



Thunder Run

Vol. 27 – NO. 2

“Together Then – Together Again”

2nd Quarter, 2012

The 11th Armored Cavalry’s Veterans of Vietnam and Cambodia

Sewall Menzel to Address 11th ACVVC in Orlando

ORLANDO 2012



**Sewall Menzel
Guest Speaker**

We are pleased to announce that Sewall Menzel has graciously accepted our invitation to be the guest speaker at the 27th annual reunion banquet on Saturday, September 15th at the Rosen Centre Hotel in Orlando, Florida.

Sewall served two tours of duty in Vietnam. In 1968 he served with the 101st Airborne Division during the TET offensive and with MACV as a counter-guerrilla militia advisor in Lam Dong Province. After attending the Armor School at Fort Knox, Sewall returned to Vietnam to join the Blackhorse Regiment’s 2nd Squadron at Loc Ninh in December 1969. He worked at the squadron’s headquarters

as the S-2 (intelligence) officer for several weeks before taking command of first E Troop and then G Troop in Tay Ninh Province. While in command of G Troop, Captain Menzel led the unit across the border into Cambodia as part of the American invasion on May 1, 1970.

Following the withdrawal of our troops from Cambodia during the summer, Sewall volunteered to return to Lam Dong Province to pass on the lessons learned from both E and G Troops’ experiences.

Please turn to **MENZEL** on page 6



Sewall Menzel (bareheaded, facing center) and his E Troop platoon leaders (left to right), Lieutenant John Crisman, Sergeant First Class Mark Cantu, and Captain John Miller examine captured antitank grenades which were part of the results of the previous night’s trip-wired Claymore ambush, 24 February 1970.

By: Steve Page

Reunion Committee Chairman

The Orlando reunion is less than five months away. The planning for this event is almost complete and the Rosen Centre is ready for our arrival. The hotel is beautiful both inside and out and offers impeccable service.

There are three places to dine at the Rosen. The Everglades, which is upper scale, Gaugan, which is moderately priced and Reds Deli, offers a variety of food items at good prices. The lobby bar offers food along with a large variety of adult beverages. The Rosen Centre Hotel offers a gift shop and spa. There is also a health club and a very large outdoor pool. Free self parking is also available for our attendees.

The Rosen Centre is located at 9840 International Drive. There are many shops, outlet malls, restaurants and other fun activities along International Drive. The street has something for everyone. Complementary shuttle service to Sea World, Wet ‘n Wild and Universal Studios is available from the hotel. Transportation to all Disney parks can be arranged at the hotel ticket counter.

Please turn to **ORLANDO** on page 6

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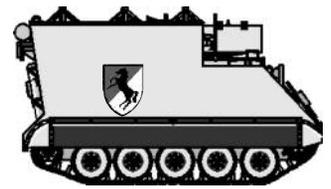




Allen Hathaway
President

From The Command Track

By Allen Hathaway, President



Plans are being finalized for the 27th annual reunion in Orlando, Florida, on September 12-16. Reunions are a great

place to renew old friendships and to make new friends. Once again this promises to be an outstanding reunion and an opportunity to be with others who served with the Blackhorse Regiment.

The Rosen Centre Hotel is a beautiful hotel located near many of the popular attractions in the Orlando area. Many of those attending have planned to arrive a few days early in order to combine the reunion with a visit to some of the Central Florida attractions.

We are pleased to announce that Sewall Menzel will be our guest speaker at the Saturday evening banquet and program. Sewall has an impressive 25 year career in the United States Army, with over four years spent in Vietnam. As a captain in 1970 he served as troop Commander of first E Troop then G Troop, 2nd Squadron. While in command of G Troop, Captain Menzel led the unit across the border into Cambodia as part of the American invasion on May 1, 1970. Sewall Menzel wrote of his experiences in Vietnam in the book called "Battle Captain". (The main title for the book was derived from the 2nd Squadron, 11th ACR call sign "Battle".)

We are also pleased to announce that Dr. Candace Drake will be hosting the Veterans Seminar on Friday morning. Dr. Drake hosted the Veterans Seminar at the 2011 reunion in St. Louis, MO. It was an excellent seminar and well attended. We encourage all, veterans, family and friends, to attend the Veterans Seminar.

We expect another large turn-out for this reunion, estimated now 1,000-1,100 or more. The room block is filling up fast. We urge you to reserve your room as soon as possible to ensure your reservations are set. Contact old friends early giving them plenty of time to make their plans to attend. Feel free to contact any board member if you need help finding an old friend. Dig out your old pictures, slides and scrapbooks and come prepared to enjoy yourselves.

In mid March the officers and directors of

We expect another large turn-out for this reunion, estimated now 1,000-1,100 or more. The room block is filling up fast. We urge you to reserve your room as soon as possible to ensure your reservations are set.

the 11th ACVVC met for our annual mid-year board meeting. The two day meeting was very productive and offered an excellent opportunity to meet and discuss the current status of the many projects of our organization and to make plans for the future.

Our Scholarship Fundraising activity is going strong again for 2012. Three pages of donor's names were printed in the 1st quarter newsletter. This issue contains another long list of donors. The annual raffle is one of three activities we conduct each year to benefit the Scholarship Fund. Raffle tickets will be mailed to all members in May. We're offering some great prizes again this year so be sure to return your tickets prior to the reunion.

We also want to remind everyone to start thinking of items for the silent auction. The auction is always a fun and interesting part of the reunion. We have many talented people in the organization and they always come through for the silent auction. We welcome any item for the silent auction. Please see the separate article in this issue.

Sales for the new book "Blackhorse Riders" by Phil Keith are doing well. The book is the story of A Troop's daring rescue of an infantry company surrounded by an overwhelming enemy force near the Cambodian border in March 1970. This is the story of the Blackhorse troopers who overcame overwhelming odds to save their fellow soldiers. Their action was finally recognized some 40 years later when A Troop was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation in a ceremony held at the White House in 2009. The hard cover version of "Blackhorse Riders" is over 330 pages packed with detailed descriptions of the actions by those who were there.

Phil Keith will be attending the 2012 reunion in Orlando to address the membership on Saturday morning and to autograph the book. "Blackhorse Riders" is available through the Quartermaster. Please see the complete line of Quartermaster products at the end of this issue and how to order.

We are always looking for YOUR stories. The first quarter issues of *Thunder Run* contained three personnel accounts by Leo Deege, George Ruggles and Mark Crist as well as the regular featured article "Blackhorse Hoofbeats" by historian Don Snedeker. These are excellent stories and historical facts of your tour and your regiment in Vietnam. Please continue to send us your stories. Submissions should be directed to Bill Gregory, *Thunder Run* editor. His address and e-mail information can be found on page 3.

We received many phone calls after our last newsletter from troopers who recognized names in "Welcome Aboard" section and the donors list. It always very gratifying to be able to reconnect old friends after many years. Please look at the new members list this issue of *Thunder Run*.

We also have several hundred unit rosters covering the period 1966-1972. We plan to add the names from these rosters to our website over the next 6 to 8 months. This may help in remembering names and in locating old friends.

Don Snedeker, our Historian, has done extensive research and summarized the many operations the 11th ACR participated in from 1966-1972. The list of operations, dates and units will be posted to our website soon.

We find new Blackhorse troopers every week. If you are looking for someone, please feel free to contact me or any board member and we will try to put you in contact and old friend.

We invite all Blackhorse troopers, family and friends to honor our fallen comrades on Memorial Day, May 31, as we lay our Blackhorse wreath at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial on that day. If you're not able to attend, take a moment wherever you may be and remember our comrades-in-arms. They shall not be forgotten. Their memory will live forever. ALLONS! – It's good to be "Together Again".



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," C.E. "Bill" Gregory, Jr., 421 Fallen Leaf Dr., Soddy Daisy, TN 37379-3577.

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SFC Yano – COL Leach



Guest speaker John C. "Doc" Bahnsen during the dedication ceremony honoring SFC Rodney J. T. Yano

BG John C. "Doc" Bahnsen (L) and Glenn Yano (R) unveil plaque at the dedication of the Central Wash Facility honoring SFC Rodney J. T. Yano



M-1 tank prepares to enter new central wash facility

An M-1 tank moves through the new Central Wash Facility named in honor of SFC Rodney J. T. Yano



March 23, 2012.

Two Blackhorse troopers were honored in separate ceremonies today at the Armor School at Fort Benning, GA.

The Central Wash Facility for tanks and Bradley Fighting Vehicles was named in honor of SFC Rodney J.T. Yano, a crew chief who served with Air Cavalry Troop, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment in Vietnam. The wash facility is a fully automated, multi-million dollar, state-of-the-art complex.

SFC Yano was awarded the Medal of Honor for actions on January 1, 1969, in the Republic of Vietnam. BG John. C. "Doc" Bahnsen (USA Ret) was the keynote speaker during the ceremony. Bahnsen, the helicopter pilot that day, recalled that, while flying as crew chief in support of a combat mission, a grenade exploded prematurely covering SFC Yano with burning phosphorus and left him severely wounded. Flaming fragments within the helicopter caused supplies and ammunition to deto-

nate. Dense white smoke filled the aircraft, obscuring the pilot's vision and causing him to lose control. Although having the use of only one arm and being partially blinded by the initial explosion, SFC Yano completely disregarded his welfare and began hurling blazing ammunition from the helicopter. In so doing he inflicted additional wounds upon himself, yet he persisted until the danger was past. His actions allowed the pilot to land the aircraft safely and prevented the loss of life and additional injuries to the rest of his crew.

Also present and representing the Yano family was brother Glen Yano from Kona, Hawaii.

In the separate ceremony, COL James H. "Jimmie" Leach was recognized with the dedication of 3rd Battalion, 81st Armor Regiment's headquarters building.

With the dedication of the headquarters building the life and legacy of retired COL James Leach was memorialized for generations to

come. This legacy encompasses 34 years of service, the command of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment and a range of military honors.

"I know that Jimmy would be honored because he loved Armor," said his wife, Marion. "He loved the Armor family. He loved the Armor School. I feel like his presence is here. I thank those of you young Armor officers and young Armor Soldiers today who are going to carry on the tradition."

Marion said she hopes the Soldiers who come through Leach Hall take the time to stop and look at her husband's memorabilia on display in glass cases near the main entrance. The artifacts include his decorations, coins, burial flag, portrait and a World War II helmet with a bullet hole showing where he was shot Dec. 24, 1944, during the Battle of the Bulge. Despite being wounded twice during the fight, Leach led his men to victory with a devotion that earned him the Distinguished Service Cross.

Honored at Fort Benning

“The dedication and naming of this building is a worthy tribute to a Soldier’s Soldier,” said retired LTG John Ballantyne, who shared his memories of Leach with the crowd of Family and friends who attended the ceremony. “This gathering today has been very professionally and carefully arranged to accomplish really two things — to honor and pay tribute to the late COL Jimmy Leach, and then by his lifetime example to inspire all those who are going to have the good fortune of using ... this fine new facility. COL Leach was a Soldier and a warrior who loved his country, served with distinction through three wars. He was in every way a fine leader.”

Ballantyne first met Leach in 1969 just after the latter had taken command of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment.

“A very hectic time — the height of the Vietnam War,” said Ballantyne, then the executive officer. “We were working long hours,” he said, “mak-

ing assignments for second and third tours affecting officers and their careers and their Families. And busy as we were, COL Jimmy Leach never failed to take the time to talk to any junior officer who walked in and wanted his counsel. That made for some long evenings sometimes. He personally reviewed every assignment for every officer and made sure it met the needs of the service, the needs of the officer and the needs of that officer’s Family. He cared for the Soldiers he commanded.”

Retired COL James Bradin, who served with Leach in Vietnam, said his friend fought to save the careers of two young Soldiers who were wounded in Vietnam but wished to continue on active duty. Both later became general officers who rose to high positions of leadership in the Army. “He worked hard at everything he did,” Bradin said. “He was the guy who would stand up for the little guy. I miss him.”

From all he has read

and heard about him, LTC William Nuckols, commander of 3rd Bn., 81st Armor Regt., said Leach was “certainly one of the very best of ‘The Greatest Generation.’”

His name and his belongings that grace the building will be seen by thousands of Soldiers every year who pass through the hall during training. But more importantly perhaps, it will be seen regularly by the cadre who train the Soldiers, Nuckols said.

“They’ve been to combat. They know,” he said. “To see the faces on my NCOs out here reading his bio and looking at the artifacts — you can see it on the face, they understand what a hero this guy was and the personal self-sacrifice he exhibited. So through them, it will have a tremendous impact on the 20,000 Soldiers a year we train. I have no doubt about that.”

