Herzlich Willkommen
to the land of
“America the Beautiful”

The Air Force Academy is located just north of Colorado Springs, nestled in some of the most beautiful country you’d ever want to visit. More than just a theme chosen by President, Claude Niebuhr, and VP, Jim Riggin, the area surrounding Colorado Springs is indeed, the land of America the Beautiful. The song “America the Beautiful” was originally written as a poem by an English Professor, Katherine Lees Bates, in 1893. On a train trip from Wellesley College to Colorado Springs to teach a summer school session, she was impressed by a variety of things on the trip; some great buildings in Chicago, the wheat fields of Kansas and the Great Plains, and other points of interest along the way. But the driving inspiration came to her on Pikes Peak; the majestic views of the surrounding mountains and the Great Plains – where the words started to come to her. It was originally published as a poem in 1895 and became quite popular. Later in 1910, it was set to a piece of music composed by Samuel Ward. The rest is, as we say, History, and it started here.

Colorado Springs itself, is quite attractive. It too is nestled in the valley with great vistas all around. It is a thriving city, and contrary to popular belief, they have electricity, indoor plumbing with hot water, and motorized vehicles. You still might see a cowboy or two, maybe even on a horse, maybe a dogie or two too, but normally it looks like a modern city with up-to-date folks living there – that is until ski season, then all bets are off.
The reunion is scheduled from 5 October thru 11 October, a beautiful time of the year. The trees are turning and the air is brisk. You shouldn't expect any snow, but you can bring a sweater or a light jacket. The high temps usually run between 60° and 70°, with the lows running between 35° and 40°. You guys from Minnesota can forget about the sweaters and a light jacket, just wear your clogs, cut-offs and t-shirts, however, you wimps from Southern California and Florida might want to consider a parka and mittens, or electric underwear.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>13:00 – 17:00</td>
<td>Executive Board - Setup Hospitality &amp; Registration Area</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>09:00 – 15:00</td>
<td>HRA Registration</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>09:00 – 22:00</td>
<td>Hospitality Room open</td>
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<td>16:00 – 18:00</td>
<td>HRA Executive Board Meeting</td>
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<td>Monday</td>
<td>08:00 – 22:00</td>
<td>Hospitality Room open - (Closed at 10:00 for meeting)</td>
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<td>10:00 – 12:00</td>
<td>HRA General Membership Meeting</td>
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<td>12:00 – 22:00</td>
<td>Hospitality Room Reopens - for people not taking tour.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>14:00 – 19:00</td>
<td>Tour to Space Foundation Museum and Mini Oktoberfest at Edelweiss Restaurant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>08:00 – 18:00</td>
<td>Hospitality Room Open - (Closed at 18:00 for Group Dinners)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>09:00 – 13:00</td>
<td>Morning to rest, shop, visit, or chat</td>
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<td></td>
<td>13:00 – 17:00</td>
<td>Tour to AF Academy, &amp; Garden of the Gods</td>
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<td>18:00 – ???:</td>
<td>Group Dinners at various Colorado Springs Locations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>08:00 – 12:00</td>
<td>Hospitality Room open</td>
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<td></td>
<td>12:30 – 18:00</td>
<td>Luncheon Buffet Program</td>
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<td></td>
<td>18:00 – 22:00</td>
<td>Hospitality Room open</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>08:00 – 22:00</td>
<td>Hospitality Room open</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>08:00 – 22:00</td>
<td>Free Day - Members choice to visit in Colorado Springs Area or visit Cripple Creek Casinos or Rest</td>
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</table>
Friday - 10/10
08:00 – 14:00 Hospitality Room open
14:30 – 16:00 Frauen Kaffee Klatsch
17:30 – 23:00 Friday Night Banquet Program

Saturday - 10/11
08:00 – 12:00 Hospitality Room open - Aufwiedersehen Coffee, and Goodbyes

The registration forms are included with the newsletter, so you should get busy and make your plans; select your meal choices, list any guests you are bringing, etc. then flip it over and order your t-shirts. The cutoff date is a little bit later than normal this year, 1 September, but like all things, this date is closer than you think so don't let it get away from you. Any registrations postmarked after 1 September are subject to a $25 late fee.

Local scenery.

Garden of the Gods

This is not the hotel, it's the Manitou Cliff Dwellings

Now that you have the reunion all scheduled, there are two non-HRA sponsored activities that are available that might alter your choice of dates adding a couple of days to your scheduled stay in Colorado Springs.

On Saturday, 4 October, there is the Air Force vs. Navy football game, and even though the times, prices and other details aren't firmed up, the best info at this time is the start time to be 13:30, and the ticket prices will run between $30 and $40 per person. HRA member, Tom Scholle of Westminster, CO, is arranging this, so contact him as soon as possible. He'll need a $20 deposit per ticket prior to 31 July. Tom's contact information is: phone: 303 940 6903, or email <tom14er@hotmail.com>.

