

Silver Spur Reunion 2025
9-11 September, Branson, Missouri
After Action Report

The Thousand Hills Resort Hotel, formerly known as the Radisson, hosted our reunion in Branson again. As you know, the 119th Assault Helicopter Company veterans have agreed to have us join their reunion each year, and this was our third. We all enjoyed a private hospitality room the entire time. Soft drinks, coffee, beer, and wine were complimentary every day, and a cash bar opened in the room every day at noon. Drinks at that bar were also complimentary the evening of the final dinner, on Thursday.

After the closing dinner, the 119th conducted a raffle of donated items. Items ranged from books to model helicopters to booze to knives, and many other desirable items. Tickets are sold for \$1 each, and the 119th uses this raffle to finance much of their reunion expense. There were so many items that winners were awarded two or three items with each win.

The 119th had about 40 attendees plus their guests. Some brought family members, and nearly all had at least one guest. We all missed Spencer Gardner, the former 119th door gunner who ran their reunions for years, but he passed away before the 2024 reunion. His widow, daughter, and son now plan and run the reunions, and have vowed to continue as long as veterans attend. They have also promised that Silver Spurs are welcome. Six Silver Spurs attended this one, plus their guests. No former commanders were able to attend, for various important reasons.

The 119th formally ended their reunion Thursday night with the banquet and raffle. Chuck Oualline conducted a Memorial Ceremony for our Silver Spur fallen and missing comrades on Thursday morning. We really appreciate Roger Young's efforts in finding information and maintaining a list of our losses between reunions, and Chuck read this list to the attendees. Our fallen list still includes one whose remains may have been returned from Cambodia, but who still has not been identified (Gregory Antunano,) and he is officially classified as BNR.

We were warmly welcomed by the 119th AHC for the third time, and Silver Spurs are making new friends. The 119th meets every year, in September, at this hotel, and we have been told that we are welcome at all their future reunions. The 119th always negotiates a very low room rate. We who attended really enjoyed their hospitality. The 2026 reunion exact dates have not been determined, but will be passed on as soon as announced. It is sad to think that all of us might not be around for this next reunion. I pray it is not so. But reality and age tell me that it is likely. Each time we meet could be our last. So, don't blow off the next reunion. Don't put off attendance until the one after that. Be there. For each other. And for loads of fun, just like old times.

Chuck Oualline, 2025/2026 Assistant Reunion Chairman