(Portions reprinted from “The Bayonett”, Fort Benning, GA, March 28, 2012)



LTG John Ballantyne (USA, Ret.) speaks at Leach dedication.



Mrs. Marion Leach unveils the bronze plaque honoring her late husband James H. (Jimmie) Leach.



Mrs. Marion Leach, left, unveils the plaque honor her late husband James H. (Jimmie) Leach. Son Jamie and granddaughter, right, unveil the portrait of COL Leach.



Bronze plaque honoring COL James H. (Jimmie) Leach



Editor's Corner

C.E. "Bill" Gregory

Remember to plan for your trip to Orlando... One time they ran out of space at the main hotel and I had to go "overflow" down the street. It is much better to plan early and be sure you get the full benefit of all the planning the reunion folks do for us.

Bill Gregory, Editor
Thunder Run

Is it Spring already? The calendar says so. Around my part of the country we pretty much skipped winter this year. Had a nice fall, two or three cold days and jumped right into spring like weather. We pretty much have loved it, but it did bring tornado season on early which was no fun at all. Hope the weather has been good where you are and you stay safe from storms.

This issue of *Thunder Run* is a lot about heroes. Men like Jerry Wickam, Rodney Yano, John Hays, James Leach, and George Patton; who each have received hard earned and richly deserved recognition for their actions while serving with the 11th ACR. These men are only five of a long line of great men who served in the Blackhorse. Their sacrifice deserves to be honored and those of us who are combat veterans have a very deep and unique understanding of what they did and why they did it. Memorial Day is approaching and it is proper that we honor these heroes along with the millions of others who sacrificed so much throughout the history of our nation.

We also have some business stuff and

some really good articles by Leonard Deege, Steve Crabill, David Stone, Eric Newton, Blandon Karabinos, and a moving poem from Frank Church. You may never see a watermelon again without thinking of Steve Crabill. Our usual columnists are included as well and are informative and entertaining as usual. Our dear friend Chaplain Haworth reminds us of something we do not normally talk a lot about, but was a daily part of life in "The 'Nam". Pay close attention to the Quartermaster order form, there have been a few changes there.

Remember to plan for your trip to Orlando. I have been to ten reunions and have done it both ways, some I have planned and made advance reservations for and others I did it at the last minute. One time they ran out of space at the main hotel and I had to go "overflow" down the street. It is much better to plan early and be sure you get the full benefit of all the planning the reunion folks do for us. Orlando is one of the great family vacation centers of the world, plenty to do for everyone from toddlers to us old guys so have a fun vacation!

MENZELL from page 1

This involved teaching the militia forces how to use and set up Claymore battery activated tripwire mines which E troop and G Troop had used with great success in Tay Ninh Province. The militia forces subsequently applied the Blackhorse's tactics against the guerrilla trail networks throughout Lam Dong Province causing the Viet Cong there to begin to surrender for the first time in the war!

After Vietnam, Sewall's military career took him to Latin America with assignments to Army Special Forces (Green Berets) in the Canal Zone and a series of American embassies in Bolivia, Colombia, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala and Peru. This involved him in America's efforts to promote democracy

in the region by overthrowing dictators, quashing drug dealers and defeating insurgencies of one sort or another.

Since retirement from the Army in 1989, Sewall has been teaching at Florida International and Florida Atlantic Universities. He has taught undergraduate courses in American Foreign Policy, The Art of War and Latin American Politics.

Sewall grew up in the Chicago area before going to Charleston, South Carolina to attend The Citadel, a ROTC-supported military college. He currently lives in Pembroke Pines, Florida with his wife Patti and their two sons William and Stewart.

(Editor's note: Mr. Menzel retired as a Lieutenant Colonel).

Memorial Day Wreath at the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial (The Wall)

All Blackhorse Troopers, family, and friends are invited to participate in the Annual Memorial Day wreath laying at the Wall

When: 10:00AM, Monday, May 28, 2012

Where: Near the Three Soldiers Statue at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Washington D.C.

Who: All Blackhorse Troopers from all eras, family and friends

What: We will initially gather near the statue of the Three Soldiers, make introductions, say a few words, and then informally carry the wreath to the apex of the Wall (Look for the Blackhorse Patch Wreath that will be there by 09:30).

Please pass this information to anyone

ORLANDO from page 1

The I-Ride Trolley travel the entire length of International Drive and are very inexpensive to use. The senior price is \$.25 per ride for 65 years or older. The regular price is \$1.25. Multi day tickets can be purchased for \$4.00 for one day pass, \$6.00 for three day pass and \$8.00 for a five day pass. Children under 12 are free. There are one hundred stops and the trollies run every twenty minutes. The trolley is equiped to handle disabled passengers. Trollies run between 8:00 am and 10:30 pm and transfers are free.

If you have not already made your hotel reservations this is the time to do so. Hotel reservations information can be found on page 25 of this this issue.

Your reunion registration can also be made now. The forms are in *Thunder Run* and on the 11th ACVVC website. We expect another very large turnout in Orlando. If you have not attended a reunion, now is the time to do so. We look forward to seeing you there!

Forty Years Ago



Blackhorse Veterans at "The Wall."

*Blandin Karabinos
HHT, 2/11 ACR 71-72*

We are observing the 150th anniversary of the Civil War. Actually we are in the second year of the anniversary and this year the battles on the Peninsula, at Shiloh, 2nd Manassas, and Antietam have special significance.

It is also the 70 anniversary of Guadalcanal, and to put that into perspective, a surviving 19 year old Marine from that 1942 pivotal battle, is now 89 and one of our fast diminishing national treasurers.

March 21 of this year marked the 40th anniversary of the "Stand-down" of the 2nd Squadron and the casing of the 11th Cav colors in Vietnam. The regimental colors were escorted to Fort Lewis, Washington and the 11th Armored Cavalry was temporarily removed from the Army's active structure. In remarks from the early morning Awards Ceremony on 21 March in Phu Loi, MG Hollingsworth, the TRAC Commander commented on the 11th Cav, "... no unit has served in Vietnam with greater distinction." The 2nd Squadron was decorated twice during that final year with the Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm for the bravery of its troopers in combat action. In

addition, The Department of the Army General Order 8, 1974, announced the award of the Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm to US Army, Vietnam, for the period 20 July 1965 to 28 March 1973.

After the colors and the command structure left for Tan San Nhut, about 80 of us loaded up the last of our equipment and road marched to Long Binh. Most remaining troopers were reassigned to units still in Vietnam, many to the 1st Cavalry Division; others, as their time in-country expired, to "Freedom Birds."

The next seven days saw our numbers steadily decrease. Finally on the 28th, with all the equipment turned in and the last bus departing for Saigon and a flight home, I drove the CO's jeep, still with 11th Cav markings, to Bien Hoa to join the Gary Owen Task Force, 1st/7th Cav.

For the last 25 years, troopers in the Washington, DC area have gathered at the Wall on Memorial Day to remember their brother troopers. Not just those we lost in SE Asia, but the many others who have since passed on to Fiddlers' Green. After greeting each other and a bit of good-nature kidding, we process down along that special Wall to place a distinctive Black Horse wreath at the

center, say a prayer or two and pause in remembrance. We then just fade away. Besides the DC area troopers, many have come from all parts of the country; California, Florida, Maine, the Rockies and every state in-between. Unofficially, 40 to 60 gather — without ceremony, without rank; bond only together by a red, black and white patch.

This year will be the 40th anniversary of the completion of our mission in Vietnam. I have been especially blessed to be able to gather there these last several years.

Allons.

2012 Election

*By: Adrian Vaaler
Secretary, 11th ACVVC*

One Director's position will be up for election this year during the General Membership Meeting held on Saturday morning at the 2012 Reunion.

The Director position is a three year term, beginning on January 1, 2013.

Nominations for this position may be forwarded to me as Secretary (11thsecretary@gmail.com); Nominations may also be made and accepted at the 2012 Reunion General Membership Meeting.

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 candidate must be able to attend the annual reunion and two Board meetings, each year of his elected term.

The elected Director must be able to communicate by email to 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 the Director's position.

Steve Page, the current Director, has been nominated to run again for this position.

Show Your Pride



A reliable source tells us that this is Bob Scott's favorite spot on his farm in southeast Minnesota. Bob served with F Troop 2/11 in 1968-69



Serious pride is shown by David Fowler (A Troop, 1/11, 67-68) as he displays his truck rear window graphic designed by his son Mitch.



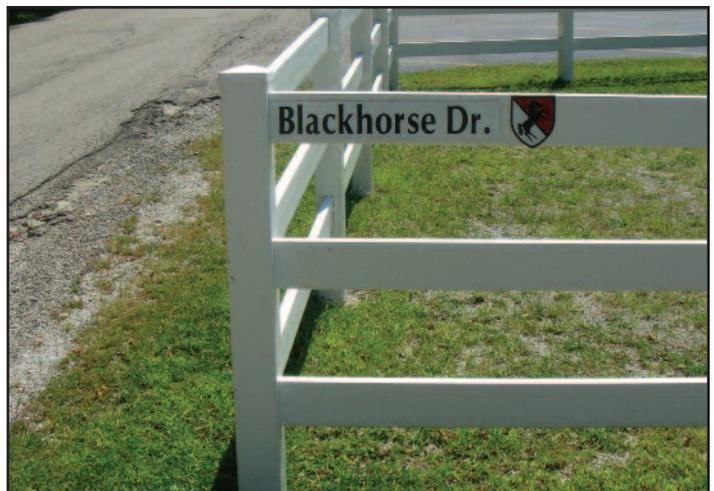
Mike Shepler (HHT, 2/11, 70-71) shows his pride for all who visit his Wichita, Kansas home.



Gerald Jackson (B Troop 1/11) shows Texas size pride with his truck as he motors around the state.



James "Unk" Ondulick (HHT 2/11 67 - 68) shows his pride in a giant way with this 4 ft. X 5 ft. painting on the bed cover of his pick-up truck.



Danny Kreger (F Troop 68-69) lets the world know that a Blackhorse trooper lives here. As he displays his pride at his drive to his West Virginia home.

THE IRON TRIANGLE

By: Leo Deege
How, 3/11, 1965-67

Our intelligence predicted that the infamous Triangle, in Vietnam contained at least one 1200 men Vietcong [VC] regiment and an artillery base. Before my involvement as part of the spearhead 11th Cavalry that thrust into the Triangle, about 30,000 US and South Vietnamese troops had already surrounded most of the Triangle. Four B-52 bombing raids and many saber jet sorties had softened up resistance. After that 760 paratroopers of the 173rd Airborne Brigade jumped along the northern edge of the Triangle to seal enemy escape routes. Our mission was to destroy what ever remained of the enemy.

Two days before the operation about 215,000 leaflets were airdropped into the Triangle to warn civilians [and incidentally the VC] that a massive assault would be launched. OPCON to the 173rd, we liaised with their field headquarters and reconnoitered¹ the Triangle on the way. The element of surprise had already been compromised.

On D-day our tanks and Armored Cavalry Assault Vehicles rolled into the Triangle, while meeting light resistance. Some vehicles ran over mines and accompanying infantry troopers were tripping booby traps and receiving small arms fires.

According to a January 1967 newspaper account, one B-52 strike destroyed the Vietcong regiment, while survivors fled north into the forests. As we rode into the Triangle we saw huge holes in the ground, courtesy U.S. Air Force. Bombs had destroyed some of the installations. Bamboo poles and lumber were sticking out of craters, while debris was visible everywhere. Just before the evening we established a laager² inside of the Triangle. We expected little trouble that night. Because all of our forward observers were occupied, I decided to go up in an observation helicopter myself to

For the uninitiated, imagine fighting a guerrilla on his terms, not being able to use our most powerful weapons, firing only when fired on, unless bureaucratically approved by an ally government infested with enemy spies. Fighting an unseen enemy, which was everywhere and at the same time nowhere, while the casualties of war were daily shown on TV in living colors to our families and friends back home.

adjust our guns for our night time defense.

For better visibility, a Bell observation helicopter's front and sides are made of Plexiglas. The bubble is easily split with a stray bullet. When the bubble splits, the top half detaches and flies into the main rotor. This would likely crash the chopper. Bullets can easily hit the outside rear gas tank, which would cause the chopper to explode into a fire ball, incinerating the occupants. When the rear rotor is hit or malfunctions, the whole chopper goes into a harmonic spin which results in the helicopter to bursting apart. A so-called "Jesus nut" is a well secured contraption that attaches the main rotor blade to the helicopter's main frame. When this nut gets detached all occupants are believed to meet their maker. The observation helicopter is commonly called a "flying coffin."

