

656TH RADAR SQUADRON NEWSLETTER

Produced by and for veterans of Saratoga Springs Air Force Station.



2016 REUNION EDITION

The third reunion of the 656th Radar Squadron was held in Branson, MO from October 3 thru 6. There were 35 paid attendees including veterans, their spouses, and guests. **Monday, the 3rd was check-in day.** Attendees picked up their nametags and met in the hospitality suite to renew old friendships and make new ones. That evening, attendees met for a reception in the hotel. An open bar and hot hors d'oeuvres were available. A drawing for valuable prizes was held including 656th caps and T-shirts, a free night at the hotel, and two pairs of show tickets.

Tuesday Morning October 4 - Attendees were picked up at the hotel by **Ride the Ducks** for a scenic tour of the Branson area and a ride on **Table Rock Lake**. Several members of the group were allowed to pilot the boat while on the lake.



Chip Norton at the helm of the Duck on Table Rock Lake.

Tuesday Afternoon October 4 – Attendees were picked up at the hotel and transported to the **Americana Theater** for a performance of **#1 Hits of the 60's & 50's too**. The fast-paced medley of songs of that era brought back many fond memories to those of us of a certain age. A very nice tribute to 656th veterans was included as part of the program. Saratoga veteran Jim Crytser was chosen from the audience to participate in a 1960's skit.



656th veteran Jim Crytser as a hippie from the 60's

Wednesday Afternoon October 5 - Shuttles transported the group to **The Showboat Branson Belle** for a dinner cruise on **Table Rock Lake**.



The Showboat Branson Belle

Prior to boarding, a brief memorial service was held to honor 656th vets who are no longer with us. After dinner the Master of Ceremonies asked audience members to participate in a Yes or No game. Contestants had to answer questions without saying yes or no within a certain time period. Our own Chip Norton met the challenge and won a prize. The show ended with a rousing musical tribute to all veterans.



John Tianen speaking at the Memorial Service



Hilda Pardee and Bill & Karen Pettigrew waiting for the show to start



Chip Norton wins the Yes or No game

Thursday Morning October 6 - The hospitality suite was open until noon so reunion attendees could say their goodbyes.



Photo courtesy of Flash Photo Branson

Top L-R Jim Crytser, John Tianen, Bob Wilsea, Bob Pinkston, John Michell, John Crumb, Orville Schroeder

Bottom L-R Dwight Pardee, Jim Micucci, Jim Scanlan, Bob Baumbach, Chip Norton, Mike Dougherty

Missing – Mike Bala

More photos of the 2016 reunion can be found on our website <http://saratogaradar.org/> Click on the link titled “2016 Reunion Photos/Videos”