



# Thunder Run

Vol. 37- NO. 1

"Together Then – Together Again"

1st Quarter, 2022

## The 11th Armored Cavalry's Veterans of Vietnam and Cambodia

As I Remember It

### First K-Troop Action in Vietnam

**What a surprise I had when the landing craft hit the beach! The ramp dropped open and there we were, weapons loaded, not ready to die just yet,...**

In May 1966 I joined K Troop, 3rd Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, Fort Meade, Maryland for further movement to Vietnam. I was originally assigned to HQ Troop, and transported to A.P. Hill, Virginia to join my unit for jungle warfare training. After completing the training my unit reported for duty in Oakland, CA for transportation to South Vietnam. K-Troop boarded the "USS Barrett," a Merchant Marine ship that was equipped to transport troops, and we spent the next 29 days at sea headed for Vietnam.

Four things stand out in my mind about that sea voyage.

1: The hour I spent vomiting over the side of the ship alongside a few other seasick individuals.

2: The time I was left below decks to

***"If you always do things the same way....."***

For all my adult life, I have been amazed at the impact that two years of military service had on me. No matter how old you are today, if you served, it is amazing how military service helped mold your life. Such was the impact of one hot, humid day in 1970 when I (who served in the 919th Combat Engineers) was leading a mine-sweep mission for M-Company (maybe 6-10 tanks on this mission). The road we were trying to clear of mines had been the "property" of the Viet Cong (VC) for about two years, if memory serves me. You could see reminders of that "ownership" as there were large and

help clean the area. The other men were required to stay topside on the bow of the ship. Except for the hour or two doing physical exercise and attending training lectures the men spent the entire day lounging on the deck machinery or lying on the cold steel deck. Our sleeping quarters were located five decks below sea level, and the area was found to be dangerously low on oxygen. When I asked one of the inspecting Marine officers why the flame on my lighter would not burn enough to light a cigarette, he immediately evacuated the area and called for repair of the fans that forced oxygen down below. The fans had been inoperable since we left port.

3: Some of the musically talented men on the ship practiced diligently before

Please turn to **K-TROOP** on page 6

small pieces of metal from local trucks and American vehicles including ACAVs and tanks strewn all over the place. Victims of mines planted by the VC.

While it is easy at times to denigrate your enemy and many people think of the VC as not being worthy, you would be making a mistake. The VC were very smart and capable. They would watch our mine-sweeps every day and learn all of our tendencies.

So, on this particular day during monsoon season, I was doing a mine sweep. I was wearing pants, boots, flack-jacket

Please turn to **SAME** on page 9

### Ambush!

Mike "Doc" Rafferty

It was around the middle of May 1970 and I had been involved in firefights the past two days in Cambodia. This day found us reconning an old logging camp which the NVA had been using for a base camp. As I recall, there were two main roads running through the area with several smaller trails radiating from them. Each platoon was operating independently. As usual, I was 3rd platoon medic.

**The ACAV had been hit by RPGs and was on fire. The crew had already pulled Lt. Zerbach (X-ray) out of the cupola and had laid him beside the road. The crew members were covered in blood**

With us were Captain Menzel's track leading our column and the troop artillery officer (X-ray) and his ACAV bringing up the rear. The jungle grew right up to the edge of the road and visibility was very limited. Suddenly I heard explosions coming from the rear of our column. The tracks immediately went into herring-bone formation and opened fire. I grabbed my aid bag and



Mike "Doc" Rafferty in the field

Please turn to **AMBUSH** on page 4





## 11th Armored Cavalry's Veterans of Vietnam and Cambodia (11ACVVC)

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*Thunder Run* covers present and future interests of the organization that includes membership and reunion information, various fund raising activities, and other items relative to the membership. Submissions are welcome and encouraged. Correspondence and inquiries concerning *Thunder Run* should be made in writing to: Editor, "Thunder Run," Peter L. Walter, 8 Tallowood Dr., Westampton, NJ 08060-3721.

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# President's Message

By Pete Walter

To my fellow Troopers, families and friends, I hope you all enjoyed a safe holiday season and a happy new year! My wish for all of us in 2022 is to see the end of the COVID pandemic and a return to a sense of normalcy in our lives.

This message will be shorter than usual as we strive to get Thunder Run to you in less time than in the past.

Some issues that need to be addressed in this note are:

## 11th ACVVC 2022 Calendar Delay

I apologize to everyone for the delay in the mailing of the 2022 calendar. I was late in getting my input to the printer and as a result other projects were in their system before ours. Additionally, we experienced delays in paper supplies and the calendar was not mailed until January 18. This delay is primarily my fault and I accept full responsibility for this problem. As your President I ask that you accept my sincere apology for the delay. For those of you who have voiced your opinion that I have taken on too many jobs, I hear you and my fellow Officers hear you. We have discussed ways to lighten the workload of the President and I thank my fellow Officers for their input and their willingness to help me in the production of our calendar and Thunder Run. Thank you all for your patience and understanding. Additionally, this will be my last year as your President. I told my fellow Officers when I accepted the nomination for President in 2018 that I would run for one term and if I felt qualified I would run for a second term but no more. Serving as your President has been an honor and privilege – it is also my greatest challenge! On September 10 at the Birmingham reunion, you will elect a new President. I am positive he will do a great job.

## 2022 11th ACVVC Reunion in Birmingham, Alabama

Vice President and Reunion Chairman Frank Church has a detailed article on the reunion, so I'll cover just the essentials:

- **Dates:** Sep 7 – 11, 2022
- **Location:** Sheraton Birmingham Hotel 2101 Richard Arrington Blvd N, Birmingham, AL 35203

- **Rate:** \$125
- **Reunion Registration Fee:** \$100 per person

Please read all of Frank's article to get all the details.

We hope the pandemic will be under control by then and we expect a good turnout. This will be our first reunion in Alabama, and I think we are all looking forward to visiting the "Heart of Dixie".

At the Dallas reunion last summer, the membership voted to go back to Grand Rapids, Michigan in 2023. We had a great time there in 2018 and I expect the same in 2023.

In a recent meeting the Officers discussed our Blackhorse Memorial located at the entrance to Fort Benning in Columbus, Georgia. As you know, our memorial was sculpted from native stone in Vietnam, shipped to the United States after the war and became the central monument and focal point of the Armor Memorial Park at Fort Knox. We voted to move it to Fort Benning when Armor training was relocated there. We unveiled it at our reunion in Columbus, GA in 2015. We all recognize we are now "old soldiers" and we hope we can have at least one more reunion where we can visit our beloved Blackhorse Memorial. To that end, we agreed it would be a good time to go back to Fort Benning/Columbus in 2024. We will be providing details during the coming year and at the Birmingham reunion we will present Columbus, Georgia as a choice for

2024. Think about it Troopers, we hope you all agree with us that we should try to visit our memorial in two years.

## Reunion Assistance Fund

It is designed to help Trooper/s and their caregivers attend a reunion when they cannot afford to do so on their own. Currently it is well funded and has been used sparingly in recent years as there have been very few requests made. If you are donating annually to the 11th ACVVC, you may want to consider choosing the Scholarship Fund or the General Fund. We will be providing more information on this fund in future issues of Thunder Run.

## Address and Data Collection

We have a notice in every issue of *Thunder Run* reminding you to update your address with our Membership Chm. Allen Hathaway. Allen works daily to keep this file current, but he cannot do it without your help, so please send any address, phone or email change to Allen ASAP. As more of us transition to cell phones, many of us drop our landlines. We also change email servers and may forget to inform the 11th ACVVC. To keep Thunder Run and the calendar coming to you, we need your address! Help us help you.

I hope you all have a great 2022 and I look forward to seeing you in Birmingham in September!

"ALLONS!"

### Brief Explanation of the Reunion Assistance Fund

**Eligibility:** Troopers and Survivors of our KIAs. Qualified applicants will be given one or more of the following, depending on the number of requests, funds available and the degree of assistance needed:

1. A room at the host hotel for one or two nights during the reunion weekend.
2. Funds for auto, tickets for airfare or other transportation (bus fare or train fare).
3. Registration fees.
4. Meals or food allowance.

**Acceptance:** The Trooper or the KIA's immediate family members (defined as parents, siblings, children, widows and grandchildren) requesting financial assistance to attend a Reunion of the 11th ACVVC, must:

Do so in writing to the Secretary or the President. The applicant should describe their need for assistance, briefly stating their financial situation (i.e., job, income, family, or other relevant facts). The President of 11th ACVVC will decide whom and how much assistance will be given to a Trooper or Survivor of a KIA

# The Irony of It All

By Joe Birge, 1 Trp. 3/11 ACR 67-68

I was drafted into the Army in April 1967. It was exciting for me because it was going to be my first airplane ride. We flew from Denver, CO. to Louisville, KY. Upon landing, we were immediately transferred by bus to Ft. Campbell. Exiting the bus, I got to meet my “new mom” in the form of a drill sergeant. He was an expert on harassment and torture, but I survived him and his crew. After basic, I was bussed to Ft. Knox for AIT. There I learned all about being an eleven delta (reconnaissance).

Basic and AIT were a hot, humid, bug-ridden ordeal. When I completed my training, I got a week’s leave to return home in Colorado (From heat and humidity to snow and dryness). At the end of leave, my brother drove me to the airport in a blinding snow-

storm. I flew to San Francisco, CA. landing in balmy weather and joined a group of FNG’s. From San Francisco, CA. it was on to Honolulu, HI. At the Honolulu airport, we deplaned for thirty minutes to refuel. When we were boarding our flight, another plane was unloading arrivals from Vietnam. They looked old and haggard. “Was that going to be our fate exiting the war?” I wondered.

After a long plane trip, with a stopover in Manila, we entered into Vietnam airspace. The pilot turned off all the lights and informed us that we were being fired at. Out the window you could see the gun bursts. I thought that I was going to die on that plane. So much for excitement of flying on a plane! At that moment, the majority of passengers lit up joints! It became very smoky in the cabin, but no one was afraid of discipline.

What were the authorities going to do? Send us to jail!

We landed, safely, at the Tan Son Nhut airfield. When we deplaned, we were instructed to line up in formation. I couldn’t believe how quiet and beautiful the night was. Vietnam was going to be a very peaceful time or so I thought!

In Tan Son Nhut, I waited for over a week to be assigned to a unit. Finally, I received word that I was going to Xuan Loc to be with I troop of the 11th ACR. I took my duffel bag and ran out to a waiting “herky bird”. I jumped into the empty hold of the plane, and we took off. After a short time, our plane headed down into a clearing of the thick tree growth. The plane slowed down and taxied in the clearing. The pilot shouted for me to jump out with my bag. When I exited, the pilot gunned the plane and took off out of sight.

I was alone with the setting sun and fear overcame me. Suddenly, my heart was beating loud! I could hear the sound of an approaching jeep. Two men were seated in the front and told me to jump in the back. We drove to my new home, Xuan Loc. *Welcome to Vietnam!*

I lasted six months in Vietnam. My second wound was the “million-dollar ticket home”. I was hospitalized and transferred to several hospitals in the states. My final destination was Ft. Carson, CO. Sixty miles from home!

Fast forward to 1995, I was doing some research on fellow soldiers that I had served with. I came across the name of my commander in Vietnam. He worked for the AG’s office in Denver and had a law firm in Greeley, CO. What a small world!

I met my commander, Lt William “Bill” Suhre, at a local bar in Denver. It was a great reunion seeing a fellow brother! He still looked the same after so many years. Bill was a hell of a leader who cared deeply for all of us. We all were lucky to have him!

In the bar Bill and I reflected about Vietnam. We came to the conclusion that most of our time was spent in combat.