On this particular mission I was glad to be accompanied by Cpt. Grant, our most experienced pilot. Almost as soon as we were airborne and flying above the jungle canopy to get oriented, our helicopter flew into an air pocket that resulted in dropping us down for a few yards. I watched Cpt. Grant making quick adjustments to the collective³, trying to grab some air and attempting to keep the chopper upright. Huge perspiration droplets were collecting on his forehead. After a few seconds, the rotor blades caught air and we let out a sigh of relief. As soon as the copter was righted we went in search of our target.

Cpt. Grant ensured that we were out of our own line of fire before allowing me to call in our first "fire mission" into the Triangle. After the mission was completed it was dark and we started to return to our laager.

Suddenly Cpt. Grant took the chopper into a turn and called out that we were receiving fire. I heard automatic fire, "rat, tat, tat, tat," and saw orange tracer rounds getting ever closer to our chopper. Cpt. Grant spun the copter into a steep descent⁴ which caused me to loose sight of the tracer rounds as we rapidly approached the canopy. Can we right her before we hit the trees? Yes, miracle accomplished. Flying a few yards above the jungle my pilot somehow found the clearing where we had set up camp. We landed safely inside of our laager, which now looked like "home sweet home" to me.

The next few days the 11th Cavalry thrust down the triangle, sporadically encountering enemy resistance. Our "tunnel rats"⁵ explored the myriad of tunnels and installations before the destruction started with flame throwers, explosives, flooding and tanks with bulldozer blades. A Los Angeles news paper reported: Base camps and tunnels destroyed, 3250⁶ civilian peasants moved out to resettlement centers, 1306 tons of rice captured, 217 weapons captured, 200⁷ enemy dead and 40 prisoners taken. US casualties were 72.

Continued on page 11

The Patton We Knew and Respected

By: Eric Newton, K Troop, 3/11
Public Affairs Chair, 11th ACVVC

My first face-to-face encounter with Col. George S. Patton was in early 1969 when the Red



Cross notified me of my grandfather's death and I was granted leave to attend the funeral. We were at Fire Support Base "Bandit Hill". I was told by TOP to get my gear and get aboard the next re-supply Huey which was expected on the LZ any moment. It wasn't long before I heard the distinctive whop- whop of the blades in the distance and headed to the dusty LZ. I was standing at the open door ready to jump in as the bird touched down. My head and eyes down to protect from the blowing dust. The next thing I saw was a pair of jungle boots hit the ground in front of me. When I looked up, I was helmet to helmet with my regimental commander, Col. George S. Patton. I was in an encounter every enlisted man dreaded. Did I salute? No, we're outside the wire and there could be a sniper in the tree-line. I suppose I had that WTH look on my face and I was spared the need to verbally communicate. "Where are you headed soldier" he shouted over the rotor noise. I shouted back that I had a death in the family and was told to get on the mail chopper back to Blackhorse Base Camp, "Sorry sir".

Col. Patton leaned in and shouted to the pilot to take me back to base camp, so I climbed in. As we gained altitude I began to get over my shock. I reflected on the reason why a full-bird Colonel would send his helicopter and crew back to base camp and stay on the ground at a forward fire base. He didn't have to do this. The mail chopper was on the way.

On February 7th, 1969, I volunteered to go with a team of six K-Troopers and a Vietnamese interpreter to verify the information of a Viet Cong soldier who had surrendered. We left the night defensive position and the prisoner led us to a tunnel and pointed out a trip-wired hand grenade just a few steps before I walked

His command of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment in Vietnam was his proudest moment he told me that night. "Find the Bastards and Pile On" was the motto for the 11th. And that they did while under his command

into it. Additional information indicated that a bunker complex was nearby and occupied by a North Vietnamese Pay Officer and his security detail. Someone decided this information should be radioed back to the command track. Reinforcements in Armored Cavalry Assault Vehicles were sent out to meet us and go in. The prisoner's information was correct and three K-Troopers lost their lives that day while giving the enemy a chance to surrender. Patton was livid and promised to get the "bastards" responsible. His chopper immediately began circling the area and stayed until the word came after dark that the enemy had been found, killed and the money captured.

In 1992 at the 11th Armored Cavalry's Veterans of Vietnam and Cambodia reunion in San Antonio, Texas, I was privileged to sit across the table from General Patton and his wife, Joanne, at the evening banquet. After the line of well-wishers and autograph seekers took their seats, the general gazed at my name tag with the troop and year I served. And then he spoke. "Do you remember Sgt. Carr and McLean.?" "Yes sir," I replied, "I was on the initial recon with the prisoner that day". He paused during what appeared to be a troubling thought and set back in his chair. I could see the pain in his eyes and realized that he had carried a heavy burden for a long time. Trying to get some levity back in the evening and take his mind off this, I mustered my strength and leaned forward and whispered, "Sir, I always wondered what happened to the money that was captured from the North Vietnamese pay officer". I didn't really expect an answer. Now, I can't be certain because I was becoming a victim of a few Texas sized Margaritas and I had imagined several "what if" scenarios over the last twenty plus years. Perhaps I imagined

that he leaned over and whispered back, "I sent it to their families".

Patton spent 34 years in the United States Army and distinguished himself over the course of his career. He fought in two wars which included three tours in Vietnam. He received two Distinguished Service Crosses (the second highest commendation for bravery in combat next to the Medal of Honor), two Silver Stars (the third highest), two Bronze Stars and the Purple Heart. After his 1980 retirement, Patton turned the 250-acre estate owned by his legendary father near Boston into the successful organic Green Meadows Farm. He named the fields to honor Vietnam soldiers who died under his command.

♦ **Wickam Plot** – named in honor of Corporal Jerry Wayne Wickam who was awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously for his actions on January 6, 1968 while serving with F Troop, 2nd Squadron, 11th ACR.

♦ **Yano Plot** – named in honor of Sergeant First Class Rodney J. T. Yano who was awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously for his actions on January 1, 1969 while serving with Air Cavalry Troop, 11th ACR.

♦ **Hays Plot** – named in honor of Captain John Hulsey Hays who was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross posthumously for his actions on November 8, 1968 while serving with B Troop, 1st Squadron, 11th ACR.

♦ **Blackhorse Field** – named in honor of the 11th U. S. Cavalry.

He also named one for the Michelin Rubber Plantation which was his last major battle as commander of the 11th Armored Cavalry at the end of his tour. The plantation was owned by the French government who had forbid US forces from entering the area, thereby creating a sanctuary for the enemy. Patton's persistence finally paid off as the US com-

mander, General Creighton Abrams granted the Regiment permission to pursue the North Vietnamese and flush them out of the plantation in March of 1969.

His command of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment in Vietnam was his proudest moment he told me that night. "Find the Bastards and Pile On" was the motto for the 11th. And that they did while under his command. The Regiment aggressively moved their armor off the roads and into the jungle in search of the enemy, a concept previously thought not feasible except in the dry season. Two of the three Congressional Medals of Honor awarded to Blackhorse troopers in Vietnam were earned during his command. His stewardship in battle catapulted many promising careers in later years including that of Lt. Thomas White of the Blackhorse Aero Rifle Platoon, who later became the Secretary of the Army in 2001.

In the book, *Growing Up Patton*, authored by son Benjamin Patton, Benjamin states,

"When my father was dying, he couldn't stop worrying about his soldiers".

After that evening in San Antonio, I found the answer to my question in that chopper headed to base camp in 1969. Col Patton genuinely cared about his troops. His very presence struck fear in warriors. He was hard, but fair. I realize now that his hardness and by-the-book leadership no doubt saved many lives. No one wanted to wear the heavy steel pot helmet and flak vest in that tropical heat. But when Patton showed up, everyone was getting their gear on but fast. Without a doubt, Patton had the respect and admiration of his men which was exhibited in their stellar performance during his command in Vietnam.

Footnote:

George Smith Patton, December 24, 1923 – June 27, 2004, was in his last year at West Point when his father, George S. Patton Jr., was killed in a traffic accident in Germany in December 1945. For a time, the younger man was known as George S. Patton III, but he eventually dropped the Roman numeral, his wife said.

11 ACVVC Members Give Record Donations for 2011

*By Ollie Pickral,
Treasurer, 11th ACVVC*

For calendar year 2011, our Treasury received a record number of donations from our membership for our Scholarship Fund. As you are aware, donations for this fund comes from four sources. Proceeds from our calendar, cash donations, annual raffle and the silent auction allow us the give scholarships to the children of our members in the amount of \$4,000 each (One outstanding scholar receives a \$6,000 scholarship).

For 2011, a record number of contributors and donation amounts were received from the calendar alone! 1,584 troopers contributed \$57,667.00 which broke 2010's record amount of \$40,623.00.

Because of these donations it allowed us to award 24 scholarships to our member's children for 2011.

As we start the New Year, your calendar donations are pouring in and we hope to exceed last year's amount. Remember, monetary donations to the Scholarship fund are tax deductible.

When considering giving to charitable organizations, please place the 11 ACVVC Scholarship Fund at the top of your list. Let's break 2011's record to assure all qualified applicants receive a scholarship in 2012.

We are nearing \$1 million dollars given as scholarships to our KIA children and our membership's children for higher education. I don't know of any other Army unit organization that can claim that from pure donations from its membership. You guys have a lot to be proud of and that shows to me that we are, "Together Then – Together Again".

ALLONS

TRIANGLE from page 9

However, the area was never completely neutralized and remained used by the VC throughout the war.

In terms of costs and benefits, the operation achieved little as compared to the tremendous costs that we incurred. Many ironies have since become apparent. For example, we fought along with an ally that was not as motivated as our enemies. This ally still needed to win over the population with propaganda leaflets, but required them to resettle and destroy their ancestral homes. On the other hand we distributed food, candy and medical assistance to the locals, while fire fights sometimes killed civilian bystanders. War is always hell and cannot be effectively conducted in a politically correct or "humane" manner.

For the uninitiated, imagine fighting a guerrilla on his terms, not being able to use our most powerful weapons, firing only when fired on, unless bureaucraticly approved by an ally government infested with enemy spies. Fighting an unseen enemy, which was everywhere and at the same time nowhere, while the casualties of war were daily shown on TV in living

colors to our families and friends back home? Imagine then returning home to a society that was in complete chaos, with riots⁸ in the streets, rallies where draft cards were burnt and medals tossed over the White House fence.

Our 11th Cavalry troopers had committed to endure these strange circumstances and did so honorably, with loyalty and at the risk of their lives. I salute all of you and am proud to have been a member of that dedicated and patriotic band of brothers. Allons!

- 1 With a noisy Huey gunship.
- 2 Circular defensive formation as was used by the Boers in South Africa.
- 3 Control that alters the main blade's angle.
- 4 An emergency maneuver [autorotation] that is second nature to experienced pilots.
- 5 Specially trained soldiers armed only with a flashlight and a handgun.
- 6 455 VC were also evacuated and forgiven under the "Chu Hoi" [open arms] program.
- 7 This figure is probably understated by several hundred.
- 8 My first job upon returning from Vietnam was in a riotous Washington D.C.