The other attraction is an Oktoberfest at the TREA Clubhouse (The Retired Enlisted Association), on 11 October. This has a history of being a great event with good German food, Bier, and dancing, with music provided by the German Band Tanzkapelle. There will be more info about this in the Hofer Weekly Updates from Don Riverkamp, so pay attention.

We'll be staying at The Hotel Eleganté Conference and Event Center, 2886 S. Circle Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80906. For reservations, phone: 719 576 5900. Email: <hotelelegantesales@mcmelegante.com>. Their web site: <www.hotelelegante.com>.

We've arranged a pricing of $80.00 + tax, per night, for a Standard Room, which includes breakfast for 2, and room upgrades are available. These rates are good three days before and three days after the reunion, and they also provide complimentary parking. You are responsible for making your own reservations, so call the hotel direct at the number above and speak with the pleasant people. To avoid a cancellation penalty, which is the price of one night's room and tax, reservations must be canceled 24 hours prior to your scheduled arrival.

There is also another outstanding deal, the “Lucky Libations Card.” You purchase it at the desk at check-in, for $8.00 per person. It entitles the bearer to a 2 for 1 discount on Domestic Beer(s)/House Wine(s), during hotel happy hour.

There are two onsite restaurants for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, plus Starbuck's Cafe and a Blue Bell Ice Cream Parlor.

The hotel is located in southeast Colorado Springs, just off highway I-25, it has great access to the major highways in the area.

There are two airports that service this area; Colorado Springs Airport (COS) and Denver International Airport (DEN). Denver International Airport is about 98 miles to the north, about a 1 ½ hour drive. If you can't get a good flight into Colorado Springs, maybe you go to Denver, rent a car and have a 1 ½ hour drive through some beautiful, scenic countryside.

For the gamblers there are five casinos in Cripple Creek. There aren't any bus trips sponsored by the HRA, but there is a bus that comes by the hotel; it has a charge but that is mostly offset with gambling chits. You can check the hotel
for the schedule and the cost. Cripple Creek is about 45 miles away, and a 1 hour drive.

2015 REUNION – DAVE NATALIE

Here's the quick rundown from our VP, Dave Natalie.

Welcome back to Biloxi, site of the 2004 Hof Reunion Association Reunion. The vote on the 2015 reunion sites was close, with Biloxi coming out the winner. Located on the Mississippi Gulf Coast, Biloxi offers many amenities and attractions.

There are many ways to play in the Biloxi area. You can play for keeps in the exciting casinos. Play ball on signature golf courses. Play in the sun along 62 miles of coastline beaches. Play dress up in unique boutiques and factory outlets. Play with your food and then land it aboard a charter fishing boat. Plan a play date at one of many fine dining restaurants. Or join the fun at famous dives and quaint local seafood spots.

The 2015 reunion is scheduled for October 18-23, 2015. This seemingly late date was chosen because of a number of major activities in Biloxi in September and early October. I received quotes from many hotels/casinos in Biloxi. HRA President, Claude Niebuhr and his wife Susanne, visited a number of them. After these visits, most were eliminated for various reasons: lack of meeting space, number of rooms available, ease of access to meeting rooms, and most of all – cost. It looks like the Golden Nugget Biloxi will serve the needs of the HRA the best of all. This property has recently completed a $100 million post-Katrina renovation. Every aspect of the property has received a complete renovation including hotel rooms and suites, spa, casino, restaurants, and convention space. Room rates are in the $80 range, with slightly higher rates for Friday and Saturday.

There's a number of tours that would be enjoyable for all reunion attendees, however, nothing definite has been decided at this time. A small sample of possible tours include Infinity Science Museum (NASA), Shopping Tours, Ship Island Excursion, GI Museum, Lazy Magnolia Brewery, Bonfire Party on the Beach, Naval Air Museum in Pensacola, WWII Museum in New Orleans, and , of course, Keesler AFB. As we make plans, the information will be reported in the weekly updates and then finalized plans in the January newsletter.

More information on Biloxi can be found at <http://www.gulfcoast.org>.

2016 REUNION – JIM RIGGIN

Let me repeat much of what I mentioned in the January newsletter. The 2nd Vice President heads up a committee to select three to four potential sites for the reunion following our next reunion. As mentioned above, the 2015 Reunion will be in Biloxi, MS, so all we have to do now is select a site for the 2016 reunion.

I am putting the choice out to the membership as to where you would like to go in 2016. And if you are one that doesn't normally attend reunions, where could we have a reunion that you would attend? Send me your choices for the 2016 Site location. Please don't just send me a name of a city, give me some information about the area; what is there to keep us busy, the entertainment, scenic or historic sites, the Hotels that are available to accommodate 200 plus people.