So much for a peaceful time in Vietnam!

**Irony at its best!**

*NOTE: Irony - a state of affairs or an event that seems deliberately contrary to what one expects and is often amusing as a result.*

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## AMBUSH from page 1

jumped off my track and ran back through our line of vehicles until I reached X-ray’s track.

The ACAV had been hit by RPGs and was on fire. The crew had already pulled Lt. Zerbach (X-ray) out of the cupola and had laid him beside the road. The crew members were covered in blood due to the shrapnel injuries they had sustained but I could tell the lieutenant was the most seriously injured. There was a gaping hole in his left leg, and he had a head injury. I splinted the wounded leg to his right leg and bandaged the head wound as he lay in the dusty road.

All this time our machine guns continued firing and the noise was deafening. Meanwhile Lt. Zerbach’s crew helped me make him more comfortable and they encouraged him even though they were all wounded themselves.

Finally, we stopped firing but we were still in a difficult situation. We only had six undamaged vehicles and we didn’t know how many NVA troops might still be nearby. Although I didn’t know it, at that moment help was on the way. 2nd platoon was racing towards our position from one direction and F troop coming to us from another. I took stock of my responsibilities and found I had five wounded although the lieutenant was the only man who could not walk. I was in the process of bandaging the shrapnel wounds of the crew members when some-

one yelled “X-ray’s track is moving!” I looked over my shoulder and saw the abandoned ACAV moving under its own power directly toward us! Flames were leaping out of the cupola and driver’s hatch, and I could hear ammunition exploding inside the track. We quickly picked up the lieutenant and moved him out of the path of the vehicle. The burning track ground to a halt as it ran off the road and into the thick jungle. The engine must have somehow been thrown into first gear by the explosions.

I was ordered to load our casualties on our tracks as we were going to meet F troop and have them escort us to an LZ where our wounded could be dusted off. There was no place a helicopter could land safely where we were. I was worried about Lt. Zerbach. He was in a lot of pain and the long, bumpy ride wouldn’t make it any easier for him. We placed his stretcher in my ACAV and I sat beside him as we pulled away from the ambush site. I tried to give him a morphine injection but he refused it. I held one of his hands and gave him drinks of water when he asked for them. He didn’t lose consciousness and held up pretty well as it took us almost an hour of rough travel to reach the LZ. A medevac chopper was waiting for us when we arrived, and we quickly put the wounded men on it.

Many years later I learned Lt. Zerbach survived his injuries.

# State of the Reunion

## 1st Quarter 2022

Another year is here, and another Reunion is coming up. Clear your calendar for:

**The 37th 11th ACCVC Annual Reunion  
September 5th-11th, 2022 Birmingham Sheraton  
2101 Richard Arrington Jr. Blvd North  
Birmingham, Alabama 35203**

**Reservations by phone-205-324-5000. Be sure to tell the reservations agent that you are with the 11th ACVVC, group code VE Reservations online go to: <https://book.passkey.com/event/50238985/owner/16607/home>**

**The room rate is \$125 + taxes per night, good for 3 days prior to the 5th and 3 days after the 11th. Parking is \$8 per night.**

**Hotel reservation cut off is Aug.8, 2022 Reunion registration fee is \$100, the cut off is Aug. 8, 2022**

Reunion registrations cancelled after August 29, 2022, cannot be refunded. This is the date all numbers must be submitted to the hotel and funds are committed. Please abide by these dates it makes the Officer's and BOD's jobs much easier and saves you money. If you cancel later than Aug. 29 your registration fee must stay in the reunion account. Cancellations prior to that will be refunded or moved to the account of your choice.

Service dogs are welcome but please bring all your valid documentation to avoid any unnecessary questioning. Pets are allowed for \$50 per night, max of 2.

We do get a 20% discount in select hotel outlets. This seems to be overlooked each year so either copy or cut from the *Thunder Run*, the following:

This coupon will also be in your registration pack. Please remember to use it, just your ID tag may not be enough. Do not turn it over to the Server, it is good for as many times as you want to use it during the reunion dates. Please tip as though there is no discount. Servers will not proactively give you the discount if it cuts into their gratuity. Handwritten coupons will not be accepted.

Even though Covid 19 and its variants are still prominent in the news we are planning to have another great reunion. The turnout last year in Dallas was proof that you, the members, and families, are still up to getting together and having a great time. We had 600 in attendance, down from past reunions but is probably the approximate number expected for the future. We are getting older and travel is a little harder to deal with and more members are going to Fiddlers Green, so don't put off coming to reunions until next year. There are 6 restaurants just outside the entrance to the hotel all with different menus and prices. Among the many things to see and do in Birmingham is the Barber Vintage Motorcycle Museum, a really cool place and a must see. There is the Alabama Veterans Memorial, Vulcan Park and Museum, a Baseball Museum, Alabama Sports Hall of Fame, the oldest baseball park in the U.S., several botanical gardens, a Zoo, several Civil Rights historical sites and a museum of flight featuring the Tuskegee Airman. Several members have called me about not being able to make reservations at the phone number provided. This happens every year. Reservations are farmed out and the knowledge of the individual agent is often limited at best. Just keep trying and let me know if you cannot get your reservation made. Stay safe, stay well. See you in Birmingham.

*Frank Church, Reunion Chairman*

### 11th ACVVC Discount Coupon

The holder is entitled to a 20% discount on food purchases at:

**Casey's Sports Bar, Coffee Shop, Atrium Café**

Per contract with the Sheraton Birmingham

### MOVING?

**We want you to get your copy of *Thunder Run* without a lot of trouble.** Complete this form and mail it to: 11th ACVVC Membership Update, Allen Hathaway, 13194 Rettew Dr., Manassas, VA 20112; Email [11thcav1966@Comcast.net](mailto:11thcav1966@Comcast.net)



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Old Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

New Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Effective Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### The Order of the Spur

Those troopers who served with the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment in Vietnam and wish to receive a Spur Certificate should submit their NAME, RANK (highest in Vietnam), UNIT and DATES along with MAILING ADDRESS to:

**ALLEN HATHAWAY  
13194 RETTEW DR.  
MANASSAS, VA 20112**

putting on a great show for us. Eventually I learned that the original 11th ACR troopers on the two boats that transported the Regiment to Vietnam were referred to as the “Boat People” by those who came over later. Most troops were transported by aircraft.

4: The daily exercises and training sessions on one of the upper decks included lectures about various dangers to be avoided once we were in Vietnam. We were warned about land mines, poison punji stakes and avoiding congregating around obstacles, such as a cut roadway. “Charlie,” Viet Cong fighters, might wait until several men gathered in the kill zone before firing their weapons or exploding a mine.

I was reassigned from Headquarters Platoon to the First Platoon after arriving in Vietnam. I was an M-60 Machine gunner on the right side of the Platoon Sergeant’s ACAV (Armored Cavalry Assault Vehicle). SP/4 Jimmy Force, the Platoon Medic, manned the left side M-60.

On arrival at a port in South Vietnam in September 1966, I spent part of a sleepless night on the open bow of the ship watching the brilliant explosions and flares exploding inland; they were visible because of the total blackness that can occur at night that close to the equator. I wondered what it was going to be like trying to avoid being killed “over there.” I continued to be quite concerned about that danger the next morning as we were being off-loaded onto landing craft. About 50 men were on each craft, fully combat loaded with packs on our backs, grenades on our belts and live ammunition in our M-16 rifles. I do not remember anyone telling us much about what to expect so I, for one, expected the worst. I had watched enough war movies by then to make me very nervous about an amphibious landing on a foreign beach.

What a surprise I had when the landing craft hit the beach! The ramp dropped open and there we were, weapons loaded, not ready to die just yet, met by cameras, newsmen, and American soldiers standing around idly watching us land.

“NEWS FLASH: Vung Tao, U.S Rest

**I later also heard Captain Hoffman had shrapnel in his behind. Although, because of my warped sense of humor, I found that amusing, the gravity of the moment overrode any possible comedy in the situation.**

and Recreation resort. 11th Armored Cavalry lands on South Vietnamese resort beach.” I have often thought about that event as having the potential of reckless disregard for innocent lives. I think they should have told me, an armed and “concerned,” somewhat insecure trooper, where we were and what to expect. Maybe I was the only one uninformed, but I could have easily shot someone. After landing we loaded onto cargo trucks and were transported to an airfield, loaded on to C-130 aircraft and flown to Ton Son Knut Airforce Base.

I remember being crammed into the cargo plane packed in like sardines. We were standing shoulder to shoulder and someone outside was pushing arms and legs out of the path of the closing ramp door to prevent cut off or broken limbs. At Tan Son Knut we climbed on to 5-ton tractor-trailer cargo trucks. They took us some distance from there and dropped us off in the middle of what looked like “Nowhere.” We were at our temporary base camp at Long Bien, an absolutely void, flat area that had been cleared, leveled, and bared of any vegetation or man-made object. Fortunately, the weather was dry for the next few months. What a mud hole it could have been.

I spent the next few days digging fox holes and trenches and laying concertina wire for a perimeter line of defense. Not far away an ammo dump was sabotaged, and I watched and listened while the munitions exploded.

After I was assigned to the 1st platoon and our ACAVs arrived with our crew-served weapons (50-Caliber and M-60 machine guns), ammo, and other gear, we prepared the ACAVs for action and went out to test-fire the weapons, where two memorable things happened.

1: My M-60 machine gun malfunctioned. The gas plug that should have

been safety-wired had fallen out of the weapon. The missing gas plug prevented the exploding gases from injecting the next round to be fired. It scared me to think about that happening under fire.

2: SFC Bourgeois, the 1st Platoon Sergeant, K Troop was observing the test firing of our M-79 grenade launcher from his 50-caliber gun position in the turret at the top-center of the ACAV. I was looking on from my position behind my M-60 gun-mount. As the grenade exploded several yards ahead a small speck of shrapnel hit the very tip of SFC Bourgeois’ nose. The shrapnel caused very little damage or bleeding, but it left SFC Bourgeois with a tiny scar on his nose and the permanent nickname, “BEAK.” I can still hear the crackling sound of the radios: “BEAK this is Six, over.” And the response: “Six this is BEAK, over.” Six being the company commander and “BEAK” replacing the call sign for SFC Bourgeois. After preparing for action we were assigned convoy security duties, escorting supply trucks and fuel tankers along the main supply route to their destination.

I have been unable to find an after-action report that describes the following event. The K-Troop commanding officer, Captain Hoffman, and I believe it was the squadron Executive Officer, were wounded in action. This happened around November 1966 before we moved from Long Bien to Xuan Loc, another desolate area like Long Bien.

My platoon was stalled in a herring-bone formation behind our scout ACAV. The Viet Cong had cut a ditch across the narrow dirt road we were on and we were anticipating some hostile fire. After some minutes of no activity several senior members began congregating around the cut in the road. They were possibly some of the same men who had lectured us on the ship weeks earlier about the danger of

congregating, because “Charlie” would wait patiently for more men to assemble in the kill zone. Eventually Captain Hoffman joined them. Soon after that the Squadron XO landed his observation helicopter and joined the others up front. The decision was made to call in a bridge launcher to span the cut in the road, allowing the vehicles to proceed. So, we waited for the bridge to arrive.

True to the lecturers’ predictions, “Charlie” did wait patiently, and suddenly all hell broke loose. A Claymore mine went off first with a very loud explosion, wounding the Captain and XO, along with several other men. Then rifle fire began. I heard what might have been incoming mortar rounds and automatic weapons firing also.