11TH ACVVC DONATIONS

Donations to various 11th ACVVC activities since the 3rd Quarter 2011 issue of *Thunder Run*

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

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Gold Level

Varljen, Frank

Scholarship

Gold Level

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Miller, James
Parks, Harvey
Patton, Joanne
Varljen, Frank

Silver Level

Carpenter, Frank
Pledger, Murray

Bronze Level

Bumanglag, Luis
Crosier, J. Leo
Dubravac, Stephen
McIntosh, James
Neary, Sheldon
Padykula, Roger
Sinclair, Susan

Calendar

Platinum Level

Bachman, William
Jarrett, James
Simpson, Michael

Gold Level

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Bourdess, Andrew
Brennan, Paul
Carr, Thomas
Clark, Bill
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Ferreira, John
Fierro, Jose
Fischer, George
Forbes, Michael
Gardenhire, Gary
Gaston, William
Gentry, Lee
Hain, James
Hand, Rocky
Henson, Stephen
Hughes, Henry
Jacobs, Gary
Jones, Daniel

Kelly, Dennis
Kerrick, Jonathan
Kraxberger, W.S.
Macon, Robert
Mashburn, Lewis
McGrail, Ed
McRoberts, Thomas
Nicklas, Harold
Orzo, Joan
Peters, Michael
Sutton, George
White, Tom
Wickstrom, Eric
Wood, Eddie

Silver Level

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Bailey, Benjamin
Bakos, Richard
Barnhouse, Lawrence
Baughman, William
Baxley, Horace
Blose, Michael
Burwick, Larry
Cavinder, Larry
Cochran, A. Frank
Coe, Garry
Coft, Larry
Cutright, Jerry
Darson, Jim
Denaro, Matthew
Dowding, Arthur
Doyle, Timothy
Effinger, John
Eriser, James
Ewert, Robert
Fortnam, David
French, William
Gallman, David
Gathe, Wilbur
Gulley, Gerald
Harris, William
Haynes, J.P.
Hemner, Eugene
Henry, Freddie
Hensley, Jerry
Herb, John
Hessburg, Joseph
Holman, Gustaf
Ingram, Glendon
Karabinos, Blandin
Kelly, Ronald
King, Edward
Koch, Anthony
Kotek, Richard
Kuchenbuch, C.M.
Labrecque, Simon
Lump, Edward

Lyle, Ross
Manzo, Joseph
Mathis, Jerry
McEliece, James
Minter, Mark
Mitchell, Jerry
Mollhoff, Wayne
Moore, Earl
Moore, Larry
Morehouse, Terry
Morris, Heney
Morrison, Jack
Moyer, Jack
Muchesko, Joseph
Murphy, Ken
Musselwhite, John
Nute, Charles
Olson, Gene
Parkins, Tom
Plummer, Kenneth
Ramsey, Steven
Ray, Judson
Ritter, Jim
Ryburn, Glenn
Sather, Alvin
Sayers, Brenner
Simmons, Michael
Sowinski, James
Stivers, Terry
Stogner, H.G.
Stoll, Ned
Stubbs, Jerry
Suhre, William
Thompson, John
Trier, Jim
Villarreal, Emilio
Wagg, Robert
Waggoner, Hugh
Wardrope, Scott
Wheelock, Thomas
Williams, Thomas
Wurster, Stephen

Bronze Level

Abrams, Lawrence
Agosti, William
Aldridge, James
Amabile, Ernest
Anderson, Philip
Anonymous
Arana, Frederick
Arthur, Andersen
Bailey, John
Bankson, Timothy
Baratta, Robert
Barnes, Douglas
Barrington, John
Bartlett, Michael
Bell, Randall

Bellotty, James
Berry, Timothy
Blackman, Melvin
Bohr, Joseph
Borror, John
Bourdeau, Michael
Bowling, Thomas
Brading, Michael
Brewer, Joel
Brewington, Richard
Bricker, Warren
Brockwell, Ronald
Brody, Thomas
Burch, Van
Burns, John
Burr, Charles
Byrns, Michael
Byrum, Herbert
Callahan, Donald
Candelario, Mike
Canuel, Richard
Caporiccio, Guy
Carosella, Joseph
Carroll, Patrick
Carter, S.R.
Cavanagh, Michael
Chappel, Merrill
Church, Michael
Cioffi, Teddy
Clothiers, Corporate
Cobb, Stephen
Collier, Kermit
Coney, Frank
Connelly, Danny
Copeland, Danny
Cotton, A.C.
Coyne, Michael
Crudele, Anthony
Cunti, Ben
Czerepuszko, Daniel
Davis, Thomas
Day, Curt
Deege, Leonard
Dennis, Arthur
Derk, David
Desanctis, Frank
Dewitt, David
Dickinson, Paul
Dobbs, John
Dominguez, Manuel
Donnelly, Dale
Donohue, Patrick
Doubleday, Duke
Duff, Randy
Duran, Juan
Durant, Bradley
Easter, Larry
Ehrets, Steven
Emerson, Ron

Entas, Laurence
Esper, Vaughn
Estringel, Erasmo
Evans, Philip
Fannant, Marcus
Finkbiner, Glenn
Fisher, Paul
Fitzgerald, William
Foggin, John
Ford, Timothy
Forehan, Dennis
Foster, Randy
Fraliex, Larry
Francis, Roy
Frantz, William
Fry, Gary
Garabedian, John
Garber, Audrey
Garren, Kenneth
Garrity, Thomas
Garrott, Robert
Glass, Wayne
Glunn, Dennis
Godwin, David
Goff, Robert
Goodner, Quint
Gordon, Dalton
Greany, Paul
Gregg, Kenneth
Grim, Eugene
Grunloh, John
Guenthardt, Gerald
Guill, Andrew
Guldner, Peter
Gunn, Michael
Guy, Joseph
Guzowski, Frank
Hainley, Norman
Hall, William
Hansford, Harold
Hartgraves, Michael
Harvey, Ben
Hassell, Grady
Hastings, Donald
Heath, Clint
Henry, Gatewood
Hertel, Herbert
Hippis, William
Hoffman, Peter
Hoffmaster, George
Hollingsworth, Roger
Holloway, Larry
Holmes, Malcolm
Hoolehan, Kevin
Horne, Kibbey
Horvatic, Michael
Hruby, Dale
Huggins, Ronald
Humbertson, John

Hunt, Robert
Hyland, J. Lynn
Insley, Philip
Ioannides, Paul
Jack, Fred
Jacobitz, Wayne
Jeans, William
Jenson, Bradley
Jones, Paul
Kaiser, Paul
Kast, Ron
Kays, Danny
Kendall, Philip
Kidd, Ralph
King, Gregory
Klosiewicz, Thomas
Knapp, John
Knight, George
Knowlton, William
Koch, Norman
Kopec, Joseph
Kopecky, Christopher
Kriston, Edward
Kubena, William
Kuhr, Richard
Kunst, Cornelius
Kyle, Frederick
Lang, David
Lantrip, Gary
Larson, Raymond
Laws, James
Lee, Eugene
Lile, Nicholas
Linberg, Robert
Long, R.H.
Long, John
Lopes, Francis
Ludwig, David
Luis, Vargas
Lundahl, Richard
Lynch, Marilyn
Lynch, James
Madej, William
Mankowski, Carl
Mankowski, Carl
Manley, T.R.
Maples, Dennis
Martin, Romeo
Martinez, Nichols
Matthews, Winston
McCollum, William
McFee, Thaniel
McKenna, Willis
McRoberts, Gerald
McSwiggan, Joseph
Meek, Benjie
Melo, Salvador
Middleton, Donald
Miller, Kenneth

Miller, David
 Minor, Earl
 Mitchell, Cleveland
 Mittler, Larry
 Monprode, Robert
 Montgomery, Lynn
 Moody, Harry
 Morath, Frank
 Morgan, Roy
 Morgan, Dennis
 Mortillaro, Anthony
 Murphree, Richard
 Murray, Mike
 Naidas, Kenny
 Neal, Bobby
 Nelson, Harry
 Nuzzi, Norman
 O'Leary, Joseph
 O'Loughlin, Brian
 Oracz, Robert
 Ortiz, John

Ottenbreit, John
 Patrick, Ronald
 Patton, Wayne
 Pejakovich, Michael
 Persinger, Karla
 Pete, Tony
 Pfingston, Stephen
 Philipp, Edward
 Phillippi, Daniel
 Quick, Richard
 Quinlivan, John
 Ramirez, Grable
 Raper, Ronald
 Raper, Ronald
 Rasmussen, Ralph
 Ray, Kenneth
 Reed, Richard
 Reinfeld, Edgar
 Reiningger, Thomas
 Renschen, Paul
 Reynolds, Johnnie

Rice, Larry
 Rich, C.H.
 Richard, Alfred
 Roberts, Don
 Rodarte, Raymond
 Rossi, Frank
 Rothmeyer, Larry
 Roy, Morris
 Rubinstein, Stuart
 Ruffner, John
 Runion, Jack
 Sabol, T.A.
 Saldana, Richard
 Salerno, Alan
 Sanford, Clinton
 Sawvell, Gary
 Scarborough, Charles
 Scherz, Gerald
 Scohy, Russell
 Scott, Gary
 Seese, Harry

Seymour, Dave
 Sharpe, Terry
 Shelburne, John
 Sieminski, Edmund
 Simpson, Charles
 Sinclair, Robert
 Sink, Woodrow
 Skinner, Michael
 Slone, Theodore
 Smith, Paul
 Stampley, James
 Stamp, Robert
 Stark, John
 Stottsberry, Kenneth
 Switek, Joseph
 Tatum, Johnnie
 Taylor, Douglas
 Terry, Gary
 Terry, Hardy
 Thayer, Paul
 Thompson, Limmie

Thompson, Patrick
 Thrasher, Harrison
 Tidwell, Phillip
 Tighe, Michael
 Toddy, Dale
 Trevino, Reynaldo
 Trifon, Ivan
 Trottier, Raymond
 Turnbull, Andrew
 Tyre, Steve
 Van Alstine, Dennis
 Van Horn, David
 Vaughan, Travis
 Velders, Larry
 Violet, J.W.
 Wagner, Richard
 Walker, James
 Walton, Ronald
 Ward, George
 Ward, Bruce
 Watters, David

Weeks, Keith
 Welch, Dennis
 Wells, Donald
 Welton, Floyd
 Werner, Warren
 Weynand, Mary
 Whitfield, Willie
 Wiese, Frederick
 Williams, Roy
 Williams, Ray
 Wise, William
 Wood, Fred
 Wood, Kenneth
 Wooldridge, Barry
 Woolverton, Jerry
 Wright, David
 Yancey, Rodney
 Yost, Michael
 Young, James
 Zimmaro, Richard
 Zimmerman, Winn

Brothers

In every war throughout American history, there have been families who have sent more than one son into battle. The Vietnam War was not an exception, in fact our researchers have found several brothers who not only served in the Vietnam War, but who served with the Blackhorse in Vietnam. We salute every family of every soldier who served, and especially these families.

BLUE, DONALD R	F Troop, 2/11, 1967-1968
BLUE, J L	F Troop, 2/11, 1967-1968
CRIST, MARK S	Air Cavalry Troop, 1968-1969
CRIST, MICHAEL F	919th Engineer Co, 1968-1969
ENNIS, LOTTIE D	HHT Regiment, 1970
ENNIS, ROBERT B	Howitzer Battery, 2/11, 1971
HALE, RICHARD	HHT Regiment, 1968-1969
HALE, ROGER	HHT Regiment, 1968-1969
LOVETT, JERRY	HHT Regiment, 1967-1969
LOVETT, RONNIE	HHT Regiment, 1968-1969
LYLE, JAY O	Air Cavalry Troop, 1969
LYLE, ROSS W	D Company, 1/11, 1967-1968
SHAW, ROBERT L	HHT, 2/11, 1967-1968
SHAW, TROY H	G Troop, 2/11, 1968
SOWINSKI, JAMES	Regt & A Troop, 1/11, 1966-1968
SOWINSKI, TERRY W	B Troop, 1/11, 1968-1969
TERRY, GARY L	HHT Regiment, 1969-1970
TERRY, HARDY J	HHT, 3/11, 1969-1970
TERRY, WESLEY E	A Troop, 1/11, 1968-1969

Is it O. K. to Cry Now?

By Frank Church, G Troop, 2/11, 69-70

**I left my family and friends in tears, I had to be strong.
 I saw children and women in rags, I hid my
 compassion.
 I saw the wounded and maimed, I could show no
 emotion.
 I felt my buddy's last breath leave his body, I had to
 hold mine.
 I saw my enemy dead and wounded, I could only stare.
 I felt the blood run from my body, I could only curse.
 I came home to indifference, I could only wonder why.**

**I say the pledge of allegiance, my heart beat quickens.
 I see a flag at half mast; I get a knot in my stomach.
 I say "welcome home" to a Vet; I get a lump in my
 throat.
 I hear taps, my knees get weak.
 I touch a name on "The Wall", my eyes fill with tears.**

**Years of emotion fill my soul; it's getting harder to hold
 back.
 Years of pain fill my heart; I can hardly take it anymore.**

**A fellow Vet reaches out to me, the pain subsides,
 the emotion builds.**

Is it O.K. to cry now?



From the 64th Colonel of the Regiment

Tony Aguto



The Chief of Staff of the Army has communicated his intent to transform the Army into a more viable, deployable force. In this plan, the transformation is described not only in the way the Army fights but in the way it operates on a daily basis. This is about doing things better, smarter and faster while taking advantage of available technology, knowledge and experience. Our Army will become more flexible by improving our ability to quickly adapt to changing environments, missions and priorities. Over the past year, the Army has concluded its mission in Iraq and commenced the drawdown of surge forces in Afghanistan while transferring responsibility to Afghan forces. We are also undertaking efforts that will shape the Army of 2020— all during a time of conflict. These transformational efforts are both significant and unprecedented, but our Army will always continue to be a capable force fully prepared to conduct the full range of operations worldwide.