Keep in mind that 2016 will be four years since we were in Hof. Do we want to go back to Hof every four years? Originally we were to go to Hof every four years, then we skipped a couple years; we were in Hof in 2002, 2006 and then 2012. Give me your thoughts about going back to Hof in 2016. If you select Hof as the 2016 Reunion location, please make sure you are planning to attend.

If you are a dues-paying member of the Hof Reunion Association, now is the time to make your choices known; the more inputs we get from our active members, the better our choices will be. Although we have a committee and we have a “short list,” the proposed locations aren’t finalized until we meet in Colorado Springs, so you might have some influence. Please let me know where you would like to visit in 2016. My email: <www.jmriggin@yahoo.com>.

ADJUTANT – MELVIN HAMILL

The Executive Board Nominating Process

Planning for the Hof Reunion Association (HRA) annual reunion starts well before the reunion start date. The process starts in January, two years before, with the President appointing the Reunion Site Selection Chairperson. Nine to ten months out, the Nominating Committee is selected. The Nominating Committee’s task is to reach out and seek volunteers from the HRA Membership; Regular Members and Life Members, to fill the forecasted Executive Board vacancies. The Nominating Committee consists of the 2nd Vice President and two non-members of the Executive Board, appointed by the President. To augment the present
nominating process, we are seeking volunteers. By using the present method in combination with the volunteer method the nomination process is opened to all members, it is transparent, we hope it will generate interest and we hope you will volunteer. When members are involved and are part of the process the outcome will be a better and stronger Association. Please read the following letter for instructions.

Your Adjutant and Friend,
Melvin and Ilse Hamill

From: Hof Reunion Association
To: HRA Membership
Subject: Nomination for Hof Reunion Association Executive Board

Suspense: August 15, 2014

The Hof Reunion Association Executive Board has eleven positions. The positions are President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, Adjutant, Secretary, Treasurer, German Affairs Representative, Membership Chairman, Webmaster, Hof Connection Newsletter Editor and Executive Board Advisor. There are three positions that are directed by the HRA By-Laws; the 1st Vice President automatically moves to President. The 2nd Vice President automatically moves to 1st Vice President. The Executive Board Advisor is automatically filled by the Past President. All positions not directed by the HRA By-Laws can be nominated for vote. The positions are 2nd Vice President, Adjutant, Secretary, Treasurer, German Affairs Representative, Membership Chairman, Webmaster and Hof Connection Newsletter Editor.

The positions to be filled for the Hof Reunion Association Executive Board FY2015 are 2nd Vice President and Treasurer. The incumbents in other positions have indicated they will seek re-election. This does not preclude nominating a person for any one of the aforementioned positions. Voting will take place at the Hof Reunion Association Membership meeting, Colorado Springs, CO, October 6, 2014.

The nominated person must be an active member having voting rights in the business affairs of the Hof Reunion Association and eligible to hold office, and be (1) Regular Member or (2) Life Member. If you are interested in or would like to nominate a person, please email the Nominee’s Name and HRA Position (2nd Vice President or Treasurer) to Claude Niebuhr, HRA president <ccnieb@gmail.com>, Dave Natalie <davenatalie@chartermi.net>, HRA 1st Vice President, or to Jim Riggan, HRA 2nd Vice President <jmriggan@yahoo.com>. Ensure the person you nominate has agreed to accept. You or the person you nominate will be contacted to discuss the position. You may also nominate a person “from the floor” at the Membership Meeting in Colorado Springs.

Have you or the nominated person read the Hof Reunion Association CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS? (available at: <http://hofgermany.com/files/2009_Constitution_Bylaws_Current.pdf>) Do you understand the responsibilities you will have as a member of the Executive Board? If you have questions you may contact any of the board members or email melvinhamill@yahoo.com.

Thank You,

Hof Reunion Association Executive Board
DOOR PRIZES FOR 2014 COLORADO SPRINGS REUNION – JERRY MIDDENDORF

Fellow Hofers and Crafters - Before you know it, once again, we'll be together for the 2014 HRA Reunion in Colorado Springs. You have plenty of time to make a donation to the 2014 HRA Reunion Door Prize Program.

In the past several years, our Auction and Door Prize Program has been very popular. To organize this undertaking, HRA President Claude Niebuhr has asked Jerry Middendorf and Phil Murray to act as co-chairmen of the Door Prize Committee. The HRA is loaded with talented members, and door prizes will again add that little extra touch to make the 2014 reunion one of the most memorable to date.