A sergeant ran up to my ACAV ordering me to get my M-60 out of the mount, grab a box of ammo and follow him. Running down the middle of the road to the front, I set-up a defensive position on the edge of the clearing where I could see and presumably help protect the bleeding men that were littering the ground nearby. As I lay there with my M-60 at the ready I realized I was soaking wet from head to toe from sweat and possible evacuation of the bladder. I looked over and saw the XO lying there among the wounded.

Medevac choppers were on the way. The XO raised up on one elbow, one arm waving in the air yelling, “Give first priority to the wounded.” “Give first priority to the wounded.”

I am certain that the XO had the well-being of his wounded men uppermost in his mind at the time. But I was struck by the incongruity, the almost hilarious thought I had: “Give first priority to the wounded,” while he was obviously wounded himself.

I later also heard Captain Hoffman had shrapnel in his behind. Although, because of my warped sense of humor, I found that amusing, the gravity of the moment overrode any possible comedy in the situation. The ambush was ever-present in my mind for the rest of my tour in Vietnam.

Having experienced that trauma early in my days in Vietnam set me up for months of constant dread day after tedious day, dreading the moment it

would happen again before I could get the hell out of there alive. I only remember spending three days in a base camp after leaving Long Bien. The rest of the time was spent on constant patrol, supporting one infantry mission after the next with no breaks in between. We were in the boonies seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day for at least six months straight, maybe longer. I was told that we were the only armored reconnaissance unit in the country at that time, so we were utilized to the max.

I sometimes felt a little bit cowardly because of my fear and had some survival

guilt after I came home. But after months of rap sessions, I came to believe that many heroes must have acted courageously regardless of how fearful it was for them. I am certainly not a hero, nor have I ever aspired to be one, but if you were ever scared enough that you could have peed down your leg, welcome to the club. ALLONS.

*Harry R. McDonald, SFC E7, Ret.  
Formerly SP/5, 1st Platoon, 3rd Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment.*

*Email: rayburnhrm@gmail.com*

## Chi-com anti-tank



...If You Find It



If You Don't Find It.....

**Round and green about 25 pounds, buried shallow in the ground  
Made of metal, hard to see hard to find, deadly if missed in a sweep  
Some were found and blew in place, some were not and blew in your face**

**An explosion so loud that you can no longer hear  
A light so bright you can no longer see  
A force driven through your body that leaves you numb**

**Sound returns as a ringing in the ears  
The bright light dims to darkness and shades of gray  
The numbness becomes a tingling then a full body ache**

**The headache subsides, your vision clears, the body recovers  
Your'e able to go on for now, the real pain is yet to come**

*Frank Church G Trp 69/70*

# Show Your Pride



Roy Edmonds of Bullard, Texas (HHT, 3/11, 1970-71) shows his Blackhorse Pride on his well decorated Jeep Gladiator, below. At right, Nick Soehnlén of Beach City, Ohio (I Trp, 3/11, 1969) shows his Blackhorse Pride on his 1949 Harley-Davidson Hummer, now “up for the winter.”



Ken Jankel, of Redding, California (B Trp, 66-67) shows his pride on his BMW , above and Harley right.





# 2022 Elections

By Greg Mason  
Secretary-Pro Tem, 11th ACVVC

Four positions will be up for election this year during the General Membership Meeting to be held Saturday morning, September 10th, during the 2022 Reunion. The four positions are President, Secretary and one Director.

The President and Secretary will serve two-year terms beginning January 1, 2023, and ending December 31, 2024. The Director will serve a three-year term beginning January 1, 2023, and ending December 31, 2025.

A special election will be held to fill the unexpired term of Secretary Jerry Beamon, who resigned earlier this year. An election to fill the office of Secretary (vacated by the resignation of Jerry Beamon) on a pro tem basis was held in October 2021 among the incumbent Officers and Directors and Greg Mason was elected until a special election that will be held at the 2022 reunion to fill the

unexpired term for the period ending December 31, 2022.

All candidates must be Life Members of the 11th ACVVC. Candidates will have an equal opportunity to state their qualifications at the General Membership Meeting. The elected candidates must be able to attend the annual reunion and two Board Meetings each year of their elected term.

The elected candidates must be able to communicate by e-mail with the other Board members and be able to help the Board make decisions on a variety of organizational matters. Each candidate must be highly organized and be able to commit time and energy to a specific project or committee as directed by the President. Excellent skills in using Microsoft Word and Excel are required in order to prepare reports and other documents required of all positions.

The position of President requires considerable time and superb organizational

skills. The President needs to frequently multi-task in his responsibility to oversee all projects, programs, and activities of the organization.

Candidates for Secretary should be able to intently follow and record organized minutes, summarize reports, actions and decisions from official meetings, and maintain records of the 11th ACVVC and its numerous projects. He should have strong language and writing skills and know basic Robert's Rules of Order. Information management skills on a computer are required.

The Directors are expected to commit themselves to a specific area of interest within the 11th ACVVC or as directed by the President.

Nominations for these positions should be submitted in writing to the Secretary or submitted from the floor at the General Membership meeting. Please consider participating on the Board of Directors serving the 11th ACVVC.

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## SAME from page 1

and helmet, No shirt. The driver of the lead M-48 tank who was probably no more than 10 feet behind me, was playing music on his transistor radio. And I started to listen to one particular song that became my all-time favorite, as every time I would hear it for decades to come, I thought about this experience. Crystal Blue Persuasion by Tommy James and the Shondells. *Look over yonder. What do you see? The sun is a-rising most definitely.....*

So, we came around a bend in the road and I see a huge mud puddle in the middle of the road with the water level about 18-24 inches or more, I would guess. And since the jungle was very wet because of the rainy season and our tracks could not get off the road because it was a swamp, what we usually did was have the mine-sweepers protect their equipment from getting wet by walking around the water and then having our tracks go plowing through the mud puddle and continue on their way. Not this day!

So I am sweeping the road, listening to

Crystal Blue Persuasion as well as hearing ping... ping.... ping, which is the noise that my metal detector was generating when we reach this large mud puddle. What to do? I wish I could say that I had thought it through completely and had come to the best conclusion for my actions, but I can't. It was hot and humid, and I see a large body of water on the road. So what do I do, I hold up the tanks by raising my hand into a fist, take off my equipment including flack-jacket, helmet and detecting equipment and take a running start and jump into the water.

Sometimes in life it is better to be lucky than good! I was about to experience the perfect example of the phrase: If you always do things the same way, your enemy (or business competitors) will take full advantage. I landed on something hard not soft, as I had expected. It was an anti-tank mine. Fortunately for me, I was a skinny runt weighing about 135 pounds and not a threat to ignite it. But all the tanks behind me would have.

So I backed off the mine that I had

jumped on and lay down in the road with my face almost in the water, as I worked to dig the mine out and pull it from the large puddle. Then I discovered that it was not going to be as easy as I had thought because the VC had double stacked two mines and had staked them down in the water waiting for the "do it the same way Americans". And while all of this is going on, the tankers in the first couple of tracks are popping out of their tank, white as ghosts, because they realized their wacky mine-sweeper had found something unexpected when he jumped into the water instead of doing it the way we had always done it by walking around the puddle. All of us realized on that day that our guardian angel was working overtime.

This experience served me well in my entire business career, as I thought of the learning lesson of thinking outside of the box. Tommy James' words resonated with me: So don't give up now. So easy to find. Just look to your soul, and open your mind.....

SSG Ross Glatzer

# G Troop, 2/11ACR - Fight on 19 May 1971

I was serving as 2<sup>nd</sup> platoon leader in G Troop, 2<sup>nd</sup> Squadron, 11<sup>th</sup> Armored Cavalry Regiment during the contact on 19 May 1971 northeast of Trang Bang, Hau Nghia Province, South Vietnam. The following are my personal recollections of this event (37 years after the fact). During my tour with the Blackhorse I maintained a 1:100,000 map on which I often posted where we operated. I referred to this map during my review of this operation. My recollections are those of a platoon leader whose eye witness view stretched only about as far as the first terrain inter-visibility line.

During this time G Troop was operating out of Fire Support Base (FSB) Warrior. The Squadron's three ground troops rotated FSB security and the troop securing the FSB conducted daily local reconnaissance in force (RIF) missions. Normally, the entire Troop returned each evening to secure the FSB.

I recall that CPT Courtney Turner, G Troop commander, commented at the operations order brief the evening of 18 May for the next day's mission that at the squadron order brief, the intelligence officer (S2) noted that 19 May was Ho Chi Minh's birthday and we should remain especially alert.

Shortly after departing FSB Warrior on the morning of 19 May, CPT Turner radioed that a small group of South Vietnamese Regional Forces had engaged in a short contact with several enemy soldiers who retired to a wooded area about 2 kilometers (KM) northeast of Trang Bang. We executed a rapid road march to this location and linked up with an element of Regional Forces.

CPT Turner sent my platoon (2<sup>nd</sup> platoon) south along the west side of the objective (there was a creek running north-south within this wooded area) to set up a blocking position. His intent was to execute a "hammer and anvil" tactic – 2<sup>nd</sup> platoon as the anvil and he, along with 1<sup>st</sup> platoon and the Regional Forces infantry, the hammer. They would attack south through the wooded



**ACAVs of the 3rd Squadron 11th Armored Cavalry assume a herringbone formation during Operation Cedar Falls. This formation gave vehicles optimal all-round firepower in the event of an ambush in a restricted area.**

area and push any enemy toward us.

We proceeded south paralleling the wood line about 200 meters out from the woods and creek. The squadron operations officer (S3) was overhead in an OH6 helicopter, came up on the G Troop net and advised me to set up the blocking position where he marked it with a smoke grenade. As we proceeded south, our Vietnamese Kit Carson scout noticed several small signs posted on bushes warning of mines. He had previously operated in this area with the 3/4 Cav of the US 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division and advised this was a "number 10" area and they had always gotten into a fight here.

The S3 marked where he wanted my platoon to set up with yellow smoke. We executed a left flank movement, orienting east, and headed toward the wood line in a platoon line formation. As we got within about 25 meters of the wood line there was a big explosion in

front of the Armored Cavalry Assault Vehicle (ACAV) immediately to my right. I thought it had hit a mine, but almost immediately we were engaged by several rocket propelled grenades (RPG) and automatic weapons fire. The ACAV had in fact been struck by an RPG, hitting the front slope just below the engine intake grille on top of the vehicle. Three of the four crewmen on board were wounded, one critically and two with minor injuries (the driver sustained major head trauma as the warhead exploded only a couple of feet from him). Three of the four crewmen exited the vehicle and climbed aboard adjacent platoon tracks.

The platoon responded with massed suppressive fires and proceeded to back out of the kill zone. All indications were that the driver, who was still in the vehicle, had been killed in action (KIA). As we backed out we continued to receive RPG and automatic weapons fire. An RPG exploded just to the right of my

vehicle and I was wounded in my right arm and shoulder (my flak jacket and CVC helmet protecting me from serious injury). We moved back to where we had executed our left flank movement and set up, continued to engage the wood line, called for a medivac for our wounded and began coordinating artillery fire from FSB Warrior through CPT Turner.

CPT Turner ordered me to hold our position and advised he was enroute with 1<sup>st</sup> platoon and the Regional Forces infantry. I adjusted artillery fire on the wood line and creek. When CPT Turner arrived he continued the artillery suppression, requested tactical air support and organized an attack to go in and retrieve the crewman and the damaged vehicle. He ordered us into a wedge formation with my platoon forming the right leg of the wedge, 1<sup>st</sup> platoon the left, CPT Turner in the middle and the Regional Forces infantry following behind our vehicles. At this time we observed the damaged vehicle attempting to move, indicating the driver was not KIA. G-21, the crew displaying extreme gallantry under intense enemy fire, drove forward to the damaged vehicle. The troop recognized their effort to rescue their wounded buddy and provided covering fire into the wood line. Two crewmen from G-21 dismounted their vehicle, climbed aboard the damaged ACAV, retrieved the gravely wounded trooper and returned in their vehicle to our formation. The wounded soldier was medivaced and survived though he lost sight in both eyes.