The twenty-first century requires a force able to conduct operations against ongoing contingencies while remaining prepared to execute major combat operations. Sustained operations and readiness to meet both old and new threats will be normal for the foreseeable future. The Blackhorse Regiment has been rapidly transforming itself to meet both requirements since its inception. To train America's Army for future conflicts, the Blackhorse Regiment provides a capable and highly trained opposing force that can replicate highly intricate insurgencies as well as fielding a combined arms heavily armored force.

This transformation process is symbolic of the Blackhorse Regiment. The 11th ACR provides a professional "enemy" against which Brigade Combat Teams hone their tactical and operational level skills under near-combat conditions. We provide the US Army the most capable and lethal combined arms opposing force in the world, and we are the Army's premier maneuver unit. The 21st century battlefield is currently fought here at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, California. Our Regiment became a leg-

The twenty-first century requires a force able to conduct operations against ongoing contingencies while remaining prepared to execute major combat operations. Sustained operations and readiness to meet both old and new threats will be normal for the foreseeable future.

endary fighting force in Vietnam and Cambodia and has continued to lead the transformation efforts to meet the needs of the nation well into the 21st Century. The 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment's unique mission is vital to the readiness of our Army.

Since our last article, the Regiment has been going nonstop, ensuring that all units that come through the National Training Center are fully prepared for their upcoming deployments. We helped train 1st Battalion of the 30th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division out of Fort Stewart, Georgia. February brought another tough rotation as 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division out of Fort Riley, Kansas gave us their all. In March, we fought our first Decisive Action (DA) rotation. This type of rotation combines counterinsurgency operations or COIN with conventional land-force maneuvers. Training the units in this manner allows us to combine traditional fighting tactics with a more modern hybrid threat aspect to prepare our Nation's Army for what may lay ahead. During this rotation, our Troopers battled 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division out of Fort Benning, Georgia in an all out assault. As always, you should be very proud of your Regiment as we pave the way for the Army of the future.

But as the summer quickly approaches, so does change. On 10 April 2012, we conducted a Regimental Change of Responsibility. We farewelled the 19th Regimental Command Sergeant Major Clinton

J. Reiss and welcome the 20th Regimental Command Sergeant Major Stephen J. Travers. CSM Travers joins us from the National Training Center, Operations Group, and has already had a positive impact. Also on the horizon is the Change of Command Ceremony on the 26th of June, 2012 at 10:00am on Fritz Field, where I and the three Squadron Commanders will relinquish command to a new set of seasoned Officers, prepared and excited to lead the Regiment into the future. LTC Frederick Snyder will take over 1st Squadron from LTC Christopher Doneski, LTC Jeffrey Bramlet will take over 2nd Squadron from LTC Brian Robertson, LTC Scott McFarland will take over the Regimental Support Squadron from LTC Lance Eldred, and COL John L. Ward, the 65th Regimental Commander, will proudly accept the guidon from me. We are excited to have them come aboard and know the Regiment will remain in good hands. If you wish to join in on either of the festivities, please RSVP to the Regimental Adjutant at 760-380-5740.

As always, I openly invite any of you Blackhorse Veterans to come and visit us. If you are in the area and would like to visit, we will be more than happy to spend time with you and show you what your Regiment is accomplishing with amazing strides.

Show Your Pride

If you are near Myrtle Beach, SC it will be hard to miss Mike Kathman's (L Troop, 3/11) truck, he has a Blackhorse patch painted on the door, an 11th ACR tag on the front and "Blackhorse" painted on the rear bumper.



Blackhorse Hoofbeats

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

By: Don Snedeker,
11th ACVVC Historian

From the First Squadron Annual Historical Report for 1966: "On 10 October, the Squadron was placed under the operational control of the 173rd Airborne Brigade, to participate in Operation 'Robin'. This mission was to secure a 20 kilometer portion of Route 15 for convoys bringing some 4000 troops of the 3rd Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, as they moved from their debarkation point at Vung Tau, to their Base Camp at Bear Cat, about 15 kilometers north of Bien Hoa. During this operation the 'First of the Blackhorse' discovered and destroyed over 75 tunnels dug by the Viet Cong in areas adjacent to Highway 15. While executing this mission, A Troop and C Troop both became the proud captors of Viet Cong crossbows, the first weapons captured by the Regiment in Vietnam."

From the beginning of November until mid-December 1966, the Squadrons were responsible for providing in-country orientation training for all newly arrived personnel. On the 12th of December, the Regimental Training Officer, assisted by a cadre of two NCOs from each Squadron as well as support from the 919th Engineers, the 37th Medical Company, and the Regimental Aviation Platoon, established the Blackhorse in-country school. The 52-hour course lasted six and one-half days. According to the official Regimental records for mid-1968, the purpose of the Pierce Cavalry Replacement Training School (named for the Regiment's first fatality in Vietnam, Private First Class John Pierce, KIA 9 October 1966) at Blackhorse Base Camp was to assist "in acclimating personnel to their new environment and conditioning their initial apprehensions of being in a combat zone. The course is designed to provide refresher training in basic skills and orientation emphasizing troop leading procedures, tactics, and safety procedures."

Some things remembered about the Pierce Cavalry Replacement Training School (also affectionately known as newby or FNG school):

- A long week's worth of classes on ACAVs and other vehicles, RPG screens, radios,

map reading, "50's" and "60's", the blooper gun, C-4, "det" cord, starlight scopes, Chieu Hois, ambush patrols, mines, and booby traps.

- Find the bastards and pile on.
- Another week living out of your duffle bag, double bunked and restricted to the FNG school area.
- Pulling guard on the perimeter as your first combat mission after learning about claymores, trip flares, red and green star clusters, and sappers trained to come through the concertina in less than a minute.
- Mosquitoes, the little white and big orange pills.
- AKs, RPGs, trip wires, and command detonated claymores.
- Proper dental care and field sanitation.
- Blackhorse Base Camp red dust/red mud.

From the 13 December 1967 edition of The Old Reliable, the newspaper published by the 9th (US) Infantry Division (under whose operational control the Blackhorse Regiment was then operating): "Specialist Six John M. 'Doc' Lemaster, of Columbus, Ohio, has started a dispensary in the village of Phuong Tho, but he doesn't intend to keep running it very long. Instead, he plans to turn it over to three Vietnamese medics he is now training. Lemaster, a medic from the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment's 37th Medical Company, is a member of a five-man Mobile Advisory Team (MAT) working from an outpost outside Phuong Tho. Recently he decided to start a hospital in the village, located in Dinh Quan District, Long Khanh Province [the province where Blackhorse Base Camp was located]. Since funds for the project were unavailable, the MAT asked the village chief to set aside a building for a dispensary. A large room in a well built, tin roofed building in the center of town was provided, and Lemaster furnished it with four cots, a medical supply cabinet and two tables. Two Vietnamese Army medics were provided to help run the dispensary, and the MAT recruited a Vietnamese girl to work as a nurse. Lemaster watches as they treat patients during two two-hour periods each day, giving advice with the help of a Vietnamese-English medical phrase book.

The first day the dispensary opened, the medics treated 27 patients, and there has been a steady stream of business since. Augmented by MEDCAPs and DENTCAPs [Medical Civil Action Program and Dental Civic Action Program] using 11th Cavalry doctors and dentists, and with the hospital in Xuan Loc, the provincial capital, available for seriously ill patients, Lemaster and the three Vietnamese medics are able to provide much better medical care for the villagers than was previously available. 'I think this job is about the best one anyone could have in Vietnam,' said Lemaster. 'You can actually see what you are accomplishing.'

Bravery comes in many forms, as evidenced by the citation for the Soldiers Medal awarded to Specialist Five Charles Hawkins, India Troop, Third Squadron for his actions on 27 August 1969: "On this date an armored vehicle slipped off a bridge that had suddenly collapsed. Specialist Hawkins plunged into the stream where the vehicle was upside down. He swam until he found one man and dragged him to the bank. He then aided another man who had just emerged from the vehicle who told him that there was one more soldier pinned inside. Diving underneath the track, Specialist Hawkins found the driver hanging unconscious in the driver's hatch and in danger of drowning. He pulled the man out before the vehicle settled further into the mud and insured that he was treated promptly, saving the man's life."

While conducting reconnaissance around Fire Support Base Fort Scott near Snuol, Cambodia on 13 May 1970, Fox Troop found and destroyed six 2½ ton trucks and eighty-two 55-gallon drums of diesel fuel (4,510 gallons) – and one red wheel barrow. The next day, Troopers from Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, Second Squadron found and evacuated over five hundred 100-kilogram bags of unpolished rice (that's 110,000 pounds of rice) and five pigs (one of which was "accidentally" shot and three of which went "missing" the following day – yummm, fresh pork on the menu tonight).

On May 24th, Bravo Troop found an additional 9,000 pounds of rice, most of which

Continued on page 27

SCHOLARSHIP UPDATE

by Mike "Doc" Rafferty, Director & Scholarship Chairman, 11th ACVVC



The Scholarship Fund is a self sufficient fund which is sustained solely by donations from our membership. The number of scholarships awarded each year depends on the total donations made during the year. **Through the generosity of our members in 2011 we were able to award twenty-four**

scholarships totaling \$98,000. Our fundraising activities for 2012 are going well and we are confident that with the continued support of our members we will once again have a very successful year.

The Scholarship fund raising program consists of three activities: the calendar, raffle and silent auction.

CALENDAR: Our first fund raising activity of the year is the ever popular calendar mailed to all members each December. The calendar contains 12 photos submitted by our members as well as notes on significant historical events between 1966 and 1972.

We want to continue to mail you a calendar each year. If you've put off mailing your donation please use the envelope included with your calendar. Your support is critical and donations of any amount are always welcome. All donors are listed in each issue of Thunder Run so look for your name!

RAFFLE: Our second fund raising activity each year is our raffle. This is the 24th year the 11ACVVC has sponsored a raffle. Again this year we will be offering a total of 15 prizes:

1st prize	\$500
2nd prize	\$400
3rd prize	\$300
4th prize	\$200
5th-15th prizes	\$100 each

Raffle tickets (suggested price \$1.00 each) will be mailed to all members in May. The drawing will be held on September 14, 2012, during the 27th annual reunion in Orlando, Florida. Winners will be notified and need not be present to claim their prizes. All proceeds from the raffle will benefit the scholarship fund.

SILENT AUCTION: Our third fund raising activity is the silent auction which also is held during our annual reunions. The silent auction is always fun and entertaining. Ron Krueger and Paul Gissible will be coordinating the Silent Auction again this year along with the help of Gregory Mason. This is our 17th year for the silent auction. Each year we continue to see an impressive array of items being offered. *Over 115 items were donated in 2011.*

We once again ask our members to put their imagination and talent to work for the organization and ask for donations of items for the silent auction. Our membership has always come through with many unique and interesting items. Donations of items or services are welcomed. Any items with an 11th Cavalry theme are always in demand. Other items such as tools, books and any other military memorabilia are also very popular.

Items can be mailed prior to the reunion or they can be brought to the reunion and dropped off at the reunion registration desk. If you would like to donate an item please make sure to fill out the Silent Auction Donor Form found in this issue. This gives us the information we need about the donor, a description of the item and an estimate of the starting bid.

All proceeds from the silent auction will be used to benefit the Scholarship Fund. We look forward to another successful silent auction. Thanks in advance for all that you do to keep this the best military reunion organization ever!

11th ACVVC Silent Auction

Donated Items Information Form

Please provide the following information with your donated item. It is important for our records. If you wish to donate anonymously, please check the box below.

Description of item donated: _____

Name of Donor: _____

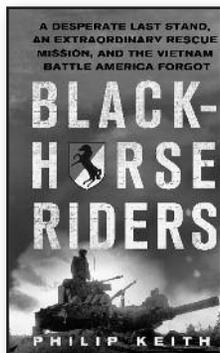
Address of Donor: _____

Value of Item Donated \$ _____ I wish to remain anonymous (check box)

Mail silent auction items to: **11th ACVVC, c/o Gregory Mason, 4636 W Knights Griffin Rd., Plant City, FL 33565**



Book Reviews



Blackhorse Riders

In our first quarter, 2012 issue of *Thunder Run*, we reviewed the new book *Blackhorse Riders* which describes an heroic battle fought by Alpha Troop, First Squadron in War Zone C. While you probably know that to order the book it would be necessary to contact our QM Store, we didn't tell you exactly how to do it. To order *Blackhorse Riders*, just use the convenient order form found in this issue of *Thunder Run* or order online at our website www.11thcavnam.com

The book chronicles the story of an amazing rescue and desperate battle that occurred in the Republic of South Vietnam on March 26, 1970. Forty years later, the combat action now described in *Blackhorse Riders* was commemorated in the Rose Garden at the White House. There, President Obama awarded the very rare Presidential Unit Citation to Alpha Troop, 11th Armored Cavalry, the principal American combat unit involved in the action.