We're looking for donations such as craft items, art work, books, gizmos, etc., that can be presented as door prizes and/or for a live or silent auction. At previous reunions, items donated included crochet doilies, wood carvings, handcrafted quilts, embroidered table runners, dirndls, oil paintings, puzzles, decorated Emu egg, handmade jewelry, German bier mugs, German/Austrian music CDs, collector plates and many other items. Let your imagination be the only limitation as to what you bring. To donate, merely bring the item(s) with you to Colorado Springs. However, please give Jerry Middendorf and/or Phil Murray, a heads-up, via email, a telephone call, or snail mail, ahead of time letting them know what you have planned to bring as a donation.

One request for documenting your donation(s) from Jerry: If you have the capability - (1) take a picture of your donation; (2) download to your computer; (3) email to Jerry Middendorf and Phil Murray. If you don’t have capability of downloading a picture of your donation(s) forget this request.

The committee encourages wide spread participation in the 2014 door prize initiative. If you're unable to be with us in Colorado Springs and would like to donate an item, please do not snail mail the donated item to our HRA Adjutant or Door Prize Committee Members. If you are unable to attend the reunion and still want to donate an item, attempt to contact someone near you that will be driving to Colorado Springs and perhaps they could transport your donated item for you. If that is unsuccessful, contact Jerry Middendorf or Phil Murray to provide assistance in getting the donated item to the reunion.

Jerry Middendorf
405 Forehand Court
Bel Air, Maryland 21015
Phone: 410 776 3637
j.middendorf@comcast.net

Phil Murray
755 Ridge Way
Fallbrook, California 92082-2679
Phone : 760 723 1726
hra.philm@wildblue.net

HRA SECRETARY - DON RIVERKAMP

I would like to thank each and every one of our HRA Members and spouses for keeping me informed whenever there was a change of address, phone number, email address, and/or sending me information, photos and stories to share with our members in the Hof Weekly Updates. The members have done a great job keeping myself and Mel Hamill informed of any changes to their data for the HRA Master Roster. Along with the mailing of the Hof Connection Newsletters in January and July, I email around 390 Hof Weekly Updates to our current active members with Internet Service. Having the proper mailing and email addresses enables the Hof Reunion Association to keep our members/spouses informed on a timely basis with information. I have been emailing the weekly update to groups of around 30-35 every few hours on Mondays in order that the internet provider does not think I am a Spammer.

We mail the Hof Connection Newsletters First Class Mail, and that has greatly improved our delivery to our members in a more timely fashion, and only a couple returned due to wrong addresses. Keep up the excellent notifications when moving, changing for summer/winter home addresses, and email address changes. I would also like to encourage all members and spouses that wish to share stories with our members to please continue to email them to me. THANKS for making my secretarial job a little easier, and the Hof Reunion Association the best military association in existence.

ONLINE ELECTRONIC HRA MASTER ROSTER

Our HRA Master Roster is updated weekly on Sunday, and whenever you wish the latest electronic copy, all you have to do is email me, and I will email it to you immediately. Some people renew for future years, and therefore do not get an electronic copy unless they ask me, since I might just have forgotten. For those renewing yearly, I email you a copy during the week following your membership renewal form reaching the adjutant's office in Dover, Delaware. Due to mailing & printing costs, Only NEW Members, without Internet Service, will receive hard copy of the roster at the time of Initial Membership to the Hof Reunion Association.
MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN - PHIL RUTH

There haven't been any extraordinary sleuthing events by devious Phil in the past several newsletters, but there have been a few during the past six months.

On Dec 27, 2013, I was attending a Ballroom Dance Festival in Columbia, SC. At 10:22 a.m., Mel Hamill sent me an e-mail saying that Glyde Kendrick in Hof, son of Marty Komp (longtime 5K Club bartender), was worried, as he had not been able to reach 88-year-old Marty for several days. I was asked to try to contact Marty's adopted son, Thomas Komp, who, like Marty, lives in the Philadelphia area. Ilse Hamill talked to Marty a week earlier, and Marty was not feeling too well. On my iPad at approximately 11:30 p.m. I found Mel's Help Request. With the possibility that something serious might have happened to Marty, I quickly went to work trying to get a phone number for Thomas. After several dead-end online searches, I charged 95 cents to my credit card on a web site I seldom use, and got a new number for Thomas. Although it was now 00:55 a.m., but, still feeling that it might be an emergency situation, I called the number and got Thomas. I explained who I was and that we were quite concerned that something serious might have happened to Marty, and that Ilse had not been able to get Marty on the phone, so that is why I was calling at such a late hour. He appreciated our concern, even though I had awoken him, rather than waiting until "tomorrow" a.m. He said that Marty was having knee/leg problems and back problems and couldn't stand and walk without somebody helping her. She is now in a rehab facility getting some therapy to try to improve her problems. When I asked for the facility phone number, he said that he would have Marty call Ilse later "today." Ilse got in touch with Marty, who was having a tough time with the therapy; and Ilse also called Marty's son in Hof.