CPT Turner then initiated the attack to retrieve the damaged ACAV. His intent was the tip of the wedge formation to orient on the damaged ACAV and once the formation pushed into the wood line the vehicle would be hooked up and towed back. As we approached the wood line, we were engaged by enemy fire more intense than experienced in the initial contact. As the Regional Forces began taking casualties, especially from RPGs which missed our vehicles, CPT Turner ordered us to withdraw to our start positions. At this time the air strikes he had previously requested arrived on station. He continued to work the

wood line with 155mm and 8 inch artillery, lifted these fires and tactical air strikes hit the wood line with bombs and napalm.

Air scouts from the squadron's air troop attempted to conduct battle damage assessment after the air strikes but were driven back by intense fire. Upon completion of the air strikes, CPT Turner immediately initiated a second attack to retrieve the damaged ACAV (due to the intensity of the enemy fire, the RF infantry remained at our start point tending to their wounded and reorganizing). Again, we were engaged with intense RPG and automatic weapons fire. CPT Turner ordered us to withdraw and called in additional and sustained artillery and air strikes on the enemy position.

Upon completion of this series of air strikes, CPT Turner ordered a third attack on the enemy position. This time we were successful in retrieving the damaged vehicle.

As darkness was approaching, our mission priority shifted to returning to FSB Warrior to provide its security for the night. We proceeded along the road network back north toward Warrior with 2<sup>nd</sup> platoon last in the march column.

As the troop moved through a small village (I don't recall its name), an RPG was fired at the tail of the column but missed its target. The restraint exhibited by our troopers was extraordinary. Rules of engagement clearly allowed us to return fire. However, everyone realized the probable impact on the civilians in the village and not one round was fired. The troop had expended most of its ammunition during the day's fight and an emergency resupply by CH-47 helicopters met us at the FSB. Upon closing Warrior the Troop assumed its defensive positions and rearmed.

The following morning, 20 May, the G Troop returned to where the previous day's fight had occurred. We pushed through the area without enemy contact (though CPT Turner and a crewman on my ACAV were slightly wounded by a booby trap denoted by the track of one of our vehicles). The area contained an extensive bunker complex dug into both sides of the creek in the wooded area that had been the troop's objective.

*MICHAEL H. TAYLOR*  
*Major General (Retired)*  
*G-26*  
*12 July 2008*



A M113 ACAV in Vietnam, 1966

# 11TH ACVVC DONATIONS

Donor Levels: Platinum Level \$500+ Gold Level \$100-\$499 Silver Level \$50-\$99 Bronze Level \$1-\$49

Members donations are used for the sole purpose for which they are intended. Whether it be for Scholarship, Reunion Assistance, Memorial or the General Fund, member donations are used to support that specific fund.

## General Fund

### Gold Level

Glenn, James  
Traner, James

## Scholarship Fund

### Platinum Level

Smith, Dale  
Taylor, Michael  
Walter, Peter

### Gold Level

Anonymous  
Beard, James  
Cartwright, Wavely  
Dougherty, Bret & Sherry  
In Memory of Mary Reynolds  
Drake, Charles  
Glenn, James  
Grosh, Carol  
In Memory of Paul R. Grosh, MD

Hain, James  
Imhoff, Earl & Melanie  
Reynolds, Lance & Lisa  
Reynolds, Linda  
In Memory of Mary Reynolds  
Rexinger, Elwyn  
Richman, Deborah  
Traner, James  
Tredennick, Susan & Nick

### Silver Level

Auxiliary Unit 127, American Legion  
In Memory of Mary Reynolds  
Brockwell, Ronald  
Childers, William  
Miner, Russell & Ruth Ann  
In Memory of Mary Reynolds  
Kotwica, Jerome  
Wardrope, Scott

### Bronze Level

Gathe, Wilbur  
Hunt, William & Tessie

In Honor & Memory of Paul R. Grosh  
Kellerman, Ray & Marlene  
Ebersohl, Charles & Deanna  
Stephens/Reynolds, Howard & Patricia  
In Memory of Mary Reynolds

## Assistance Fund

### Gold Level

Glenn, James  
Grosh, Carol  
In Memory of Paul R. Grosh, MD

## Memorial Fund

### Gold Level

Glenn, James  
Koch, Thomas

## Calendar Fund

### Gold Level

Anderson, Graig

Brockwell, Ronald  
Nash, William  
O'Dell, Dale  
In Memory of Richard O'Dell  
Tallent, James  
White, James

## Silver Level

Brewer, James  
Charles, Gale  
Gathe, Wilbur

## Bronze Level

Carpenter, Jess  
Geller, James  
Hans, Owen  
Jack, Fred  
Main, James  
Spangler, Robert

# 11 ACVVC Donations for 2021

By Ollie Pickral, Treasurer

For year 2021, our Treasury received a record number of donations from our membership for our Scholarship Fund. As you are aware, donations for our scholarship fund comes from four sources: calendar donations, cash donations, the annual raffle and our silent auction. These sources allow us to award scholarships to the children of our members and grandchildren in the amount of \$3,000 each (The outstanding scholar receives a \$5,000 scholarship).

For 2021, a record number of contributors and donation amounts were received from the calendar! 1,800 troopers contributed \$98,241.00 which have broken all records thus far.

Because of your generous donations from sources noted above, it allowed us to award 55 scholarships to our member's children and grandchildren for 2021.

As we start the new year, your 2022 calendar donations are pouring in and we hope to exceed last year's amount. Remember, monetary donations to 11 ACVVC are tax deductible.

We have surpassed \$2 million dollars in giving scholarships

to our children and grandchildren for higher education. I don't know of any other Army unit organization that can claim that from pure donations from its membership. As I've stated in the past, You guys have a lot to be proud of and that shows that you are committed to help educate our kids and grand-kids.....the Blackhorse way!

ALLONS

## Your Donations To 11 ACVVC – 2021

Fund	Donors	Amount
General	8	\$1,250.00
Memorial	10	\$880.00
Assistance	12	\$1,441.00
Scholarship	104	\$20,393.00
Calendar	1,800	\$98,241.00
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>1,934</b>	<b>\$122,205.00</b>

**Thank you for your continuous support for our various funds that allow assistance to our 11 ACVVC Troopers and Blackhorse families**

# 2022 Silent Auction

By Greg Mason

The 2021 Silent Auction raised \$6,593 for the 11th ACVVC Scholarship Fund with 199 items donated and available for bid. The donated items included many hand-crafted items and one-of-a-kind items with a Blackhorse theme. We are not allowed to have alcoholic beverages or firearms in the auction as many state laws prohibit it. We look forward to another successful auction.

The auction process will be as follows:

Items are needed for the Silent Auction to be conducted during our 37th Annual Reunion in Birmingham, Alabama. Items peculiar to the 11th Cavalry are always favorites, and any item of value is welcome, Cavalry related or not.

We will have a collection site set-up in the registration area to collect donated items brought to the reunion beginning on Wednesday from 1pm to 5pm,

Thursday from 1pm to 5pm, and Friday from 1pm to 4pm.

You can ship items to John Welch, to collect, hold and bring the items to the reunion for display. If you plan to ship items, please use the convenient Silent Auction Donor Form printed in this issue. If you bring the items to the reunion, also complete the donation form and include it with the item.

The auction will be from 6pm to 9pm on Friday night with the bidding ending precisely at 9pm. Those in wheelchairs or motorized chairs will be allowed in at 5:45 to allow them a little time to view the items before the crowds enter.

Winning bidders must be present, pick up their items and pay for them between 9pm and 9:30pm after the bidding is closed.

If the item is not picked up, the item will be awarded to the next highest bid at 9:30 or auctioned off at 9:45pm Friday evening. The bid form will have

a place for you to leave a cell phone number in case we need to call you to let you know to pick up your item.

We will be able to accept cash, checks, Visa or MasterCard for payment.

We do need volunteers to work the collection site and the night of the auction. We are setting up the collection site schedule in 2-hour shifts and if you would like to volunteer please contact me at [gregmason311@gmail.com](mailto:gregmason311@gmail.com) or 813-220-9027. I will respond to your email as I receive them.

Our reason for requiring items to be picked up and paid for the evening of the auction is because of the difficulties we have had in prior years getting all the items delivered and paid for. We appreciate your understanding.

We look forward to seeing you in Birmingham and thanks in advance to all the donors!

## 11th ACVVC Silent Auction

### Donated Items Information Form

Please provide the following information with your donated item. If you wish to donate anonymously, please check the box below.  
**Please print clearly.**

Description of item donated: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Donor: \_\_\_\_\_

Address of Donor: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # of Donor: \_\_\_\_\_ Value of Item Donated \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to remain anonymous (check box)

Mail silent auction items to: 11th ACVVC, C/O John Welch, 3248 Crossings Drive, Birmingham, AL 35242-4475



**Membership is Our Strength**  
**It's not the price you pay to belong, it's the price you paid to become eligible to join**





**11th ACVVC 37th Reunion  
Schedule Birmingham, Alabama  
September 5 -11, 2022**

*(Preliminary, subject to change!)*

**Tuesday, September 6  
3:00 PM**

**Rooms available for set up**

**Storage - Room 5C East**

**Wednesday, Sept. 7**

10:00 am - 5:00 pm  
2:00 pm - 6:00 pm  
2:00 pm - 12:00 am  
5:00 pm -8:00 pm  
1:00 pm- 5:00 pm

Quartermaster Store open  
Registration open  
Bunker open  
BOD Meeting  
Silent Auction Items Accepted

Room 5M East (proposed)  
East Registration Desk  
Birmingham Ballroom  
Room 5B East  
East Registration Desk

**Thursday, Sept. 8**

8:00am-3:00 pm  
9:00 am - 5:00 pm  
2:00 pm - 6:00 pm  
2:00 pm - 12:00 am  
1:00 pm- 5:00 pm

29th Annual Marty Ognibene Golf Outing  
Quartermaster Store open  
Registration open  
Bunker open  
Silent Auction Items Accepted

TBD  
Room 5M East (proposed)  
East Registration Desk  
Birmingham Ballroom  
East Registration Desk

**Friday, Sept. 9**

9:00 am - 5:00 pm  
10:00am - 12 noon  
1:00 pm-4:00 pm  
2:00 pm - 9:00 pm  
2:00 pm - 12:00 am  
6:00 pm- 9:00 pm  
9:00 pm-10:00 pm

Quartermaster Store open  
Veterans Seminar  
Silent Auction Items Accepted  
Registration open  
Bunker open  
Silent Auction sell off  
Silent Auction Pay/pick up

Room 5M East (proposed)  
Room 5A East  
East Registration Desk  
East Registration Desk  
Birmingham Ballroom  
East Ballroom A  
East Ballroom A

**Saturday, Sept. 10**

9:00 am - 12:00 pm  
9:00am - 12:00 pm  
2:00 pm - 3:00 pm  
3:00 pm - 5:00 pm  
3:00 pm - 5:00 pm  
5:45 pm-6:45 pm  
6:00 PM  
7:00 pm-10:00 pm  
10:00 pm- 1:00 am

Annual Membership Meeting  
Women's Meeting  
Memorial Service  
Quartermaster Store open  
Registration open for late arrivals  
Cocktail Hour (Cash Bar)  
Banquet room Doors Open  
Banquet, Presentations and Salute  
Dancing (DJ)

East Ballroom B  
Room N East  
East Ballroom B  
Room 5M East (proposed)  
East Registration Desk  
Birmingham Ballroom Foyer  
  
Birmingham Ballroom  
Birmingham Ballroom Foyer

**Sunday, Sept. 11**

10:00 am - 11:00 am  
All Day

Worship Service  
Farewell and Safe Travels

East Ballroom B  
No space Required

*(Preliminary, subject to change!)*

REGISTRATION FORM



37th Annual 11th ACVVC Reunion
Birmingham, Alabama September 5-11, 2022



Sheraton Birmingham Hotel
2101 Richard Arrington Jr. Blvd. North, Birmingham, Ala. 35203
Reservations- 205-307-3600

Registration fee is \$100 per person. This fee is required for attendance at the Wednesday, Thursday and Friday night Bunker Parties and Saturday evening banquet dinner.