Karl Marlantes, a Vietnam War hero and the author of the blockbuster novel *Matterhorn*, says about the book: "A riveting account of one of the most extraordinary and courageous rescues in U.S. military history. *Blackhorse Riders* is written with enough detail to satisfy even the most particular of military historians, yet the storytelling breathes life into the personalities involved, so that minute by minute, following both rescuers and rescued, you keep turning the pages to find out who lives and who dies."

Recently retired US Army Chief of Staff and four-star general George W.

Casey contributed a heart-felt foreword for the new book. His father, who died in the war, plays an important role in the battle and the younger General Casey writes, "*Blackhorse Riders* is a soldier's story of ordinary men who voluntarily undertook an extraordinary mission. The narrative is powerful and inspirational. It is also a timeless story that represents the best of what we have come to expect of our men and women fighting along the front lines of freedom." Doc Bahnsen adds, "This riveting true story of young American soldiers fighting in Vietnam paints a gut-wrenching picture of combat rarely described in print."

The author, Phil Keith, is himself a decorated Vietnam veteran. "As soon as I saw the story in the media of these brave warriors, led by John Poindexter, going to the White House to receive their long overdue recognition, I knew this was a narrative that had to have a larger audience, and that I wanted to be the one to present it. For too long, those of us who fought in Vietnam have had to bear the unjust stigmas of that war and I am thrilled to finally be able to write an account that contains all the best of what this country and the American soldier represents."

Order your copy of *Blackhorse Riders* from the Quartermaster Store using the convenient mail-in form in this issue of *Thunder Run* or order online at our website www.11thcavnam.com

11th ACVVC Life Memberships

Pin Design Competition

At the 2011 reunion the Officers agreed that Troopers who are Life members should receive special recognition for their commitment to the 11th ACVVC in the form of a "Life Membership" pin.

It was decided that the design of this pin should come from the membership. Any Life member of the 11th ACVVC may submit their proposed design to the Vice President. He will copy and distribute these designs to the Officers, who will choose the best five entries. The five finalist's designs will be displayed at the 2012 reunion in Orlando and in *Thunder Run*. All Life members will have the opportunity to choose the winning entry.

No strict rules exist as to the proposed design elements; however the winning design should incorporate the image of the Blackhorse patch and any other appropriate embellishment that will immediately identify the wearer as a Life member, proud of their combat service in the legendary 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment (Blackhorse).

Design entries should be in color and can be hand-sketched or computer generated. Keep in mind that the final product will be a cloisonné type lapel or hat pin, not to exceed 2" in any dimension. Entries must be postmarked no later than July 31, 2012. Please submit your entries to:

Peter Walter, 11th ACR Pin
8 Tallowood Drive
Westampton, NJ 08060-3721

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.



Name: _____
Old Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
New Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone _____ Effective Date: _____



Going To The Loo

"Whoa," you say. "The chaplain has lost it this time. Sounds like he's on the way to the funny farm." "Now, hold off," I reply. "Loo is a legitimate word in its own right." It's in the dictionary. Look it up. It seems to be some sort of old English word meaning a place of convenience. In more practical terms, for our discussion, it means commode (excuse me, but it actually means toilet). Now that's cleared up, so let's proceed - in a proper manner, of course. A proper manner is to avoid what might seem to be dirty jokes or a subject that wouldn't have been proper a few generations ago. That's why we're saying loo instead of the T word. Loo doesn't carry all the connotations of the T word. After all, what American ever says loo?

Since most of what I write about is life in Viet Nam, aside from the actual war part, it seems rather chicken to ignore this basic part of living - know what I mean? In case you don't know it, which you don't because I haven't told you, one of my basic fears of going to Viet Nam was how a person, namely me, could take care of certain needs in such a different and foreign place. Turns out my fears were unfounded. After all, thousands of GIs were already serving in Viet Nam whose certain needs were being taken care of OK. I would be no different. Even so, life was different from home in "civilization" which included going to the loo. So I'll remind you vets of Viet Nam and inform you non-vets of Viet Nam of what it was like. Also, family members who want to know what life was like there, at least with this very personal subject.

To my point, there were loos in the base camps and rear areas, which some of you passed through on your way out to the field, or where some stayed in a rear job. Many of these places had what we would consider regular fixtures. You know, flush toilets, wash basins, mirrors, and such. They weren't as nice as back in the world, but were "normal," just the same, normal meaning what we were

When the need arose, namely the ½ 55 gallon drum was full enough; some poor trooper would be designated to be the sewage disposal duty person. He would uncover the board containing the hole (or holes) cut into it, mix some diesel fuel into the contents of the ½ 55 gallon drum, and set it ablaze. As discussed on another occasion, one did not want to walk through the smoke.

used to. However, I hasten to remind you that we weren't back in the world (so to speak). Recall that the Vietnamese people did things somewhat differently from us. For example, when at their dinner table, which was low to the floor, they squatted. When smoking a cigarette (a pungent French cigarette) outdoors, they squatted. When they were just talking with their buddies, they squatted. (Their joints and legs were in great condition - no fat). So think about this - when they went to the loo, you guessed it, they squatted.

A question that will undoubtedly come to your mind will be, "Did they use the American loos (commodes), with seats and all?" I will respond, "Yes, those who worked on American bases did." "Well, so what was the big deal about that?" you wonder. The memorable thing about that was that all the loo seats had been cracked right in half from someone squatting on the seats that were designed only for being sat upon. I'll admit, that wasn't the worst thing that could happen. But when's the last time you sat on a loo seat that was cracked in half? Think about it.

Moving right along, let's remind ourselves of loos in the more primitive forward support areas (FSB, for short). I'm certain that many of us recall clearly, the fifty-five gallon drums that were cut in half, length-wise. This loo invention was usually located out in the open, which mattered, not a whit, to anyone. Or it may have been contained within a small shelter. This shelter had nothing to do with protection from enemy shooting. It had to do with giving you a bit of privacy for doing what was done in a loo. That privacy was only when there were likely to be females present which was not common in many places. Only rarely

were there females in the bush, the field, which I'll mention. Females in Viet Nam were in the rear areas and seldom visited the field where there was no privacy. So, as you might expect, the outdoor loos went unused in mixed company, whenever such was present - another subject, of course.

As has been mentioned on other occasions, fifty-five gallon drum loos had a structure erected over and about them whereby the trooper using the loo could sit on a piece of board, plywood or whatever was available, which had a sensible size hole cut in it upon which he sat. Being an American GI, he did not squat, squatting not being his custom. When the need arose, namely the ½ 55 gallon drum was full enough; some poor trooper would be designated to be the sewage disposal duty person. (This was a very effective disciplinary measure, by the way). He would uncover the board containing the hole (or holes) cut into it, mix some diesel fuel into the contents of the ½ 55 gallon drum, and set it ablaze. As discussed on another occasion, one did not want to walk through the smoke.

Another category, which I'll term sub-loo, was called the P-tube. Actually, it was called the pee-tube, but I'm trying to be real tactful here, as I said earlier. P-tubes were mostly used out in the field, as I recall, the field being un-refined by nature so didn't matter. Also, there were only male troopers there so privacy was not required. The P-tube was simply a long round can which originally contained artillery gun powder. It had both ends cut out and was stuck in the ground with half of its length sticking out of the ground. A fly screen was fastened over the end (to keep flies away). Its use will be apparent to you, I'm sure. (The practicality of this device was a clear indica-

tion of a male-only sub-culture).

This is a very quick and light write-up of a part of life that was obviously important for the soldier in Viet Nam, especially out in the field. Life was dramatically different, usually better, in the rear base camps so far as personal hygiene matters were concerned. With this, I hope I've "enlightened" some of you, and "reminded" others who were there of a facet of army life in Viet Nam.

For those of you who remember events of the Bible, remember how God, through Moses, led the Children of Israel out of slavery in Egypt into the Promised Land of Canaan. There were about 600,000 men plus women and children on that wilderness journey - walking. They were well organized, according to how God instructed Moses. All their

needs were provided for, including their loo needs, which I can't explain.

That's how it is with us, to this day. All our needs are remembered by our Lord. Consider the Lord's Prayer, which you might know by heart. Jesus said to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread...." "He was saying that we should look to God for our physical needs as well as our spiritual needs. He was talking about all our physical needs, even the "lesser" ones. Check also what Jesus said in Matthew 6:25-26, "I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body.... Look at the birds of the air, they do not sow or reap or store away in barns.... Are you not more valuable than they?" There's a lot to think about here.

God bless you. God loves you. So do I.

So that his brethren shall know...

Please report the death of any member of The 11th Armored Cavalry's Veterans of Vietnam and Cambodia to Allen Hathaway, 13194 Rettew Dr., Manassas, VA 20112; Phone: (703) 791-6610; Email: 11thcav1966@comcast.net; for listing in "Journey to Fiddler's Green."

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 (\$100)

LIFE Plan (\$25 enclosed, plus 3 payments of \$25 in 3, 6 and 9 months)

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.**

Bustin' Rubber

David Stone
H Company, 1969-70

Busting rubber is probably one of the most boring activities that you can imagine. Sitting on top of the tank or APC moving at a slow rate back and forth between long rows of trees, really seeing nothing but rubber trees, and hoping that you don't get hit. How can something be boring and exciting at the same time? Every few days during recon missions especially in rubber somebody would run over a chi-com mine (Chinese Communist mine, usually 23 pounds in weight), detonating it, blowing off a track or maybe a road wheel and incapacitating the track. If that happened, one or two ACAVS (M113, Armored personnel carrier) would stay with the downed vehicle while a maintenance track called an 88 would come out and pull it out of the jungle or where ever it was and the pull it back to the NDP (night defense position), where it would be dragged onto a semi-trailer truck, and get the downed vehicle transported back to the rear to be either repaired or scrapped.

Mine sweeper experts had a job very few envied. They walked in front of the column and methodically waved the sweepers back and forth, listening for a

beep in his headphones. I remember the minesweeper guys discovered a mine one particular day in late July, 1969. It had been recently buried in the dirt at the front of the column. I hadn't been in country long and for me, it was still an adventure, so I jumped off the track walked up to location of the mine after receiving permission from my sergeant to scope it out. There was an old professional sergeant that everybody called grandpa along with several other troops. He was looking down at it; with a perplexed look on his face, sort of puzzling over it. Probably six or eight of us were standing around watching and he said, "This is really peculiar. I've never seen one set upside down like this one." He really didn't know what to do. Finally, he leaned over the thing, grabbed it by the edge and pulled it up. It came out easily and apparently had been recently planted in front of us. He said, "I really didn't know what was going to happen when I pulled that puppy out." And then he sort of smiled.

If we found a mine we disabled it by removing the trigger mechanism from it and took it with us or blew, or burned it place with little C4 explosive, pushing

When we returned to the NDP on one particular day, we found that a new lieutenant had been assigned to us, something none of us gave a damn about. This one was different, though. He spent some time walking around introducing himself with, "Hello, I'm Lieutenant so-and-so. I graduated from Harvard!"

the blasting cap into the C4, running a wire to the detonator and popping it off. This was always entertaining. So at the end of a day of busting rubber, we'd head back down the road to the NDP. We were near An Loc during this time. There was a lot of action around An Loc, that is, lots of sign of NVA and lots of VC activity, which was obvious, but we never saw any of them.

When we returned to the NDP on one particular day, we found that a new lieutenant had been assigned to us, something none of us gave a damn about. This one was different, though. He spent some time walking around introducing himself with, "Hello, I'm Lieutenant so-and-so. I graduated from Harvard!" Smiling like a cheap used car salesman as he told us. Well, within a half hour his nickname was "Lieut. Harvard". We were not impressed with him. Here's some short, doughy guy walking around in a spiffy clean uniform introducing himself to anybody who would listen. We were not impressed with him in the least, although he was clearly impressed with himself. That's probably what he ended up doing, selling cheap used cars.

I was in the routine of doing two hours of guard duty every night, which I wasn't required to do because I was a medic, but I did anyway because I was a trooper. Everybody had to pull guard duty. I learned how to use star clusters. Star clusters were sort of like hand held fireworks, only extremely useful for guard watch. They were about 18 inches long or so, an aluminum cylinder with a cap you could remove. You put the cap on the bottom, hold it in whatever you wanted to pop it, smack the bottom with your palm, and a cluster of fireworks sort of like a roman candle would explode out of the top. Some of them were just clusters of white phosphorus, (Willie Peter is what we used to call it), some had parachutes so they would pop way up in the air and then slowly drop down, illuminating a huge area into stark contrast. You could really see what was out there. Almost always there was nothing to see.