On Feb 8, 2014, Mel sent me an e-mail he had received from Stephanie Lass Wallace, the daughter of former 606 AC&W member, Robert Lass, who passed away Jan. 19, 2014. Among Robert's personal effects was a photo album that Regina Schuessler, daughter of CMSgt Robert Schuessler, had made and given to Robert Lass. Stephanie wanted to get the album back to the Schuessler family, since the photos would have much more meaning for them. Via e-mails with Stephanie, I found out there were names associated with some of the photos in the album. Becky, Susie, Mark, and Pat Schuessler; further that Pat was a male who, based on the 1970-dated album, would now be about 55-56 years old. My searching gave me a Daniel Patrick Schuessler, as a 55-year-old relative of Robert and Patricia living at the same address on the Hof Reunion Roster for deceased Robert. I called the number and spoke with Dianne Schuessler, wife of Robert's son Daniel Patrick Schuessler. I mentioned the names Becky, Susie, Mark and Pat (Daniel Patrick) and Dianne confirmed that I had the correct family. I told her about the album and that Stephanie wanted to get it to Regina. Unfortunately, Regina is now deceased; but Pat will be more than happy to get the album. I gave to Dianne, Stephanie's e-mail addr and phone number, and she said she would call Stephanie. I asked Dianne to call me with follow-on details about getting the album to Pat. On Feb 10, Stephanie said she had spoken to Dianne Schussele, sister-in-law to Regina Schuessler, obtained her address, and would be sending the scrapbook soon. Stephanie further hoped the album would bring the Schuesslers some comfort, due to the fact that Regina is also deceased; and she further felt that her father, Robert, would also be pleased that the album had been returned.

While on the phone with Dianne Schuessler, I said that it is my job to try to find our missing AF members from Germany, and she said she has a name on a Viet Nam POW/MIA bracelet, and has been trying to find info to contact his family. I got the name, and, after a brief search, found the sister of the name on the bracelet and spoke with her. She confirmed that her USAF brother had been shot down, while on a reconnaissance mission over North Vietnam, and his body was never recovered. I passed the contact information and additional information about the MIA to Dianne. Having graduated from the United States Air Force Academy, he has a memorial headstone in the United States Air Force Academy Cemetery.

Now to the more routine membership activity. Since the activity cut off for the Jan 2014 Newsletter input, I forwarded appropriate membership or reunion paperwork via e-mail or snail mail to 19 former Hofers. I spoke with 3 former Hofers that will print forms from the HRA website. After a Jan 2014 Newsletter was returned as undeliverable, I made a phone call and confirmed a change of snail-mail address. I responded to one paid-up dues request. For one former Hofer, I got returned as undeliverable snail-mail from his two latest addresses, and several phone numbers for him are Not in Service. I forwarded information on 6 deceased Hofers. I provided Mel Hamill with 25 roster administrative fixes.

TREASURER REPORT – JERRY MIDDENDORF

JUST WHAT IS A REUNION?

In a world where we’re often too busy to catch our breath, the HRA Reunion provides an opportunity to stay connected, keep our memories alive, share war stories, make new friends and can provide a sense of history that began in that little town we love called “Hof.” As we look forward to Colorado Springs, I would like to thank each and everyone for giving me the opportunity of serving you and the Hof Reunion Association as your 2014 Treasurer. If I can be of service to anyone, please let me know. I am only a phone call; 410-776-3637, or email <j.middendorf@comcast.net> away.

The HRA operates on a fiscal year that runs from January 1 to December 31 of each calendar year. The HRA’s finances are in excellent condition with a balance of $45,685.16 in the HRA Bank Account as of May 31, 2014 (Includes dues,
donations, HRA registration). Total Income: $11,250.00, Total Expenses: $1,139.89). Beginning balance as of January 1, 2014 was $35,575.05. However, we are confronted with the expenses of the 2014 reunion in Colorado Springs, and the publication of the July 2014 Hof Connection Newsletter. The greatest single line item cost to the HRA is the printing and postage of the Hof Connection semi-annual Newsletter. The goal of the Executive Board is to provide all members of the HRA with the best service for the money received from members.

The HRA Treasurer Books will be available in Colorado Springs for Fiscal Year 2014 for inspection by any member with a desire to review the treasurer books. Also, I will need two volunteers to conduct an audit of the Treasurer Records. Remember way back when you volunteered to serve your country in the military service. We’re a group of volunteers.

The HRA is recognized as a nonprofit, tax exempt, charitable organization under Internal Revenue Code, Section 501 (c) (19). So what does Section 501 (c) (19) mean. Specifically: (1) The organization is organized in the United States or any of its possessions, (2) at least 97.5% of all members of the organization are past or present members of the U.S. Armed Forces, cadets, or spouses, widows, widowers, ancestors, or lineal descendants of any of those listed here, with at least 75% of those members being past or present members of the U.S. Armed Forces, and (3) that no part of net earnings inure to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual. Pursuant with Internal Revenue Service (IRS) requirements and my Treasurer responsibilities, HRA’s tax exempt status requires annual electronic filing of Form 990-N (e-Postcard) for small tax exempt organizations. IRS requires electronic submission of the e-Postcard not later than the 15th day of the 5th month after the close of the tax year (May 15th).