All registrations must be received by Tuesday, August 9, 2022. Any registration received after this date will be returned. Registration refunds will be paid in full to our members if cancellation is received by the Treasurer no later than Monday, August 30, 2022.

PLEASE PRINT ALL INFORMATION
(Print clearly or use a mailing label)

Name Telephone No:

Address

City/State/Zip

E-Mail Address

Unit Assignment Dates in Country
(Example: B TRP, D CO - List only one unit. This is your banquet seating.) (Example: 1966-1967)

KIA Relative? Yes, Name of KIA:

Relationship to KIA: Unit:

ATTENDEES, INCLUDING YOURSELF (please print)

Table with 2 columns: Name, Amount. Includes Total Registration Fee row.

Banquet Meal Selection (Indicate number for each selection) Chicken Beef Fish

Is this your first reunion? Yes No Wheelchair or special needs banquet seating? Yes

Visa MasterCard

Card No. Exp. Date

Signature (Required for credit card)

Make checks payable to 11th ACVVC. Please mail registration form along with payment to:

11th ACVVC
C/O OLLIE PICKRAL
571 DITCHLEY RD
KILMARNOCK, VA 22482



## A Night's Lodging

Two thousand and twenty-two years! 246 since our nation was cobbled together by a diverse group of unselfish and dedicated men under the hand of God's Divine Providence. On 2 February, we celebrated the 121st birthday of the Blackhorse Regiment. It has been fifty years since I held a worship service at FSB Fiddlers Green, and on the 27th of March, it will be 50 years since I drove the last Blackhorse jeep from Long Bien to Bien Hoa and surrendered it to the 1st Cavalry Division. The colors had left Vietnam on the 22nd of March in 1972, and the last of the Blackhorse garrison in Vietnam had been re-assigned in country, with a few lucky ones catching a Freedom Bird home.

Now 50 years later, I have forgotten more than I can remember. I tried to explain to a young college graduate what we called the gathering of a Cavalry Troop in the field each night. Can you believe, I couldn't remember an "NDP." I was explaining how it was like the "circle your wagons" concept of old western movies, and grasping for the right term, I called it a laager. I could remember the Boer War term, but I could not recall an NDP - "night defensive position." Old age really does affect our memory. But, now thanks to Don Snedeker's books: *The Blackhorse in Vietnam* and, his newest edition, *Blackhorse Tales*, my memory is improving. Great books.

Reading his tales of mayhem amidst bravery and cama-

reunions: echoes from "The Bunker." At each reunion we see groups of men (many with their wives and family members) leaning back in their chairs; some standing and gesticulating, sharing pictures, taking turns going for beer, yet always laughing. They (you) are old veterans and their stories are familiar tales, seemingly getting more vivid and more elaborate as our annual calendars become obsolete. The only way I can describe what happens in the "Bunker" is with one word: "hospitality." It is the same word; I think of when I explain my arrival at a firebase or a Troop's NDP: hospitality.

My grandfather was a Slovak immigrant. He came before Ellis Island started the process of screening and counting. He came in 1890. He came to Pittsburgh, where he had an older brother, and work was easy to find. The country was expanding, developing and building. Coal, Iron ore, railroads and Oil were fueling an inebriating boom in America. America was a nation thirsty for success and so he became a liquor distributor. He made a lot of friends, and a lot of money, especially during the Prohibition Era; but he was ever, a hospitable man.

As his grandson, I marveled at how many times, he would meet a friend or even a stranger on the street and say: "come on to my house and have a shot of whiskey with me." He wasn't kidding, and they did come and they did sit at the kitchen table and enjoy at least one shot of whiskey. More often, more than one. Made no difference, no distinction: neighbors, trash men,

salesmen, hucksters, priests, I even heard him say once: "OK, good Bishop, come on in and have a shot of whiskey with me." That was in the 1940's and now almost 80 years later, I can still clearly remember his unique sense of hospitality.

But a little over 50 years ago, I can also recall the hospitality offered me in the fields and firebases, Quonset huts, sand bagged bunkers and the NDPs of E, F and G Troops. Troopers like, Jim Staffieri, (Spaghetti), Mike (Chief) Aguilar (KIA 25 May 72), and so many other lads called either "Rusty" or "Doc" or "Short Round" or "Fat Belly" and other monikers offered me hospitality. I remember

Sergeants Fisher, Jordan and Foster seeing to the Chaplain's well-being and platoon leaders like Dick Green



Sgt Jim Fisher

FSB Andrews (10, 1971)

Sgt James Foster

raderie, I could hear echoes from the gatherings at our

Chaplain's well-being and platoon leaders like Dick Green



(KIA 3 Dec 71), John Boles, John Hrom, Bill Knowlton, Joe Shogan and HOW Battery's Jim Machut, welcoming me to the field. Troop Commanders, I well remember like Bill Bachman, Tom Merriweather and William Clarke (KIA 23 Feb 1972) offered me bunk space in the Command Track. And tank and ACAV crews on the perimeter greeting me with an invitation to share a meal and a place to stay ... and even after Mass or Service, a cold beer from their unique Styrofoam lined and ice packed empty ammo crates. I even found a picture of Sergeants Fisher and Foster who offered me the comfort of a bunk in their Quonset Hut at Firebase Andrews, my first night in the field. Little did I know it was next to the 8-inch guns that fired all night long ... and now, even with hearing aids, I can barely hear.

Hospitality and sharing. Quick, easy, natural. It was a way of life in the field, as it is in the Bunkers at our reunions. Once the sharing of food, or beverage or whatever was over, it made you want to reciprocate, so it wasn't hard to find a track a man

short, and fill-in for a night watch slot of two or three hours behind a .50 caliber. Don's books, covers all those situations, as well as about every other event that we lived and (some died) through.

Now, 50 years later, I still look forward to the hospitality of a table in the Bunker, where for sure, one of the troopers will get up and say, "I am a Blackhorse Trooper so, can I get you a beer?" The Bunker set up is a brilliant and blessed concept, I wonder who thought that up, 36 reunions ago?

Hospitality is the key to a great reunion. And your response and generosity, your willingness to give back from the abundance God has showered on our nation, has been the key to the success of our great programs, especially the Scholarship Fund, where your support has done so much good. I'm sure it will be there when we arrive in Birmingham. Allons.

*Chaplain Bill*

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## Board of Directors Meeting Motions 2021 Summary of Motions

(Motions were passed unanimously unless note otherwise)

### March 3, 2021 Board of Directors Meeting Motions:

**Motion 2021-0303A Secretary's Minutes:** Dispense with the reading of the minutes and accept the Secretary's minutes of the Board meeting held November 9, 2021.

**Motion 2021-0303B, C, D, E F - Treasurers, President's, Membership, Scholarship, Chaplain's Report:** Accept all the Reports as presented.

**Motion 2021-0303G 2023 Reunion Sites to Present to at Membership Meeting:** Present the Columbus Ohio and the Grand Rapids Michigan locations for the 2023 reunion.

### June 9, 2021 Board of Directors Meeting Motions:

**Motion 2021-0609A Secretary's Minutes:** Dispense with the reading of the minutes the Secretary's minutes of the Board meeting held March 3, 2021.

**Motion 2021-0303B Treasurers Report:** Accept the Treasurer's Report as presented.

**Motion 2021 060921C 2021 Scholarship Awards:** The 11th ACVVC award 54 \$3,000 scholarships and 1 \$5,000 scholarship for a total of \$167,000 in 2021.

**Motion 2021-0303D Scholarship and Raffle reports:** Accept the Scholarship and raffle reports as presented.

**Motion 2021-0303E Thunder Run Printing Costs:** Transfer \$35,000 from investments to the General Account to cover the estimated cost of publishing the *Thunder Run*.

### August 9 and 26, 2021 Reunion Board of Directors Meeting Motions:

**Motion 2021-0826A Treasurer's report:** Accept the Treasurer's report for year to date 2021 as presented.

**Motion 20210826B-Board Member Reimbursement:** "Seven (7) Board members plus the President Emeritus, Hathaway and Chaplain

Karabinos to be reimbursed for not more that three (3) nights not to include Friday and Saturday, effective starting with the 2022 reunion"

### August 28, 2021 Reunion Membership Meeting Motions:

**Motion 2020-0828A:** "Waive reading of 2019 Membership Meeting minutes and approve minutes"

**Motion 20210828B-Board Member Reimbursement:** "Seven (7) Board members plus the President Emeritus, Hathaway and Chaplain Karabinos to be reimbursed for not more that three (3) nights not to include Friday and Saturday, effective starting with the 2022 reunion"

**Motion 20210301 Donation in Memoriam:** "I move the 11th ACVVC donate \$100 to Turning Point of Las Cruces, Las Cruces, NM 88005 in memory of Elaine Rafferty"

**Motion 09292021 Annual Reunion Reimbursement:** "Reimburse in an amount of \$4,231.98 to the Officers, Board of Directors, Silent Auction Chairman, Legal Advisor and Chaplain for a portion of the total cost of nightly guest rooms during the 2021 Annual reunion of the 11th ACVVC."

**Motion 20211004-Election of Secretary Pro-Tem:** "Elect Greg Mason Secretary Pro-Tem until September 10, 2022 (our next Membership meeting)."

**Motion 20211201 Approval of the June 9, 2021 Board Meeting Minutes:** "Accept the minutes of the June 9, 2021 as recorded."

Motions 20211203 Special Recognition Awards: "The President will order two Special Recognition Awards for an amount not to exceed \$400 total." The motion passed 6-1.

**Motion 20211207A Approval of the March 3, 2021 Board Meeting Minutes:** "Accept the minutes of the March 3, 2021 as recorded."

**Motion 20211207B Approval of the August 9 and August 26 Reunion Board Meeting Minutes:** "Accept the minutes of the August 9 and August 26 Reunion Board meetings minutes as recorded."



# SCHOLARSHIP UPDATE & IMPORTANT INFORMATION

by Mike "Doc" Rafferty, Director and Scholarship Chairman



The 11th ACVVC Scholarship Program has awarded 638 scholarships totaling \$2,025,000 to the children and grandchildren of our membership since its inception in 1996! Every scholarship dollar paid to these deserving scholarship winners was donated by YOU, the members of this great association of Blackhorse combat veterans! Our **Scholarship Guide** provides more information on the scholarship process and history of the program. You can find the Guide on our website. If you have a child or grandchild who is planning on attending a college, community college or trade school fall semester, 2022, please encourage them to apply for a scholarship (application deadline 05/15/2022). Each recipient's Scholarship Award will be dedicated in honor of a specific 11th Cavalry "Blackhorse" Trooper who was Killed in Action (KIA) in Vietnam or Cambodia.

