

Young men in harm's way

By Craig Rullman
Correspondent

It was only after the ceremonies and dinners and storytelling were over, after the final handshakes and well wishes, after the sincere exchange of promises to build new relationships out of former enmities, that Richard Hartnack found the downtime to begin serious reflection on the importance of his trip to Vietnam (see stories page 1 and 15).

As he sat, thinking it over on the long flight home, he says he began "to get it," to understand what made his return to Vietnam important and "fascinating" and "touching" all at once.

Hartnack told *The Nugget*, "During the air war over Vietnam, it was entirely possible to lose your life at a young age. This was the time in our lives when everything lay ahead — family, career, friends, more education — everything. A rational person wouldn't do it day after day, but we all did because of the unwritten, unspoken contract we had with our fellow aviators. We all showed up to do the job because if we didn't



PHOTO COURTESY RICHARD HARTNACK

Richard Hartnack with his F-4 at Chu Lai, Republic of Vietnam, 1970.

someone else would have to carry our share.

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—Richard Hartnack

we went in harm's way. On the American side for a year. Then we went home. Indeed, we did it for each other more than for any other reason.

"The Vietnamese pilots we met were there for the duration. However long or difficult the war, they were in it until it ended or until they were killed or injured so badly they couldn't fly anymore. I realized that, despite the differences between our countries at the time, these guys were stand-up men like the guys I flew with. They would have killed us in a New York second given the chance 45 years ago. But the same is true of our guys. We all had a chance to discuss events where that happened, and good men on both sides died — too young.

"In the end, after all the death and destruction, things have worked out pretty well. Vietnam is a very successful country. The values of the people there are very close to the values of Americans after World War II. They just want to live in peace, make a home for their families, improve their standard of living, enjoy daily life, see their children and grandchildren grow and succeed and have better opportunities than they had.

"For them the war was worth it. I am glad it's turned out this way."



PHOTO COURTESY RICHARD HARTNACK

Richard Hartnack, left, next to Charlie Tutt. The photo was taken where the Chu Lai Regional Airport is today.

Funds still available for enrichment

Funds are still available for a Roundhouse Foundation Enrichment Experience Scholarship. Awards for this scholarship may be used for workshops, camps, seminars, internships or other activities in pursuit of interest and career technical education discovery. Students from grades 9-12 are eligible to receive one scholarship per year, including summer programs (subject to funding availability).

This is what previous recipients of Roundhouse Foundation Enrichment Experience Scholarships had to say about their experience:

Lauren Wattenburg said that "The (Texas Ballet Theatre Summer) intensive was my first major program far away from home for an extended amount of time, so I had to learn how to cope

through the ups and downs, while in a new place. I learned how to be more independent and responsible..."

"I took away so many things that I will use forever in my journey of life," said Alana Lukens of her experience at a UCLA Music Theatre Camp. "Musical theater has taught me more about myself and what I can do. After walking away from this camp I was inspired to continue with this side of the arts because I finally found a place where I feel I belong."

Scholarships are managed and distributed through Sisters GRO. Details and the application are available at [www.sistersgro.com / Scholarships / Local Community Scholarships](http://www.sistersgro.com/Scholarships/LocalCommunityScholarships) page. For information contact Karen Hensley at information@sistersgro.com.

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