Force personnel

Pikes Peak

Arguably the most famous mountain in the United States, Pikes Peak draws millions of

tourists a year who drive, hike, or take the Cog Railway to the summit, 14,110 feet, to gaze at resplendent vistas.

Garden of the Gods

Located at the base of Pikes Peak, this popular park features many unique geological formations, mountain climbing, nature trails and a trading post

Glen Eyrie Castle

Olympic Training Center

Headquarters for the U.S. Olympic Committee administration and the Olympic Training Center programs.

Rock Ledge Ranch Historic Site

Cheyenne Mountain Zoo



Contact one of the 213th Alumni Officers to register for the reunion. There will be a \$25 reunion fee to cover cost of the Hospitality room, but that fee will also provide you with a one-year membership in the 213th Black Cat Alumni Association.

Terry K. Sanderlin	(505) 550-0145
Thomas Hoopes	(440) 636-5309
Foster Sexton	(361) 225-4612
George Haley	(508) 737-6827



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Cruising the Rhine and Moselle Rivers by Riverboat by George R. Haley II, Treasurer of the 213th Black Cat Alumni Association



The Moselle River in Cochem, Germany

This past fall my wife, Eileen, and I -- along with two of our close friends -- enjoyed an awesome three-week trip to Europe: two weeks cruising the Rhine and Moselle Rivers on the riverboat *MS Swiss Emerald* from Amsterdam, the Netherlands, through Luxembourg, France, and Germany, to Basel, Switzerland; this was followed by an enjoyable week visiting Bavaria while

- 8/28/09-8/31/09 Amsterdam [the Netherlands]
- 9/1/09 Nijmegen, Rees [Germany]
- 9/2/09 Dusseldorf, Bonn [Germany]
- 9/3/09 Koblenz, Cochem [Germany]
- 9/4/09 Trier [Germany]
- 9/5/09 Trier, Bernkastel [Germany]
- 9/6/09 Boppard [Germany]
- 9/7/09 Worms, Heidelberg, Speyer [Germany]
- 9/8/09 Plittersdorf, Baden-Baden [Germany]
- 9/9/09 Strasbourg [France]
- 9/10/09 Basel [Switzerland]
- 9/11/09 Basel, Zurich [Switzerland]
- 9/11 - 9/16 Munich and Bavaria [Germany]



George and Eileen having a good time in Munich, Germany



MS Swiss Emerald in Boppard, Germany

based in Munich. The gorgeous scenery, fairy-tale castles, historical sites, food, "adult beverages," and fellow travelers were all wonderful! We had a terrific time and would recommend this Tauck World Discovery trip to all.

**213TH ASHC ALUMNI
ASSOCIATION OFFICERS**

President	Terry Sanderlin
Secretary	Foster Sexton
Treasurer	George Haley
Membership Coordinator	Thomas Hoopes
Alumni Registrar	Thomas Farley
Unit Historian	Mike Brown
Webmaster	Ed Faught



EASY TO BECOME A MEMBER

The 213th Assault Support Helicopter Company Alumni Association was formed to bring together Black Cats from all years served, to rekindle old friendships, and to develop new ones. Membership dues are \$15 per year. Contact Tom Farley at chopperteach@aol.com for more information.

BLACK CAT ALUMNI ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Sea Kayaking the Middle Keys by

Terry K. Sanderlin, Ed.D., and President 213th Alumni

As I drive south down the 18-mile stretch on US 1, we come to John Pennekamp Reef State Park in Key Largo, my childhood and early-teen memories began flooding back to me. With a satisfying smile on my face, I fondly recall John Pennekamp and Elliott Key, which were favorite stops for my family during weekend and summer outings on our 30-foot Chris Craft. I can remember as if it was just yesterday skindiving in 20-foot water off my parents' boat for lobsters at Adams Key, which is at the southern end of Elliott Key, and sailing my folding kayak in the crystal-clear waters, all those years ago. There was nothing better than catching lobsters and having my mother cook them in the boat's galley, with a lemon-and-butter sauce of course. I can almost taste those lobsters now.