The Blackhorse KIAs honored each year are selected on an impartial and random basis. An attractive certificate suitable for framing and containing information about the trooper in whose honor their scholarship is dedicated will be sent to each recipient. In addition, each year, one recipient is selected to receive a special Colonel Charles L. Schmidt Leadership Scholarship award in honor of former 11th ACVVC President Chuck Schmidt for his leadership and devotion to the 11th Cavalry "Blackhorse" Troopers of the Vietnam War. Chuck died on Veterans Day 2007 as a result Agent Orange-related cancer shortly after being elected to his third term as President. Chuck's widow, Mrs. Bonnie Schmidt, selects the recipient of this award from the list of scholarship winners.

## A Scholarship applicant must fall into one of the following categories:

- 1: A child or grandchild of an 11th Armored Cavalry Trooper who was Killed In Action (KIA) in Vietnam or Cambodia.
- 2: A child or grandchild of a deceased life member of the 11th ACVVC.
- 3: A child or grandchild of a current life member of the 11th ACVVC in good standing.
- 4: "Child" is defined as a natural born, adopted or step-child.
- 5: "Grandchild" is defined as a natural born, adopted or step-grandchild.

## Additional Criteria

- 1: The applicant must have maintained a minimum Grade Point Average of 3.0 during the last two years of high school (or college if applicable).
- 2: The applicant must be a high school graduate (by fall semester 2021).
- 3: Graduate and doctoral level students are not eligible.

2021 scholarship winners will receive an award of \$3000. The Colonel Charles L. Schmidt Leadership Scholarship award winner will receive \$5000. All scholarship awards are sent directly to the school the recipient is attending.

*Mike "Doc" Rafferty, Scholarship Chairman  
E mail address: platoonmedic36@gmail.com*

## SGT. 1ST CLASS ALWYN C. CASHE, MOH

**S**gt. 1st Class Alwyn C. Cashe grew up in poverty in Oviedo, Florida, and joined the U.S. Army as a supply specialist shortly after graduating from Oviedo High School. He initially served two years in Korea, followed by nearly three years at Fort Lewis, Washington.

In 1993, he became an infantryman and served another year-long tour in Korea. Cashe served as a squad leader for two years at Fort Hood, Texas, and for two years in Germany. He graduated from Drill Sergeant School in 1998, and served over two years as a drill sergeant at Fort Benning, Georgia.

He returned to Europe in February 2001 as an operations non-commissioned officer for the 19th Battlefield Coordination Detachment, then served in Germany for two years as a squad leader in the 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment. Finally, in April 2004 Cashe served as a platoon sergeant in the 3rd Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, at Fort Benning, Georgia.

Cashe deployed in support of the Gulf War in 1991, participated in the 2003 invasion of Iraq, and deployed in 2005 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

On October 17, 2005, near Samarra, Iraq, Cashe's Bradley Fighting Vehicle was struck by an improvised explosive device. Cashe retrieved six Soldiers and an Iraqi interpreter from the burning vehicle, receiving burns on nearly 72% of his body. Alwyn Cashe died on Nov. 8, 2005, at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas.



**Sergeant First Class Cashe's wife Tamara accepts his Medal of Honor from President Biden at the White House on December 16, 2021**

Cashe's awards and decorations include the Army Commendation Medal with one silver and two bronze oak leaf clusters, the Army

Achievement Medal with one silver oak leaf cluster, the Army Good Conduct Medal with five knots, the National Defense Service with bronze star device, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Korean Defense Service Medal, the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, the Kosovo Campaign Medal, the Armed Forces Service Medal, the Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development Ribbon, the Army Service Ribbon, the Overseas Service Ribbon, two NATO Medals, the Drill Sergeant Identification Badge, the Expert Infantryman Badge, the Combat Infantryman Badge, the Parachutist Badge, the Driver Badge and the Expert Rifle Marksmanship Badge.

Cashe is survived by his spouse, Tamara Cashe; daughters, Lajada and Alexis; and son, Andrew.



**11th Armored Cavalry's Veterans of Vietnam & Cambodia  
Scholarship Application (effective September 9th, 2021)**  
Please review Scholarship Guide at [www.11thcavnam.com/scholar.html](http://www.11thcavnam.com/scholar.html)  
**Application Deadline May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022**



**IMPORTANT: A PERSON WHO HAS BEEN AWARDED AN 11<sup>TH</sup> ACVVC SCHOLARSHIP IS NOT ELIGIBLE TO APPLY AGAIN.  
Students working on advanced degrees (master's, doctoral) are not eligible to apply.**

Applicant's full name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's social security number: \_\_\_\_\_ E mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Street address: \_\_\_\_\_ Apt./Unit # \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

**Applicant's Status:**  Child  Grandchild of a current life member of the 11<sup>th</sup> ACVVC.  
 Child  Grandchild of a deceased life member of the 11<sup>th</sup> ACVVC.  
 Child  Grandchild of an 11th ACR veteran who was killed in action in Vietnam or  
**Cambodia.**

Your Sponsor (11<sup>th</sup> Cav Veteran): Full name: \_\_\_\_\_ E mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor's 11<sup>th</sup> Cav unit in Vietnam: \_\_\_\_\_ Dates in Vietnam \_\_\_\_\_ 11thACVVC member# \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Address of College or Trade School you plan to attend: What is your major? \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Schools and Colleges Attended (10<sup>th</sup> Grade to Present)**

Name	City, State	Dates (From/To)

**You must attach a copy of your grade transcripts from your last 2 yrs. of High School or College.  
Requirements: at least a 3.5 unweighted Grade Point Average for applicants pursuing a 4 yr. degree. At least a 3.0 unweighted Grade Point Average for trade or vocational school applicants.**

**Briefly tell us about your extra-curricular and volunteer activities and include your name and email address on a separate sheet of paper.**

I, the undersigned verify the answers given above are true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I give my permission for a copy of my high school/college grade transcripts to be submitted with this application.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Applicant Printed Name Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Sponsor Veteran or Guardian Printed Name Date

Please send your completed application and grade transcripts to:  
Mike "Doc" Rafferty, 11<sup>th</sup> ACVVC Scholarship Chairman, PO Box 13188, Las Cruces, New Mexico 88013  
Email: [platoonmedic36@gmail.com](mailto:platoonmedic36@gmail.com)

# Veterans Headstones, Markers, and Medallions

Rev. Peter R. Hook, Past National Chaplain, VFW (reprinted with permission)

Any Veteran and Member of the Armed Forces who was discharged under conditions other than dishonorable is eligible for a Government Headstone, Marker, or Medallion. However, the following exception does apply: "...service beginning after September 7, 1980, as an enlisted person, and service after October 16, 1981, as an officer, must be for a minimum of 24 months or the full period for which the person was called to active duty."

Memorial headstones and markers, for individuals or groups, are also furnished for eligible deceased active-duty service members and Veterans whose remains have not been recovered or identified, are buried at sea, donated to science or whose cremated remains have been scattered.

While there is no charge for the headstone or marker itself, arrangements for placing it in a private cemetery are the applicant's responsibility, and all setting fees are at private expense.

## How to Apply for a Headstone, Marker, or Medallion

When burial is in a private cemetery, VA Form 40-1330, Claim for Standard Government Headstone or Marker or VA Form 40-1330M, Claim for Government Medallion must be submitted along with Veterans military discharge documents (DD214). Do not send original documents, as they will not be returned.

• Details for the Headstone or Marker, and the form can be found at: <http://www.va.gov/vaforms/va/pdf/VA40-1330.pdf>.

• Details for the Medallion, and the form, can be found at: <http://www.va.gov/vaforms/va/pdf/VA40-1330M.pdf>

## What is the Medallion?

The medallion is a device furnished in lieu of a traditional government headstone or grave marker for Veterans whose death occurred on or after Nov. 1, 1990, and whose grave in a private cemetery is marked with a privately purchased headstone or marker. Under federal law, eligible Veterans buried in a private cemetery are entitled to either a government-furnished grave marker or the medallion, but not both.

The medallion is available in three sizes: 5 inches, 3 inches and 1 1/2 inches in width. Each bronze medallion features the image of a folded burial flag adorned with laurels and is inscribed with the word "Veteran" at the top and the Veteran's branch of service at the bottom.

Next of kin receive the medallion, along with a kit that allows the family or the staff of a private cemetery to affix the medallion to a headstone, grave marker, mausoleum or columbarium niche cover.

## Who Can Apply for a Headstone, Marker, or Medallion?

Only the following individuals may apply for a headstone, marker, or medallion:

1. Decedent's next-of-kin (NOK)
2. Authorized representative on behalf of decedent
3. Authorized representative on behalf of next-of-kin

If someone other than the NOK is applying for the headstone, marker, or medallion, the application package must include a written statement signed by the NOK or decedent authorizing that person (the

applicant) to apply for this benefit. A notarized statement is not required for these purposes.

## When to Apply?

The application can only be submitted upon the death of the Veteran. However, Veterans are encouraged to have the application prepared and stored, along with other important documents and instructions, for their next of kin.

For more information, you can contact the Applicant Assistance Unit between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. (ET), Monday through Friday, at 1-800-697-6947. Information on VA burial benefits can be obtained from national cemetery offices, from the VA Web site on the Internet at [www.cem.va.gov](http://www.cem.va.gov) or by calling VA regional offices toll-free at 1-800-827-1000.

Blessings,

Rev. Peter R. Hook

# The M16A1 Rifle

For those of you – including me – who never received a copy of "DA PAM 750-30, The M16A1 Rifle," it's time you started to learn about your weapon (not your gun!). I'll publish the rest of the manual in future issues. Anyone who wish to view the entire pdf in one file can go to: [The Original M16 Manual Was a Vietnam War Comic Book | Military.com](http://TheOriginalM16ManualWas.aVietnamWarComicBook|Military.com) I'll try to follow up in each future issue with the rest of the manual. Hope you enjoy this!





# Blackhorse Women's News

By Sheryl Myers, Women's Group Co-coordinator

Dear Ladies and Supporters of the Blackhorse Women's Group,

This is our first greeting of 2022, and it brings with it wishes for a Happy & Healthy New Year for each of you.

We hope you are making plans to attend the 2022 11th ACVVC Reunion in Birmingham, AL, Sept 5-11th at the Sheraton Birmingham. Look for details in the Thunder Run and on the Website.

Your BWG coordinators will be planning another informative and entertaining group meeting for Saturday morning of Reunion Week.

We hope you will join us.

There are many opportunities throughout the year for anyone in our 11th ACVVC family to support the projects of the Blackhorse Women's Group. Please consider these opportunities:

• Purchase a Blackhorse Tote Bag- Proceeds benefit the 11th ACVVC Scholarship Fund

• Prayer Shawl Project -If you knit or crochet and would like to support this project please contact Cherry Platt @ [fredplatt@att.net](mailto:fredplatt@att.net)

• Remembering our KIA's - This opportunity is open to all in our 11th ACVVC family: Place a simple memorial at the gravesite of one, or more of our KIA's; snap a picture; send picture by email or mail to us and we will add the memorial to our Remembering Our KIA's Scrapbook and feature it in future *Thunder Run* issues. Please contact Sheryl @ [sheryl.e.myers@gmail.com](mailto:sheryl.e.myers@gmail.com) or at 19155 Royal Troon Dr. Monument, CO 80132, for questions or a listing of the gravesites in your state.

• Sarah's Angels Honor Roll - If you are made aware of the passing of one of our Blackhorse Ladies, please notify Sheryl.

We are looking forward to seeing all of you in Birmingham !!