Most small tax-exempt organizations whose annual gross receipts are normally $50,000.00 or less ($25,000.00 for tax years ending after December 31, 2007 and before December 31, 2010) are required to electronically submit Form 990-N, also known as the e-Postcard unless they choose to file a complete Form 990 (Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax) or Form 990-EZ (Short Form Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax) instead. On February 5, 2014, I filed Form 990-N. On February 5, 2014 the e-Postcard for the HRA as a tax exempt organization for tax year 2013 was accepted. Made it through another HRA Tax Year.

Americans are remarkably charitable. The Hof Reunion Association has made a donation annually to the Air Force Enlisted Village (AFEV) since 2003. More recently for the last two years (2012 and 2013), the HRA has made donations to the Jugendhilfehaus Saint Elisabethhein Orphanage in Hof.

The Air Force Enlisted Village (formerly the Air Force Enlisted Widows Home Foundation), was founded in 1967 after the Air Force Sergeant's association conducted a survey and found that over 50,000 widows of enlisted men were living in poverty. A group of active duty and retired Air Force noncommissioned officers with the assistance of former Air Force Chief of Staff General and Mrs. John D. Ryan set about to correct this deficiency. The AFEV’s primary mission is to offer housing and financial assistance to surviving spouses of enlisted Air Force members. Those spouses with the greatest need have priority. Surviving spouses who can no longer safely live on their own are now able to be at home. Spouses of enlisted members who served in other branches of the military are admitted on a space-available basis, but aren't eligible for financial assistance. AFEV helps active duty members as well. Temporary housing is available to spouses of enlisted members who die or who are killed on active duty. Adult dependents - typically parents of active duty members or their spouses - are eligible for permanent housing on a space-available basis. Contact Information: AFEV at 800 258 1413, visit the AFEV website at <www.afenlistedwidows.org> or email: <info@afev.us> and find more information about the benefits of the AFEV.

The Hof Orphanage, Jugendhilfehaus Saint Elisabethheim, has been in existence for more than 80 years. Services include kindergarten, nursery, social welfare, chapel and other services. Saint Elisabethheim is about a 3 minute walk from the Bahnhof and is located at Orleans Strasse 6 – 10 (Email: <StElisabeth@gmx.net>). Stop by and say hello when in Hof.

Remember playing table fussball during your younger military days in Hof? Well, with a portion of the 2013 HRA donation, Saint Elisabethheim purchased a fussball table for the children to enjoy. Be proud of your donation to the Saint Elisabethheim. Hofers, if you have any memories or photographs of your involvement with Saint Elisabethheim send them to me at <j.middendorf@comcast.net >.

Today our Armed Forces confront enemies around the world – US soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines and coast guard personnel defend freedom on station wherever and whenever they are called. We salute and keep in our prayers our current military members and acknowledge those who served in the past for their memorable contributions and countless sacrifices.

WEB MEISTER – JERRY MANGAS

Report on the Web Site ... Status quo, but with an ever changing cornucopia of various types of robot spam messages which are deleted on a regular basis. The chat room sees a little use now and again, and it can be set up for "private chat," but by invitation only. Also, from time to time, the internal addressing of the guest book is changed and that stops the spammers for a week or two until they discover the new address and the battle begins again. Even so, we seem to pick up a new “check-in” every month or so and our elite head hunting section goes after them, usually with good success.

Here's a little history of Languages used in the Hof Kaserne thru the years.

With construction beginning in 1934/35, German, of course, was the first and the continuing mainstay language used in the Kaserne. English and GI-Sprache came into use in 1945.
with the beginning of the American Occupation at the end of WW II, and many of the GI's were multilingual: German, Russian, Czech, Hungarian, Polish, and so on. The Post War Displaced Persons (DP) Camp, housed in the original E-heim barracks on the western side of the Kaserne, built and first used during the construction years, heard any one of a number of Eastern European languages and dialects, from Yiddish, or Jidditzer, immediately after the war when the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) housed Jewish concentration camp victims and refugees there in 1945 and 1946. Expellees from Bohemian Czechoslovakia were housed there, then refugees and escapees from the Ostzone, and beyond, from all over Eastern Europe after that. The DP camp was dissolved about 1985