A Living Reef

John Pennekamp is an underwater state park, with a living coral reef.



Terry Sanderlin
in kayak

Pennekamp is located Oceanside (the Atlantic side of the keys) and is a popular destination for snorkeling, scuba diving, and fishing off the reef. The fish on the reef are plentiful and varied. The diving has remarkable underwater sites, such as the giant underwater coral-heads, and the 13-foot "Christ of the Deep" bronze statue. When you are tired of diving, there is always the Jules Undersea Lodge, located in 30 feet of water. Now that would be an adventure to consider. With good memories in mind, I push on toward our kayaking destination, the middle keys. My kayaking partner and I plan to gunkhole kayak sites around Summerland Key, Sugarloaf Key, and the Saddle Bunch Keys, conditions permitting, during this windy 2009 spring trip.

Camping on Sugarloaf Key

As we pass over the Bow Channel Bridge from Cudjoe Key, we come to our camping destination just south of Bow Channel and mile marker 20 at the KOA Campground on Sugarloaf Key. The campground is well appointed with swimming pool, hot tub, cafe, pub, marina, and boat launch site. However, after a straight-through drive from Atlanta, I am more interested in the hot shower and the bed awaiting me after I register and set up the camper.

Getting on the Water

Ready for a day on the water, we review the conditions at the KOA launch site only to find 20-knot winds, stronger gusts, a powerful current, and a heavy chop on Cudjoe Bay. Reconsidering our launch site, we moved south down US 1 pass mile marker 17 and over



Terry making a wind check at
mile marker 17

the Harris Channel Bridge where there is a speed sign and an off-road parking location on a small island. Here, we took wind readings and finding 14-knot



Bruce Parsons



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winds in the more-protected Bayside, we decided it was a “go.” My paddling companion, Bruce Parsons, teacher and Vietnam PBR veteran, and I decided on a northwest and then north route, heading toward the direction of the wildlife refuge. Upon turning north we found strong currents that would be a challenge on our trip. This area has creeks passing through islands which are teeming with mangroves, birds, such as White Ibis, Great White Heron, Brown Pelican, and the American Bald Eagle. We also spotted Sea Turtles, Horseshoe Crab, gray snapper, and Barracuda.

After kayaking, we returned to our launch site, packed up our gear, and headed back to our campground. After securing our equipment and 17-foot Folbot kayak, we then turned our attention to a great seafood feast at the Sugarloaf Lodge Restaurant, located just down the road from our campsite. As we sat at an outside table, we watched giant lizards climbing palm trees and a single canoe paddling against heavy winds back to Sugarloaf Marina. It was a fine end to a good day, and I was ready to repeat it.

Summerland Key

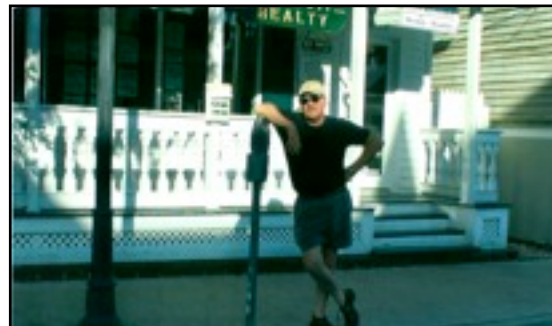
Driving five miles north of our campground on to Summerland Key, we find Niles Road after a couple of turns. At the end of Niles Road, on the Bayside, is an excellent put-in for kayaking the shallow and protected waters of this key. Summerland Key has excellent areas to explore south of the put-in where fish hide in the sea grasses and mangroves. There are rocky shoal areas to the north toward Toptree Hammock Key. The West Side of this key is teeming with small Nurse and Lemon sharks and stingray. Just north of our put-in, we discovered a pier from a smaller island to the main part of Summerland Key. Here was a fisherman we spent time talking to. He told us that some years-back drug smugglers dropped their loads on this small island and packed their booty into vehicles that crossed the pier and disappeared up the keys to Miami. That was until law enforcement discovered their operation and put an end to it. Now it is a place where fisherman go

to catch small sharks.