Love, Sheryl, Lajaunda, Marguerite, Kathy, Cherry, Cathi, & Jan

**BOD Member & Scholarship Chm. Doc Rafferty visits with former BOD Member and Scholarship Chm. Frank Cambria in northern California.**

**Blackhorse Women's Group Offers Tote Bags For Sale!**



**Blackhorse Women's Group Fundraiser!!**

These two-colored black and red heavy duty totes are offered for \$10 each plus shipping.\*

All proceeds raised benefit the women's group Prayer Shawl and Wreaths Across America projects and our group donation to the 11th ACCV Scholarship Fund.

Please complete the order form below and mail with payment to:  
**Marguerite Austin 34578 Kimble Shores Dr. Pequot Lakes, MN 56472**



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Number of bags \_\_\_\_\_ X \$10 each = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Shipping\* \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\*Shipping: \$7.50 for 1-3 bags; \$15 for 4 or more bags.

*Thank you for supporting the Blackhorse Women's Group!*

## A Meeting of the Minds...



# Blackhorse Hoofbeats

Echoes from the Regiment's Service in Vietnam 1966-1972

(January 2021)

• The Blackhorse Moves In: From the Commander's Analysis section of the Combat Operations After Action Report for Operation Atlanta (20 October – 8 December 1966): "Operation ATLANTA proved to be a most successful operation not only from the standpoint of casualties inflicted on the Viet Cong but the number of lines of communication [roads] that have been opened to friendly traffic. No longer can the Viet Cong freely utilize them for movement of their forces and supplies nor set up tax collection points to harass and extort money from the local populace... Geographical locations heretofore considered privileged Viet Cong sanctuaries were breached by the armored columns of the Blackhorse Regiment destroying base camps, fortifications, and capturing precious stores of food. The operation only further demonstrated the flexibility, effectiveness, and prowess of an Armored Cavalry Regiment in an insurgency environment."

• Operation Junction City: The Regiment (initially minus 2/11) participated in all three phases of Operation Junction City between 22 February and 14 May 1967. With over 35 combat battalions involved, this was the largest ground operation up to that point in the Vietnam War. The target of Operation Junction City was the Central Office for South Vietnam – COSVN, the Viet Cong Headquarters for all of South Vietnam – located deep in the heart of War Zone C, a 150-square-mile jungled plateau located 70 miles northwest of Saigon. Colonel William Cobb, 34th Colonel of the Regiment, assessed Operation Junction City as follows: "The unique dual combat capability of the Blackhorse Regiment... the ability to move fast and the capability to conduct detailed search and destroy operations – was clearly demonstrated during the operation... The success achieved by the squadrons in the search and destroy phase of the operation is shown by their discovery of large numbers of enemy base camps, medical facilities and fortified positions. The value of armor protection of fighting personnel was strikingly shown during the heavy and close-in fighting one squadron [1/11] experienced as it fought its way into a tenaciously defended VC Base Camp." During the almost three months of Operation Junction City, the Regiment lost 9 Troopers killed and 141 wounded. Overall, there were 282 US soldiers killed in action – far less than the 13,500 that captured enemy documents later claimed. Over 2,700 enemy bodies were found on the battlefields of War Zone C during Operation Junction City.

• "Hey Nguyen, got a light?": Between late December 1967 and mid-January 1968, 1/11 and 2/11 conducted search and destroy operations along Highway 13 between Loc Ninh and the Cambodian border. The operation was designed to open Thunder Road for military traffic for the first time since the French were in charge, as well as to locate Viet Cong (VC) and North Vietnamese Army (NVA) units that were suspected of infiltrating across from Cambodia southwards toward Saigon. In mid-January, Alpha Troop came across "an intricate enemy base camp supply complex." The base had obviously been hastily evacuated, as the Troopers found wet laundry hanging on the line and a just-used toothbrush in a cup. Cards wishing the

guerrillas a happy Tet (Chinese New Year) from Uncle Ho were found throughout the above-ground structures hidden in the dense jungle. Bags of rice, estimated as enough to feed a VC company for three days, were stored inside the camp. Most interesting of all, however, was a cache of cigarette lighters – one for each man in the troop.

• Bustin' Jungle: From the Operation Montana Raider (12 April to 14 May 1969) after action report: "Extensive jungle busting operations take a heavy toll on all types of armored vehicles. This is especially true of tanks which are always placed in the lead. Mines, RPGs [rocket-propelled grenades], and maintenance failures make sustained operations for longer than 10 days almost impossible."

• Back to School: In addition to conducting combat operations, Blackhorse Troopers also gave and received a wide variety of specialized training courses. As an example, during the 3-month period from August to October 1969, 5 Regimental aviators attended a jungle survival course in the Philippines, 8 individuals attended a Prescribed Load List (PLL) course at Long Binh, and 13 Troopers attended the 1st Cav Division's sniper school. During the same period, personnel from the Regimental Signal section provided instruction on the AN-PPS-4 ground surveillance radar and various night vision devices, 1/11 held a one-day course on the M548 Cargo Carrier, and the 919th Engineers provided demolition training to all three squadrons.

• Local Modification: In early 1970, Air Cavalry Troop, using a locally fabricated mount, attached an XM191 4-tube launcher pod for the 66mm rocket – the same rocket used in the Light Anti-Tank Weapon or LAW – on an OH-6A Light Observation Helicopter (LOH). In the words of the official after action report, "This device was employed in a local test and was found to be excellent as an offensive anti-personnel weapon, as well as for marking targets."

• Vietnamese First Lady: From the March 1970 edition of the Blackhorse Newspaper: "Madame Thieu, wife of the President of the Republic of Vietnam, is now an honorary member of the Blackhorse. Captain Francis E. Mara, 3d Squadron chaplain, serving as the official escort for four Gold Star Mothers, attended a reception given in their honor by Madame Thieu. The first lady was curious about the Blackhorse patch on Father Mara's shoulder. 'In Vietnam a black horse is considered a sign of good luck,' Father Mara explained. 'In addition, Madame Thieu was born in the year of the horse, so naturally she asked me about the patch.' The chaplain told her about the Blackhorse Regiment and the patch. He then gave her his regimental crest. 'She was delighted to receive it,' Father Mara said. 'She said she considers the presence of the Blackhorse an omen of good fortune.'"

• Too Much Nuoc Mam? The official interrogation report for Assistant Squad Leader Nguyen Xuan Tu, captured by Hotel Company, 2/11 on 5 May 1970 inside Cambodia, ends with the following observation from the 541st Military Intelligence Detachment Interrogator: "The source is an extremely slow moving and thinking

individual. He became confused on simple questions and often, after a long pause for thought, forgot the question posed. What responses were given are believed to be valid.”

• 2/11 Carries On: From the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment Redeployment After Action Report, dated 5 March 1971: “On 20 December 1970, the Regiment was notified that the 1st, 3d, and Provisional Squadrons would be included in redeployment Increment Six and was directed to prepare necessary plans to execute a phased standdown of units commencing 1 February 1971, completing redeployment by 5 March 1971. The Regiment’s equip-

ment was to be prepared for turn-in, the majority reverting to control of US Army Vietnam. Personnel would be reassigned to units remaining in Vietnam unless they met specific DEROS [Date Estimated Return from Overseas] criteria in which case they would be returned to CONUS [Continental United States] for reassignment or separation. The Regiment requested and received approval to leave the Regimental colors with the 2d Squadron, a non-color bearing unit, in the Republic of Vietnam. An honor guard detachment was to be formed to escort the redeploying units’ guidons to Fort Lewis, Washington for an appropriate ceremony and for safekeeping until the Regiment is reconstituted.”



## Fiddler’s Green

We are sorry to report the following Troopers have taken the journey to Fiddler’s Green. We send our heartfelt sympathy and sincere condolences to their families and friends. We honor their service to our country and to our regiment by posting their names.

Over 500 U.S. newspapers are checked daily for the keywords “11th Cavalry” or “11th Armored Cavalry”. Information is then posted on our website to allow us to post notices. Please check the “Funeral Honor Guard check daily” at [www.11thcavnam.com](http://www.11thcavnam.com)

**Richie B. Bernard**, 409th Radio Research Detachment (1969-1970) passed away on October 26, 2021. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Concord, VA.

**Theodore (Terry) Cioffi**, K Troop, 3/11 (1967-1968) passed away on December 28, 2021. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Staten Island, NY.

**Michael C. Craig**, F Troop, 2/11 (1970-1971) passed away on November 14, 2021. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Denver, CO. He was laid to rest in Ft. Logan National Cemetery, Denver, CO.

**Leroy J. Dunahay**, 919th Engineer Company (1966-1967) passed away on February 24, 2021. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Eau Claire, WI. He was laid to rest in Southern Wisconsin Veterans Memorial Cemetery, Union Grove, WI.

**Michael T. Garrigus**, HHT, 2/11 (1971-1972) passed away on November 19, 2021. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Warner Robins, GA.

**Doyle R. Gaultney**, C Troop, 1/11 (1967-1968) passed away on May 20, 2020. He was a member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Muskogee, OK. He was laid to rest in Ft. Gibson National Cemetery, Fort Gibson, OK.

**Raymond D. Giesige**, 919th Engineer Company (1969-1970) passed away on September 29, 2021. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Celina, OH.

**William J. Gillette**, H Company, 2/11 and HHT, 2/11 (1968-1969) passed away on May 9, 2015. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Sugar Land, TX. He was laid to rest in Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, VA.

**Earl D. Kindred**, F Troop, 2/11 (1966-1967) passed away on October 25, 2021. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Sevierville, TN. He was laid to rest in Shiloh Cemetery, Kasson, WV.

**Bryan L. McClellan**, I Troop, 3/11 (1970-1971) passed away on November 25, 2021. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Iowa City, IA.

**Jimmy L. McMahon**, E Troop, 2/11 (1967-1968) passed away on December 18, 2021. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Houston, TX.

**Harry W. Montague**, Howitzer Battery, 1/11 (1968-1968) passed away on December 19, 2021. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Charlotte, NC. He was laid to rest in Sharon Memorial Park, Charlotte, NC.

**William H. Ochowicz**, K Troop, 3/11 (1966-1967) passed away on July 21, 2020. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Colgate, WI.

**Michael C. Oroman**, G Troop, 2/11 (1969-1970) passed away on July 12, 2021. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Ewa Beach, HI. He was laid to rest in National Memorial Cemetery Of The Pacific, Honolulu, HI.

**Daniel J. Pintaric**, 37th Medical Company and HHT Regt (1969-1970) passed away on May 28, 2021. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Centennial, CO. He was laid to rest in Ft. Logan National Cemetery, Denver, CO.

**Michael E. Steinwachs**, H Company, 2/11 (1966-1967) passed away on January 6, 2021. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Almond, NY. **sell L. Verbeke**, A Troop, 1/11 (1967-1968) passed away on December 14, 2021. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Gulliver, MI.

**Amos M. Webb**, G Troop, 2/11 (1970-1971) passed away on December 9, 2021. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Central Square, NY.