So, after a day of busting rubber, we were heading up the highway to the NDP and it hits the fan towards the front of the column. A tank exploded for no apparent reason. A fired RPG was usually the first

weapon fired at a column in an ambush. In this case there was no firing from either side of the road. There was no small arms fire or return fire from us. There was nothing to show why a tank would be burning up ahead. I jumped off our track and started running toward it, thinking somebody had to have been hurt. When Tex, (more on him later), Yelled, "What are you doing doc?" "Heading up there." I said. "Maybe somebody got hurt!" Tex said, "If they need you they'll call for you, Doc. Get yer butt back up here on this tank NOW." Another lesson learned.

50 caliber rounds started cooking off, with tracers flying high into the air in all directions around the tank: main gun rounds started exploding inside the turret: and diesel fuel and everything else that could burn was. Something really ugly had happened. Word trickled down that the tank was going to be burning for quite a while, days not hours. There was a huge plume of smoke rolling up from the hatch on top, the rubber on the tracks were

Something really ugly had happened. Word trickled down that the tank was going to be burning for quite a while, days not hours.

burning, and shrapnel from all the ordnance flew in all directions. Additionally, all of the troopers' gear was destroyed since they carried all their stuff in ammunition cans on the back of the turret, in a large bolted on rack called the bustle. The bustle carried boxes of 50 cal. rounds, c-rations, parkas, extra .50 cal barrels, the odd M16, assorted junk, and the medic and anyone else hitching a ride.

We must've waited a couple of hours before one of our officers received orders that we could head back. So we drove back down into the jungle on the left side and detoured way around the burning tank because it was very dangerous to be near it, and finally got back to the NDP. We later learned that "Lieut. Harvard"

had been playing with a star cluster, accidentally popped it down into turret, and single handedly destroyed the tank he was commanding, holding up the entire column for several hours, destroying his tank, pissing off the squadron commander, no doubt, and demonstrating that a college education, even from Harvard, don't mean nothin' in Vietnam.

Word spread that the Colonel had had a meeting with "Lieutenant Harvard" who walked from the meeting directly to Colonel Brookshire's chopper (a loach) and was flown out of the NDP that evening.

We never saw Lieutenant Harvard again.

REUNION SHIRT ORDER – also available with additional personalization 11thACVVC - 27th Reunion 2012 – Orlando, FL

All pre-ordered shirts will be available for pick-up during the Reunion in Orlando

If you know you are attending and want a Reunion shirt, whether or not you want your unit on it also, we encourage you to take this opportunity to make your pre-order; it will be ready and waiting for you at Registration – This year's shirts' sizes run average (smaller than past years.)

All personalization of shirts will be pre-ordered. To receive your 2012 Reunion shirt for the Reunion, Order must be in by July 31, 2012 – No Exceptions.

contact:

name and phone or email

2012 Reunion Shirt

Sport shirt – pique knit cotton/poly blend, light blue - left chest pocket

Adult (mens) sizes S – 6X avail – (for sizes 3-6X, please add \$2.- per X)

If to be shipped (AFTER the Reunion) – please add \$8.- per shirt

Include your address and shipping instructions:

personalization

Add your name, unit, and/or dates in-country:

left chest over pocket, opposite Reunion logo – in 1 to 3 lines, allow 24 characters, excluding spacing:

example: **CHUCK BOWER**
L TRP 69-70

This form is for 2012 Reunion Shirts only – all other orders go thru the quartermaster

Reunion shirts provided through Penn Sport Embroidery – Please e-mail or call direct with questions!

360-321-7110 – pennsport@whidbey.com - Chuck and Cathi Bower – 6075 S. Coles Rd. Langley, WA 98260



\$30.-ea. _____

(may request no pocket)

qty _____

(add over 2Xs =) _____

size _____

S&H _____

WA residents 8.7% Tax _____

\$10.-ea. _____

Total enclosed _____
payable to Penn Sport – Thanks!
- see you there – Allons

Communist Watermelons

By: Steve Crabill

M Company, 3/11, '68-'69

In May 1968 I arrived at my new unit's base camp in the beautiful Republic of South Vietnam. Almost immediately I was ordered to help install coils of razor wire to replace the old coils of barbed wire, which stretched about a hundred yards outside a dirt "berm", all the way around the camp. The old wire was steel, sitting out there during the dry and Monsoon seasons, rusted and outdated. The aluminum "concertina" was a much sharper corrosion resistant replacement. We had to dig up antipersonnel mines, disarm any flares hanging from the old wire, and pull the old coils flat, fold them up and then pull out and install the shiny new razor wire in its place. Then came new mines flares and trip wire booby traps. All this work occurred during the daylight hours. No one wanted to be out there after dark of course, even though 80 degrees would have been a whole lot more pleasant than 100+ that we labored under! Fortunately, our crew only had to replace the wire in our Company's "sector", and then other crews took over, finally pulling that nasty armed wire all the way around the three mile camp circumference. On the second day beyond the berm, the cooks from our mess hall brought out a jeepload of cold watermelon! Wow, what a treat! For about a half hour we sat in the dusty shade next to our armored vehicle; spitting seeds at each other, and getting sticky juice all over ourselves. For a little while we forgot that we were soon going to be enduring the most horrible ordeal of our lives, and became a group of seven year old boys back home, eating cold watermelon!

Most of us including myself, soon found ourselves in the "field" with our Company, thundering all over South Vietnam, looking for the enemy: "Charlie" the Viet Cong. We were a tank unit, and as such were expected to inflict heavy pain and suffering on our foe. We did a pretty good job of doing that, having occasional "breaks" escorting convoys of ammunition and fuel trucks, through "enemy controlled" areas. We worked with American Infantry, regional "PF" (South Vietnamese) forces, and now and then ROK troops (S.Korean). It was a bloody

I was starting to see what looked like enemy sappers crawling toward the wire, and I really didn't want them to start disarming our flares, and get inside the wire, so I decided to call the tower on a handset.

nasty and seemingly unending job. If we stayed in one AO (Area of Operation) for more than a week or two, we would occasionally attract a following of Vietnamese children. We called all of them "baby-san", though none were baby like, even in the youngest one! They were constantly begging, especially for our cigarettes...American tobacco was a hot trading item, and we had plenty of that, so we knew how shallow our relationship was with them, but didn't care with little kids giggling around us, giving them piggy-back rides, taking pictures of them with our big helmets on... it was almost easy to pretend we were back home again. Kids have a sweet smell about them, you know? Kind of like puppies.

Yeah, that was a kind of "time warp" that held us together, at least I felt that way. After about six months "In Country" we were all entitled to a one week long vacation from the war called "R&R". I think it stands for Rest and Relaxation, but I would have preferred honestly, to just keep on "Busting Charlie's A**" as my company commander was fond of saying! Hard to explain, but sitting in Honolulu watching kids my own age getting drunk smoking weed openly, and partying on Daddy's dime, didn't do much for my relaxation! They didn't have a clue, and I didn't have the time or patience, to explain what was happening just a short plane ride away in South East Asia!

After chasing through hell and high water for the enemy, and killing quite a few, those of us still alive were brought back to base camp, so we could "unwind" and prepare to mainstream into civilized life back in "the world", or the mainland U.S. Usually guys would be pulled out of the field when they had about a month left on their tour. If the "action" was hot and heavy, you would only get a week or two of unwind time. You got a haircut, fairly light duty, no KP...time to slip away to the EM Club for beer, and generally get your stuff together for going home. It was kind

of tense, because you had made it this far, and didn't want something stupid happening to prevent that long awaited trip back.

They had one duty or "detail" that almost everyone had to perform: "Bunker Guard". Generally it entailed 3 men in each bunker (built into the berm around the perimeter) taking shifts throughout the night, to protect the camp. We were well armed with a light machine gun, 2 rifles, 1 grenade launcher, hand grenades, flares, and plenty of ammo. On every corner or 500 meters was a 70foot tower, with even more firepower and a big night vision scope. Even though it was really a Spartan environment, I felt more secure in a bunker than in my little cot back in the base camp. As an E-5, I always had two "FNG's" (f-ing new guys) with me, and was the "bunker commander" by virtue of seniority of rank, and being still alive after 10-11 months of combat! Once our little group had moved into our sandbagged home for the night, I made sure all the weapons were clean and 110% operational. As we inventoried the ammo, I started describing what we would do if attacked, and basically scared the crap out of the newbies, I really wanted them alert, mostly to keep my short timer butt safe, if nothing else! Well on one of my watches in the bunker two away from the tower, I was staring out through the slit past our new razor wire, and the full moon was casting weird shadows out there. Clouds would obscure the moonlight for a second; the light would brighten up, and then darken again.

The two guys with me were trying to sleep on their little wooden bunk beds behind me, and I was starting to strain my eyes every time the moonlight got brighter. I was starting to see what looked like enemy sappers crawling toward the wire, and I really didn't want them to start disarming our flares, and get inside the wire, so I decided to call the tower on a handset. That of course, woke the guys up if they were asleep, and soon all three of us were

squinting out through the gun slit, and waiting for word from the tower. One of my FNG's wanted to take the grenade launcher up on the roof and pop a couple of grenades over the wire, but I told him "Charlie" would probably see him climbing up there, and take him out when the moonlight gave him away. After what seemed like forever, "Tower 3" came back with: "We can't pick out anything to your front Bunker, you may use your Mike 60 (machine gun) to clear any suspected VCs beyond your wire, fire at will, use minimum ammo to draw their fire, we'll back you with our 50 (heavy machine gun) if needed, over." I was pumped up then: "Roger that, Tower...shouldn't need a flare if this moon will light them up again, out." One of the FNG's just kept whispering: Damn! Oh Damn! All of a sudden the moon co-operated again, I saw what looked like two or three faces/heads out about 120meters right in front of me! I clicked the safety off, whispered "fire in the hole" and let go a burst of about 20 or

25 rounds, adjusted my fire, and put another 25 right through the wire! One of the guys thought he could see some "meat" fly into the air with my 2nd burst, and all three of us waited quietly in anticipation of return fire. And waited, and waited. Nothing! I sent my grenadier up on the roof, to peer out and get ready for a counter attack. Nothing! I thought: "I guess they could be just a probing force, and backed off when they discovered we were awake!" I had seen that happen in the field, so why would base camp be any different?

The Tower called after about 10 minutes of silence, and said they still didn't see anything, but hoped we would get a good "body count" at daybreak, told me to stay alert...Hey no problem doing that! All three of us were up for the rest of the night; whispering excitedly about what we would find in the morning. As horrible as the term "Body Count" sounds, we were in the business of killing communists, and the high command got real excited when we

did an efficient job of sending our enemy to visit Buda, heaven, or whatever. If I stopped the enemy from getting into the base camp, killed a few in the process, well it would be a promotion for sure, and some pictures to take back home...Steve the 11th Armored Cav's hero of the week!

Well, sunrise finally dragged in, and probably 20-30 troopers rushed out the safe zone through the wire, and started looking for the dead VC. They found 3 or 4 completely shot up watermelons instead! Pretty soon guys were yelling out: Damn! You killed another one over here Zooey! (My nickname) Do ya want to pose with this one, not too pretty though...your Mama probably ain't going to want to see this!!! Har har har! Talk about embarrassing! I couldn't believe those seeds we had spit out so long ago, would have thrived out there in that dust and mud. They sure looked like little heads out there the night before! Thank God no one called the base camp reporter out there that morning...he would have had a blast with that one!

THE 21st ANNUAL MARTY OGNIBENE MEMORIAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

Thursday, September 13th, 2012

Shingle Creek Golf Club
 Brian Kennedy, Golf Professional
 9939 Universal Blvd, Orlando, FL 32819
 Phone 407-996-1559

Veteran Friendly Championship Golf Club

\$75 per golfer includes greens fees, carts, balls, tees, lunch and prizes! Fill in the form and mail it to the address below with a check for \$75 per golfer (payable to Joe Coopet). Form and fee must be received in Minnesota by September 1, 2012 to guarantee your entry!

You don't need a foursome to enter. Include your average score for 18 holes and I'll pair you with a golfer of equal talent or include the names of all golfers in the group for whom you are paying. This outing is open to men and women. Don't delay!!! Mail today!!! FORE!