But also heard during the war inside the Kaserne walls, and outside, in town, in a school used as a field hospital, one could hear the lilt of Castilian Spanish. As partial payment for the assistance received from Germany during the Civil War in Spain in the later 30's (Think Hemingway, Pilar and the tolling bell), Franco sent a large Freiwillige force eventually totaling about 47,000 troops. At first volunteers, then later draftees, to aid the Axis War Effort. Since Franco did not want to jeopardize his shaky "neutral" relations with the Allies, he insisted they not go as regular Spanish soldiers, but as volunteers and could only fight on the Eastern Front. The Wehrmacht dressed them and their officers in German Feldgrau uniforms, and housed and trained them in Wehrmacht tactics and military doctrine at Schmidtlar Kaserne in Hof and other Oberfrankener Kasernen as well as a 5-week course in tactics and weapons at Grafenwöhr. The volunteers were assigned into three regiments of the new 250th Infantry Division of the Heer and routed first towards the Central Front and Moscow but eventually they were sent to the northern side of the Eastern Front in 1942. To maintain some semblance of national identity, the Spanish soldiers and officers were allowed to wear their traditional bright blue or Azul shirts under the Wehrmacht gray, causing the 250th Division to be referred to in the military history books as the Blue Division. During their efforts on the Front in the struggle known in the Werhmacht as the Battle of the Frozen Flesh, first in the Leningrad area, and then, falling back under the Soviet advances to Krasny Bor, they were supplied through Hof/Saale, with a Lazarette or Field Hospital maintained in Hof till Capitulation, complete with Spanish nurses to treat the sick and wounded until at least 1944. The Division was disbanded after being decimated at Krasny Bor in 1943 and over time repatriated to Spain although a few die-hard anti-communist volunteers remained in the Wehrmacht as part of the so-called Blue Legion till the end of the war in 1945. After the war, by 1946 reports say that the Russians "released" 382 Spanish POW's and that 70 more had died while in prisons.

HOF HATS AND PAST REUNION PINS

Ladies’ Gildan Short Sleeve Scoop Neck Shirts w/Logo Design
Sizes - M, L, XL, XXL - Color - FOREST GREEN
Men’s Gildan Short Sleeve Polo Shirt w/Logo Design
Sizes - M, L, XL, XXL, XXXL - Color - FOREST GREEN
COST OF SHIRTS:
Ladies’ Scoop - $10.00 per shirt and Men’s Polo - $15.00 per shirt.

2014 HRA COLORADO SPRINGS REUNION SHIRTS

This is the logo design that will be on upper left front chest of the 2014 Colorado Springs Shirts. The Shirt Order Form is on the back of the 2014 HRA Colorado Springs Registration Form. Deadline for ordering is 1 September, 2014.

GERMAN AFFAIRS REPRESENTATIVE – ROBERT HÖRATH

We have a picture from our German Affairs Representative, Robert Hörath, taken at the St. Elisabethenheim. This is a Fußballtisch that they purchased with funds from our donation. The kids seem like they don't mind too much and it was just in time for the World Cup. I vaguely remember being pretty good at that game (or is it a failing memory that makes me think that?). Nonetheless, now they don't have to hang out in bars to play Fußball like we did.

During the 2014 Colorado Springs HRA Registration on Sunday, October 5, 2014, we will have our Hof Germany Hats on sale for $8 each. We will also have some past HRA Reunion Pins on sale for $1 each. The 2014 Colorado Springs Pins will be included in the reunion attendees registration package on Sunday. Also on sale on Sunday during registration will be our HRA Decal Sticker.
MORE LOCAL NEWS FROM THE RATHAUS

Another “newsy” item from the Rathaus. The Press Secretary for the Hofer Oberbürgermeister/Rathaus is a gentleman by the name of Rainer Krauß. He has worked with us and helped us open many doors in Hof for our past reunions. He recently became a father and when we found out about this, President, Claude Niebuhr, sent him and his wife a congratulatory card to commemorate the occasion. He was surprised and wondered how we found out about it. Here’s the email that Claude received.

We can’t tell him where we got the news from, but if the card surprised him, now he has something to really be surprised and wonder about – we got this picture of him with Marlene Sophie, his new bundle of joy. Mama, Verena, wasn’t available for a picture at the time.

Again, congratulations to Rainer and Verena on the birth of their beautiful child.

(Note: It was probably an ex-6915th guy, working for NSA and posing as a Verizon cell phone technician that got the picture with his iPhone.)

AND NOW POLITICS HAVE ARRIVED

It looks like Hof isn’t that quiet little town that we remember any more - politics have arrived. Apparently they are on the cusp of hitting the big time political circuit - no longer just the battle for Oberbürgermeister, but now worthy of Bundeskanzlerin Angela Merkel personally speaking to the citizens in the Altstadt live.