# The 11th Armored Cavalry's Veterans of Vietnam and Cambodia QM Store



#1 Coffee Mug \$15.00



#2 Key Ring \$6.00



#3 Bumper Sticker \$3.00



#4 Window Sticker \$3.00



#7 Blackhorse Patch Colored \$5.00



#8 Mouse Pad \$12.00



#10 Web Belt with buckle \$25.00



#9 CIB car magnet, 3"x4" \$6.00



#13 License Plate, Blackhorse \$9.00



#11 Flag, Indoor/Outdoor \$60.00



#16 Tote Bag, Embroidered \$22.00



#17 Blackhorse Pin \$5.00



#14 License Plate Frame, Black w/white letters \$13.00



#15 Attache Case \$30.00



#18 11th ACR Regimental Crest \$5.00



#19 Blackhorse Cavalry Pin \$5.00



#26 Large Magnetic Patch (8" x 7 3/4") \$7.00



#20 Vietnam Blackhorse Pin, Wreath \$5.00



#21 Small Magnetic Patch (5" x 4 3/4") \$5.00

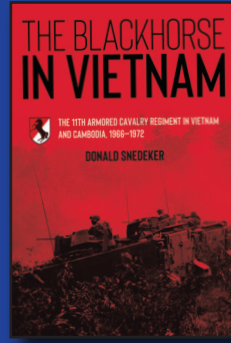


#22 Overnight Bag \$25.00

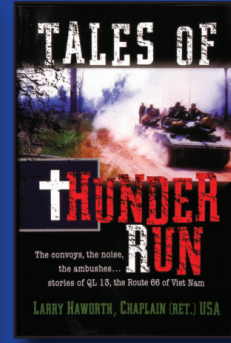




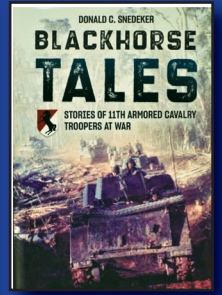
#5 Hoodie Sweat Shirt \$30.00



#34 "The Blackhorse in Vietnam" \$25.00



#37 Book, "Tales of Thunder Run" by Chaplain Larry Haworth \$11.00



#33 Blackhorse Tales \$25.00



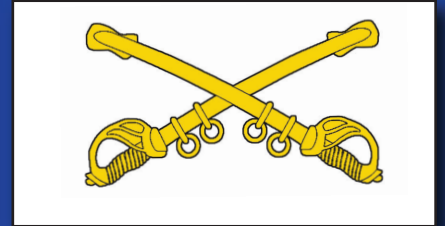
#25 Blackhorse Coin \$15.00



#31 Lapel or Hat Pin Size Spurs \$7.00



#35 See through Window Decal Sabers and Patch, 12" x 13" \$15.00



#32 See through Window Decal, Sabers, 13" x 13" \$15.00



#27 Golden Boot Spurs \$30.00



#36. Sweatshirts w/ BH patch, \$28.00



#44 See through Window Decal Blackhorse Patch, 5" x 4.5" \$10.00



#45 See through Window Decal Blackhorse Patch, 12" x 13" \$15.00



#40 Specialty T-Shirt: sizes S, M, L, 2X, 3X, 4 X \$20



#38a



#38b



#38c



#38d

#38 Poplin Hats \$17.00



#39 a/b T-Shirt, Light Gray & Green \$20.00



#43 Windbreaker, black w/snap front & BH Insignia & VN Ribbon, \$35.00



#41 Light (A) or Dark (B) Denim Shirt, w/BH & VN Ribbon \$35.00



#42 Blackhorse Jacket (lined), 100% Nylon \$95.00



### Hello Troopers and Trooper Wives!

Jan and I hope everyone had a Very Merry Christmas and looking forward to a new happy and prosperous 2022.

Hope, everyone has already started making plans for the coming new year. We are just 8 months away from another fabulous Reunion in Birmingham Alabama September 7th -11th. So, start making plans now to attend. Time is short and it will be here before you know it.

Coming up in May will be the 10th Annual East Texas Roundup, held again at the Antique Capital RV Park in Gladewater, TX. The dates are May 17th to the 21st. If you have a camper make plans to attend, AND if you don't have a camper come on anyway, there are several hotels in the area for your convenience. We would like to have your company. For more information you can call 903-780-5621. If no one answers please, leave a

message and we will call you back. On Saturday we will be having lunch around 11:30 prepared by our ladies.

Also, if you live in the east Texas area let us hear from you. In the last several months I've been blessed to come across several Blackhorse troopers who live in the Tyler/Longview area, that have not received Thunder Run in a while. One Trooper had never heard about the 11th ACVVC.

Along with that, I was asked to men-

tion that there will be a breakfast at Poor Richards Café, 2442 Avenue K in Plano, Texas on the 18th of March at 10:00am. If you live in the Dallas/Ft Worth area, come on by to meet and greet. If you can attend, please RSVP so we can have an idea on how many to save a place for.

Again, we will be looking forward to seeing everyone in Birmingham.

Allons

Jerry

### Newsletter Deadlines

Due dates to submit articles for *Thunder Run*

- 1st Quarter .....Jan 1
- 2nd Quarter .....Apr 1
- 3rd Quarter .....Jul 1
- 4th Quarter .....Oct 1

All submissions for publication must be sent to: Peter L. Walter, 8 Tallowood Drive, Westampton, NJ 08060-3721; email [basepiece70@verizon.net](mailto:basepiece70@verizon.net).

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

#### 11th ARMORED CAVALRY'S VETERANS OF VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA

Membership is open to all troopers who served with or were attached to the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment while in the countries of Vietnam or Cambodia from August 1966 thru March 1972. Membership is also open to the wives, parents and children of our Troopers killed in action.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

UNIT \_\_\_\_\_ DATES: FROM \_\_\_\_\_ TO \_\_\_\_\_  
(Troop,Sqdn) (Mo/Yr) (Mo/Yr)

SER NO RANK (during tour) \_\_\_\_\_ SSN NO \_\_\_\_\_

OTHER INFORMATION \_\_\_\_\_

TYPE MEMBERSHIP:  NEW  RENEWAL MEMBERSHIP NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_  
 ANNUAL (\$15)  LIFE (\$50)

IN ADDITION, PLEASE ACCEPT MY TAX DEDUCTIBLE CONTRIBUTION FOR \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I authorize the release of my address/phone number to other Troopers who served with the 11th ACR

(Sign) \_\_\_\_\_

Visa  Mastercard Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks/money orders payable to: **11th ACVVC**. Mail this form with your check or money order (no cash) to: **11th ACVVC Membership, Ollie Pickral, 571 Ditchley Rd., Kilmarnock, VA 22482.**



# Quartermaster

ORDER FORM • 3rd Qtr 2021

11TH ARMORED CAVALRY'S VETERANS OF VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA

Item No.	Product Description	\$ Amt	Size	Qty	\$ Total
1.	Coffee Mug, white, ceramic (glass) 11oz w/full color Blackhorse insignia .....	15.00	_____	_____	_____
2.	Key ring, Plastic .....	6.00	_____	_____	_____
3.	Bumper Sticker "I Rode With The Blackhorse" w/full color BH insignia .....	3.00	_____	_____	_____
4.	Window Sticker, full color BH insignia and Vietnam service ribbon .....	3.00	_____	_____	_____
5.	Hoodie Sweat Shirt .....	30.00	_____	_____	_____
7.	Blackhorse Shoulder Patch, Colored .....	5.00	_____	_____	_____
8.	Mouse Pads .....	12.00	_____	_____	_____
9.	CIB car magnet, 3"x4" .....	6.00	_____	_____	_____
10.	Belt: Military style 'web' trouser belt with Blackhorse buckle.....	25.00	_____	_____	_____
11.	Flag, indoor/outdoor 3'x5' with color insignia .....	60.00	_____	_____	_____
13.	License Plate, metal red & white background with crossed sabers & 11 .....	9.00	_____	_____	_____
14.	License Plate Frame, metal, black w/Blackhorse 11th US Cavalry in white .....	13.00	_____	_____	_____
15.	Attache Case w/shoulder strap 11.5" x 15.5" w/dir emb. BH insignia & VN rib .....	30.00	_____	_____	_____
16.	Tote Bag, red & black, 14x1x6 w/full color BH insignia and VN rib .....	22.00	_____	_____	_____
17.	Blackhorse Pin .....	5.00	_____	_____	_____
18.	11th ACR Regimental Crest .....	5.00	_____	_____	_____
19.	Blackhorse Cavalry Pin, brass, 11 over crossed sabers .....	5.00	_____	_____	_____
20.	Vietnam Blackhorse Pin w/wreath.....	5.00	_____	_____	_____
21.	Small Magnetic Patch "Blackhorse" (5"x 4 3/4") .....	5.00	_____	_____	_____
22.	Overnight Bag.....	25.00	_____	_____	_____
25.	Blackhorse Coin.....	15.00	_____	_____	_____
26.	Large Magnetic Patch "Blackhorse" (8" x 7 3/4").....	7.00	_____	_____	_____
27.	Golden Boot Spurs .....	30.00	_____	_____	_____
28.	Video: "Combat Reports" (DVD Only).....	30.00	_____	_____	_____
31.	Lapel or Hat Pin Size Spurs .....	7.00	_____	_____	_____
32.	See through Window Decal, Sabers, 13" x 13" .....	15.00	_____	_____	_____
33.	Book, "Blackhorse Tales" .....	25.00	_____	_____	_____
34.	Book, "The Blackhorse in Vietnam" by Donald Snedeker.....	25.00	_____	_____	_____
35.	See through Window Decal Sabers and Patch, 12" x 13" .....	15.00	_____	_____	_____
36.	Sweatshirts w/ BH patch, gray only. Size: <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> XL <input type="checkbox"/> 2XL <input type="checkbox"/> 3XL .....	28.00	_____	_____	_____
37.	Book, "Tales of Thunder Run," by Chaplain Larry Haworth .....	11.00	_____	_____	_____
38.	Hat, Poplin adjustable <input type="checkbox"/> 38a, <input type="checkbox"/> 38b, <input type="checkbox"/> 38c, <input type="checkbox"/> 38d.....	17.00	_____	_____	_____
39.	Blackhorse T-shirt, 100% cotton, preshrunk, full color BH insignia. Specify color: <input type="checkbox"/> Light Gray <input type="checkbox"/> Green .....	20.00	_____	_____	_____
40.	Specialty T-Shirt: sizes S, M, L, XL, 2X, 3X, 4 X .....	20.00	_____	_____	_____
41.	Denim shirt (men's) <input type="checkbox"/> Light (A) <input type="checkbox"/> Dark (B) .....	35.00	_____	_____	_____
42.	Blackhorse Jacket, 100% Nylon, zipper front, fleece lining w/full color BH insignia, (6" back ), and ACVVC front left .....	95.00	_____	_____	_____
43.	Windbreaker, black w/snap front, BH insignia & VN Ribbon .....	35.00	_____	_____	_____
44.	See through Window Decal Blackhorse Patch 5" x 4.5" .....	10.00	_____	_____	_____
45.	See through Window Decal Blackhorse Patch 12" x 13" .....	15.00	_____	_____	_____

Subtotal \_\_\_\_\_

Shipping and Handling \_\_\_\_\_

Total \_\_\_\_\_

Note: unless otherwise noted, all clothing items are available in size medium through size 3XL  
Specify size and color preference of item requested.

### Shipping Costs: (Includes multiple items)

- A) \$3.00 — \$5.00 = \$3.00    C) \$10.00 — \$35.00 = \$15.00    Gear Bag Only = \$25.00
- B) \$6.00 — \$10.00 = \$9.00    D) \$36.00 and up = \$20.00    Gear Bags with other items = \$28.00

Visa  Mastercard Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ CVC Code \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

### \* If paying by check, please write your drivers license number on the check.

\*Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

\*Address \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

\*City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Check if address change

Please include the largest of chosen items S/H costs with your order. Checks or Money Orders should be made payable to 11th ACVVC. ALL PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE. Previous price lists are invalid. Mail order to: 11th ACVVC Quartermaster, c/o Jerry Beamon, 15926 Cedar Bay Dr., Bullard, TX 75757. JerryLBea@aol.com

\* Required info to process your order



**11ACVVC**  
 13194 Rettew Dr.  
 Manassas, VA 20112-7800  
 CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

## REUNION 2022 SHERATON BIRMINGHAM



NONPROFIT ORG.  
 U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
 Pontiac, Illinois  
 PERMIT NO. 592

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