Our kayaking day complete, we head back to Sugarloaf Key to partake of the culinary offerings at Mangrove Mama's Restaurant at mile marker 20. It is a small restaurant with a garden in the back that has abundant banana trees. Its seafood and roadhouse-like ambiance was a real treat, as well as the extensive wine list.

Key West and Duval Street

With the winds kicking up beyond our comfort zone, we decided this is a perfect time to explore Key West. Making the 16-mile journey to Key West from our campsite, we find famous Duval Street decidedly empty during this weekday. We were lucky enough to plan our trip to miss spring break, and the weekend is when Duval Street really crawls with people. We had a late but casual



Terry on Duval St., Key West, Florida

breakfast with coffee overlooking the few tourists already on the street.

Our next stop was one block off Duval Street at 907 Whitehead Street to visit the Hemingway Home and Museum. The Hemingways lived here from 1931 to 1939. Ernest wrote some of his best works here, including *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, *To Have and Have Not*, *The Green Hills of Africa*, and *Death in the Afternoon*.

Next on our list is the Key West Lighthouse Museum, across the street from the Hemingway Museum. The 88 steps to the top of this lighthouse

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Lighthouse at
Key West

will make you huff and puff on the way up, but what a view of Key West when you make it to the top. This 90-foot lighthouse was built inland in 1847 to replace the previous lighthouse, which was destroyed during a hurricane. The Key West Butterfly and Conservatory is without a doubt the most unusual gallery I have ever viewed. With 30 to 50 species of living butterflies from around the world in a glass greenhouse, you walk through, but it also brought a smile to my face. Our trip complete, we head north up the keys on US 1, with new memories, tanned skin, and dreams of even more trips to America's tropical paradise.



Department of Veterans Affairs Vietnam Veteran Fact Sheet

For VA benefits, two dates are used for the "Vietnam era:"¹

- ◆ Feb. 28, 1961 to May 7, 1975, for veterans who served in Vietnam
- ◆ Aug. 5, 1964 to May 7, 1975, for all other veterans

Vietnam Veterans

- 9.2 million served on active duty (Aug. 5, 1964 to May 7, 1975)²
- 2,590,000 served in the combat zone⁷
- 109,000 died in service²
- 58,184 died in the combat zone or from combat wounds⁴
- 8,113,000 are still alive²

Vietnam Vets and VA Health Care³

- 125,275 vets were hospitalized 206,763 times in VA facilities last year
- 989,833 vets visited VA clinics 12,704,963 times last year

- 991, 672 vets received some VA health care last year

Vietnam Vets and VA benefits⁵

- 737,397 vets received disability compensation in February
- 112,207 family members of dead vets receive survivors benefits
- 102,088 vets received VA pensions for non-service disabilities

Vietnam Veterans and Agent Orange⁶

- 297,194 vets took exams under Agent Orange Registry since March 2000
- 99,226 filed claims alleging Agent Orange affected their health
- 7,520 receive VA disability compensation for Agent Orange-related causes

Notes

1. 38 U.S. Code, 101 (29).
2. "America's Wars," Department of Veterans Affairs, August 1999.
3. "Inpatients and Outpatients by Period of Service, FY 1999," April 2000, Office of Program and Data Analyses VA.
4. "U.S. Military Casualties in Southeast Asia," March 31, 1997, Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters Service, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports. (<http://web1.whs.osd.mil/mmid/casualty>).
5. "Active Compensation, Pension and Retirement Cases By Period of Service," February 2000, Office of Program and Data Analyses, VA.
6. "Agent Orange: Statistical Update," March 2000, VA Office of Public Affairs, Media Relations Office (80-F).
7. *Pentagram*, June 4, 1993



ATTENTION BLACKCATS

Our Alumni Association has a Fund raising project for this year. We have Wooden Model Chinook that we have Raffle Tickets on. It will be raffled off at the Reunion. It would be appreciated if you would email or call your address to Foster Sexton at foster_213th@yahoo.com or call 361-225-4612, so he can mail some tickets to you for your help with their sale. Your cooperation is appreciated. Thanks