Here is the ad for the political campaign speech …

Here is a shot from the Altstadt webcam showing the podium that was erected in front of the Marienkirche. There is a big screen TV next to the podium for those in the back rows to see – just like in a rock star concerts. What you don’t see is the crowd that ran up Ludwigstraße, all the way past the Kaufhof. Apparently she is quite popular.
REFLECTIONS

Occasionally you get an email that needs to be passed on,

THE BACK NINE – Author unknown

You know ... time has a way of moving quickly and catching you unaware of the passing years. It seems just yesterday that I was young, just married and embarking on my new life with my mate. Yet in a way, it seems like eons ago, and I wonder where all the years went. I know that I lived them all. I have glimpses of how it was back then and of all my hopes and dreams.

But, here it is ... the back nine of my life and it catches me by surprise ... How did I get here so fast? Where did the years go and where did my youth go?

I remember well seeing older people through the years and thinking that those older people were years away from me and that I was only on the first hole and the back nine was so far off that I could not fathom it or imagine fully what it would be like.

But, here it is ... my friends are retired and getting gray ... they move slower and I see an older person now. Some are in better and some worse shape than me...but, I see the great change ... Not like the ones that I remember who were young and vibrant ... but, like me, their age is beginning to show and we are now those older folks that we used to see and never thought we'd become.

Each day now, I find that just getting a shower is a real target for the day! And taking a nap is not a treat anymore ... it's mandatory! Cause if I don't on my own free will ... I just fall asleep where I sit.

And so ... now I enter into this new season of my life unprepared for all the aches and pains and the loss of strength and ability to go and do things that I wish I had done but never did. But, at least I know, that though I’m on the back nine, and I'm not sure how long it will last ... this I know, that when it's over on this earth ... it's over. A new adventure will begin! Yes, I have regrets. There are things I wish I hadn't done ... things I should have done, but indeed, there are many things I'm happy to have done. It's all in a lifetime.

So, if you're not on the back nine yet ... let me remind you, that it will be here faster than you think. So, whatever you would like to accomplish in your life please do it quickly! Don't put things off too long! Life goes by quickly. So, do what you can today, as you can never be sure whether you’re on the back nine or not!

You have no promise that you will see all the seasons of your life ... so, live for today and say all the things that you want your loved ones to remember ... and hope that they appreciate and love you for all the things that you have done for them in all the years past!!

"Life" is a gift to you. The way you live your life is your gift to those who come after. Make it a fantastic one. Live it well! Enjoy today! Do something fun! Be HAPPY! Have a great day! Remember, it is health that is real wealth and not pieces of gold and silver. Live happy in 2014!

LASTLY, CONSIDER THIS:

- Your kids are becoming you ... but your grandchildren are perfect!
- Going out is good ... Coming home is better!
- You forget names ... But it's OK because some people forgot they even knew you!
- You realize you're never going to be really good at anything like golf.
- The things you used to care to do, you aren't as interested in anymore, but you really do care that you aren't as interested.
- You sleep better on a lounge chair with the TV 'ON' than in bed. It's called "pre-sleep".
- You miss the days when everything worked with just an "ON" and "OFF" switch.
- You tend to use more 4 letter words ... "what?"..."when?"... "????"
- You notice everything they sell in stores is "sleeveless"?!!!
- What used to be freckles are now liver spots.
- Everybody whispers.
- You have 3 sizes of clothes in your closet ... 2 of which you will never wear.
- But Old is good in some things: Old Songs, Old movies, and best of all, OLD FRIENDS!

Stay well, "OLD FRIEND!" Send this on to other "Old Friends!" and let them laugh in agreement. It's not what you gather, but what you scatter that tells what kind of life you have lived.

Today is the oldest you've ever been, yet the youngest you'll ever be, so enjoy this day while it lasts.

**MEMBERS PASSING**

We close this newsletter on a somber note as we acknowledge those that have passed from our midst. This is a list of members whose loss we have been informed of just since the last reunion in September of 2013. A reminder that now is the time to reconnect with our friends; it may not be possible next year. Our deepest sympathies and condolences to all the families and friends.

**Flyby list:**


**Ladies serving in Heaven:**

Heidi Beier, Mary ‘McDonald’ Freddie, Mary Lee Hartjes, Dixie Jarman, Karoline ‘Kielbania’ Kurlander, Ursula Mikelatos, and Myrtle Spicer.

**Current Board Members and Staff:**

Executive Board Members:

Claude Niebuhr - President - ccnieb@gmail.com
Dave Natalie - 1st Vice President - davenatalie@chartermi.net
Jim Riggin - 2nd Vice President - jmriggin@yahoo.com
Mel Hamill - Adjutant - melvinhamill@yahoo.com
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Phil Ruth - Membership Chairman - afnsagdret@cox.net
Jerry Mangas - Webmaster - hofreunion@dejazzd.com
Phil Murray - Newsletter Editor - hra.philm@wildblue.net
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Bill Ward - Exec Board Advisor - bward4@cfl.rr.com

Staff Members:

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