

Members, Family and Friends
of

YMSB 243
United States Marine
Corps

Are Cordially Invited To The

2009 Reunion
St. Louis, MO

To be held at the Marriott St. Louis Airport Inn on September 10th thru September 13th. Special room rates are available for attendees.

Reservations for the event must be made by individual attendees directly with Marriott reservations by calling 1-866-661-8953 or 1-877-265-8771, ask for the Marriott St. Louis Airport and identify themselves with the VMSB 243 Reunion.

For any special needs request, contact Jackie @ 314-228-9290.

For more information or suggestions for activities, please call:

Jim Slota
314-800-3539 cell
636-227-3235 home
jmslota@hotmail.com

VMSB-243

March-April 2009 Squadron Newsletter

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This is Jim Slota (son of M/Sgt John Slota) with the March-April Newsletter. As my sister Margaret informed you, I have been directed...uh...selected to chair this year's reunion.

With help from Carl DiMaria of the local Marine Corps League, contact was made with the St. Louis Airport Marriott. We are receiving very good room rates; the hotel is literally across from the airport and is being renovated. It is next to I-70 which makes it easy to get to any attraction in the Metro area. There is also a light rail station adjacent to the hotel. There is free transportation to and from the airport and the light rail station. I think we will be very comfortable there.

To make reservations call the toll free number, 1-800-228-9290. If you have any questions about the facility or special needs, call our event manager, Jackie Gaughan at 314-253-5237. Be sure to mention the VMSB-243 reunion when making reservations or speaking with Jackie.

Carl also directed me to their national headquarters where our reunion is mentioned in the March/April newsletter.

Speaking of attractions, the St. Louis area has many to choose from. There are Cardinal baseball games in town Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. To get a price break on tickets, I will need a number to order or we can buy on game day. If young people are coming, the Six Flags Amusement Park is open on weekends in September. St. Louis has a world class zoo. As of today, there is no admission charge to the zoo. If exotic trees, plants, flowers and Japanese Gardens are your thing, we have the world famous Botanical Gardens.

Excursion boats cruise the Mississippi daily. Numerous museums dot the area landscape. The hotel is about 15-20 minutes away from three casinos. And of course, there is the Arch with its Museum of Westward Expansion.

There was interest in Portland about visiting the Arch. I can look into group rates. You can ride in a "capsule" to the top of the Arch, with the museum underground below the Arch.

St. Louis has many fine restaurants in all price ranges. The Italian district, known as "The Hill," has some of the best Italian food in the country. There are also shops that make their own pasta, cheese, sauces and salami, if you would like to take something home.

It should also be mentioned that Boeing is located near the airport. F-15 and FA-18's are assembled there. I might be able to arrange a tour.

Your input is needed so don't hesitate in calling or emailing.

There is also some sad news to report. I received the following email from Spider Webb on March 4th:

"Steve Gibbens, a goldbrick pilot for three tours in the Solomons and wearer of two DFCs and seven AMs, died Tuesday in CA. To the best of my knowledge there are four pilots from the original squadron remaining: Richard Mulberry, Lou Conti, Jim Swiger and me. I became 90 on the 25th. The ranks are terribly thin. Semper Fi, Spider"

We all join Spider in celebrating the life of this American hero and wish he could be with us in September.

As some of you know, my older brother Jack is in Iraq serving on a Provincial Reconstruction Team helping local governments to change from a totalitarian form of government to a democratic government. He is at FOB Garry Owen, an Army base in Southern Iraq. . He has been a regular attendee at VMSB 243 reunions but will be unable to attend this year.

Please send any news items to my email: jmslota@hotmail.com.

Spider Webb sent a \$25 donation to help with mailing expenses. *Thank you for your generosity.* Spider is still writing his remembrances of the unit. They are on the following pages.

Until next time, keep me posted!

Jim Slota
Reunion Chairman
314-800-3539 cell
636-227-3235 home