Call 651-246-8009 if you have questions. You will receive confirmation in the mail if your registration fee is paid by September 1, 2012. All entries must be prepaid. This year we will be playing at one of best facilities in central Florida. They have a dress code to include: 1) No denim (Blue jeans), 2) No tank tops or T-shirts. Shirts must have collars. 3) Soft spikes only facility. Tee times will be an 8:00 AM shotgun start with lunch buffet following golf. The golf course is a short 5 minute ride from our hotel. Top line rental clubs are available. Let Joe know if you need them.

20th ANNUAL MARTY OGNIBENE MEMORIAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

Name _____	Average Score _____
Address _____	Home Phone _____
City _____	State _____ Zip _____
Name _____	Average Score _____
Name _____	Average Score _____
Name _____	Average Score _____

Mail Checks To: **Joe Coopet, Golf Tournament Director,**
 9289 Parkside Draw, Woodbury, MN 55125

This golf course is affiliated with our hotel and is taking great pride in hosting our event.

REGISTRATION FORM



27th Annual 11th ACVVC Reunion
Orlando, Florida



Wednesday, 12 September thru Sunday, 16 September 2012

PLEASE MAKE YOUR OWN HOTEL RESERVATIONS AT

Rosen Centre Hotel
9840 International Drive
Orlando, Florida 32819
Reservations: 800-204-7234

Registration fee is \$90.00 per person. This fee is required for attendance at any of the scheduled events including the Thursday and Friday night Bunker Parties and the Saturday Banquet dinner.

Please register early. The registration fee will be an additional \$25.00 per person for registrations post marked after AUGUST 29, 2012. All registrations must be received no later than Friday, SEPTEMBER 7, 2012.

PLEASE PRINT ALL INFORMATION

(print clearly or use mailing label)

Name Telephone No:

Address

City/State/Zip

E-Mail Address

Unit Assignment Years in Country

(Example: B TRP, D CO)

(Example: 1966-1967)

ATTENDEES (please print)

Four rows of registration fee entries with dollar signs and lines for input.

Total Registration Fee \$

Banquet Meal Selection (Choose one selection per attendee) Chicken Beef Veggie

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

KIA Relative? Yes Name of KIA:

Relationship to KIA: Unit:

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



27th Annual 11th ACVVC Reunion

Orlando, Florida



Schedule of Events

(Tentative Schedule as of April 15, 2012)

Wednesday, September 12

12:00 pm – 4:00 pm Registration Open
 12:00 pm – 4:00 pm Quartermaster Store Open
 2:00 pm – 12:00 am Bunker Open

Thursday, September 13

7:00 am – ??? 21st Annual Marty Ognibene
 Memorial Golf Tournament
 (optional fee per golfer)
 9:00 am – 6:00 pm Registration Open
 9:00 am – 5:00 pm Quartermaster Store Open
 2:00 pm – 12:00 am Bunker Open

Friday, September 14

9:00 am – 6:00 pm Registration Open
 9:00 am – 5:00 pm Quartermaster Store Open
 10:00 am -12:00 pm Veterans Seminar
 12:00 pm -12:00 am Bunker Open
 5:00 pm – 9:00 pm Silent Auction
 8:00 pm Raffle Drawing

Saturday, September 15

9:00 am – 12:00 pm Annual Membership Meeting
 (Members Only)
 9:00 am – 1:00 pm Women's Group Meeting
 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm Memorial Service
 2:00 pm – 5:00 pm Registration Open for Late
 Arrivals
 3:00 pm – 5:00 pm Quartermaster Store Open
 5:45 pm – 6:45 pm Cocktail Hour
 7:00 pm – 9:30 pm Banquet, Presentations and
 "Blackhorse Salute"
 9:30 pm – 1:00 am Dancing

Sunday, September 16

10:00 am – 11:00 am Chapel Worship Service
 (Nondenominational)
 10:00 am – 2:00 pm Quartermaster Store Open
 All Day Farewells and Departures

27th ANNUAL 11th ACVVC REUNION

SEPTEMBER 12-16, 2012

The Rosen Centre Hotel, 9840 International Drive, Orlando, Florida 32819

www.rosencentre.com

RESERVATIONS: 800-204-7234

ROOM RATE: \$95.00 SINGLE - QUAD

- ◆ Room types are reserved on a first-come, first-served basis.
- ◆ Rates are good three days prior to and three days after event based on availability.
- ◆ Complementary self parking.
- ◆ Complementary guest room internet.
- ◆ Complementary scheduled shuttles to Universal, Wet n Wild and Sea World Parks.
- ◆ Please make hotel reservations early.



RESERVATIONS MUST BE NO LATER THAN AUGUST 29, 2012



Welcome Aboard!

New Members of the 11th Armored Cavalry's Veterans of Vietnam and Cambodia (11th ACVVC) since our last issue of *Thunder Run*. Are you looking for an old friend? Please contact any Officer or Board Member listed on page 3 for help

NAME	DATES	NAME	DATES	NAME	DATES	NAME	DATES
HHT REGIMENT		Spengler, David C	70-70	Corning, Jerald T	71-72	Wiley, Scott E	70-71
Fortenberry, Billy Ray	68-69	Treloar, Dennis A	70-70	Easley, James W Iii	69-70	H COMPANY, 2/11	
James, Robert C	68-69	Tumlin, Robert M Sr	68-69	Gilpin, H Duncan Jr	70-71	Reese, David L	70-71
Lendt, Donald L	68-69	Zigman, Allen J	68-69	Grice, Roger D	67-68	HOWITZER BATTERY, 2/11	
Smiley, Charles D	66-67	HHT, 1/11		Hersha, Robert J	70-71	Carey, Timothy	71-72
Stover, Sidney	70-71	Edwards, Jerry W	69-70	King, Paul H	70-71	Cole, Darrell E	68-68
Sucato, Richard A	70-71	Holmes, Glenn D	67-68	Merideth, Glen D	70-71	Gandara, Joe	65-67
AIR CAVALRY TROOP		Miller, James F	67-68	Meryweather, Thomas A	71-72	Hogan, Raymond H	66-67
Blean, Thomas K	71-72	Whiteman, Michael F	69-69	Mueller, Ernest C	71-71	Leach, Douglas D	67-68
Cole, Arthur W Jr	67-68	A TROOP, 1/11		Perry, Ronnie L	69-69	Machut, James P	71-72
Fowler, Earl L	69-70	Kehoe, Michael P	67-68	Robbins, David E	70-71	Melton, Willie F	71-72
Gates, George C	69-70	Lambert, William J	69-70	Russ, Lanny B	70-71	Morelock, Johnny W	67-68
Grayson, Kenneth J	71-72	Lilly, Edmond N Jr	70-70	Schlottach, Rodger D	68-69	HHT, 3/11	
Grice, Earnest M	68-70	Madej, Jan S	66-67	Searcy, Rufus G	70-71	Bayer, Karl W	66-67
Griffith, John R	67-68	Matelski, Gerard M	66-67	Transou, Jay L	71-72	Bullard, Johnie R	65-67
Henninger, Byron D	65-67	Merrill, Howard R	68-68	Treleaven, Thomas A	66-67	Greene, Irving R	69-70
Meyers, Gary R	69-70	Moscarelli, Charles P	65-67	Wierema, Ronald G	67-68	Hicks, Roy D	66-67
Neal, William J	68-68	Transou, Jay L	70-70	Yocum, Kenneth L	71-72	Huffman, James O	70-71
Reinhart, William R Jr	70-71	Wesch, Alfred J	67-67	E TROOP, 2/11		James, Jimmy N	70-71
Shaw, Felton	69-70	B TROOP, 1/11		German, Ronald L	71-71	Moody, A R	68-68
Starnes, John E	71-72	Chambers, Michael S	67-67	Hires, Russell R Jr	69-70	Wagner, William T	66-67
Tarbet, Barry B	68-68	Kayler, Edward	70-71	Rutherford, Dwight E	70-71	Watts, Buford Jr	67-68
7th ARMY POSTAL UNIT		Orange, William A Jr	69-70	Schmidt, Samuel G	68-70	Westbrook, James D	69-70
Huss, David R	68-70	C TROOP, 1/11		Taitano, Michael K	71-71	I TROOP, 3/11	
7th SURGICAL HOSPITAL		Brown, Michael G	68-69	Williams, Robert L	71-71	Earnest, Larry C	69-70
Rivers, William	68-69	Hallmark, James O Jr	69-70	F TROOP, 2/11		Moody, A R	68-69
37th MEDICAL COMPANY		Nordstrom, John F	67-68	Bockman, Wayne E	67-68	K TROOP, 3/11	
Gregg, Stephen A	68-69	Smith, Larry L	67-68	Chambliss, Harry T	68-69	Boobyer, Teddy R	70-71
Parks, John G	67-68	Tackett, Harry A	68-68	Futch, Oliver	67-68	Gekas, Stephen A	68-69
Prokopiak, Adam J	69-71	D COMPANY, 1/11		Kirk, Harold J	68-70	Lewis, Donald W	65-67
398th TRANS DET		Coppom, Lawrence D	66-67	Landry, Patrick M	70-71	Williams, Charles D	70-70
Bibbs, Jackie L	71-71	Dills, James A	69-69	Sandor, John M	68-68	L TROOP, 3/11	
Bledsoe, Carlton J	71-71	Grine, Richard W	64-67	Scahill, James V	71-71	Ballard, John S Iii	66-67
Nielson, Philip F	70-70	Insley, Philip M	66-67	Thomas, James R	70-71	Barnard, Richard L	70-71
Stahlheber, Kent E	71-71	Main, James F	67-68	Thomas, Terry Lee	69-69	Luker, Raymond E	70-71
409th RR DET		Severns, Duane R	70-70	Yeotis, Athanasius G	67-68	Yadon, John M	69-70
Paskett, Darwin G	66-67	Wortmann, James A	66-67	G TROOP, 2/11		M COMPANY, 3/11	
Strickland, Julian W	68-69	HOWITZER BATTERY, 1/11		Cumpston, Sam	67-68	Prince, John L	69-70
919th ENGINEER COMPANY		Breed, Donald E	70-71	Hayes, Frederick V	70-71	Rabon, Jimmy L	68-68
Caron, William P	66-67	Dortch, Warren B	69-70	Hill, Elmer L	69-70	Thowe, Vernon W	66-67
Douglas, Denny L	69-69	Scott, George L Iii	68-69	Kern, Donald F	69-70	HOWITZER BATTERY, 3/11	
Fратиello, Joseph E	67-68	HHT, 2/11		Mueller, Ernest C	70-70	Derringer, Stanley L	70-70
Green, Floyd M	67-68	Barbre, Ronald K	66-67	Mullett, Fred	70-71	Kestila, Wayne D	67-68
Kampe, David D	69-70	Budnick, Gilbert J	68-68	Nielsen, Morris G	70-71	Lakner, Michael L	69-70
Maerz, Arthur J	70-71	Buttice, Joseph N	69-69	Padykula, Roger J	66-67		
Pena, Arturo	67-68	Chain, Willard H	70-71	Pineda, Pedro Jr	69-69		
Porter, Michael L	69-69	Collins, Dean A	71-72	Postlethwait, Edwin N	70-71		
				Tafoya, Leroy	71-71		



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. Funeral Honor Guard, please check daily at www.11acr.com/hg.htm. We check over 500 U.S. Newspapers. The daily obituary keyword is 11th Cavalry. Information is then posted on our website to allow us to attend the funerals.

Darrell A. Adkins, E Troop, 2/11 (1968-1969) passed away on November 25, 2011. He was a member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Harold, KY. He was laid to rest in Bush Cemetery, Harold, KY.

Paul V. Boals, HHT Regt (1967-1968) and G Troop, 2/11 (1968) passed away on February 26, 2012. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Radcliff, KY. He was laid to rest in the family cemetery in Carbondale, IL.

Randall L. Ford, HHT, 1/11 (1970-1971) passed away on December 18, 2011. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Oakton, VA. He was laid to rest in Hope Cemetery, Pocahontas, AR.

Melvin B. Hayes, M Company, 3/11 (1969-1970) passed away on March 10, 2012. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Junction City, KS. He was laid to rest in Fort Riley Cemetery, KS.

James L. Fleshood, F Troop, 2/11 (1966-1967) passed away on March 20, 2012. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Winnetka, CA.

Kirby L. Hunter Jr., HHT Regt (1966-1967) and K Troop, 3/11 (1967) passed away on October 8, 2011. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Port Orange, FL. He was laid to rest in Kentucky Veterans Cemetery Central, Radcliff, KY.

Paul F. Icovitti, H Company, 2/11 (1967-1968) passed away on January 31, 2012. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in York, ME. He was laid to rest in First Parish Cemetery, York, ME.

Greg R. Jelinski, HHT Regt (1970-1971) passed away on January 23, 2012. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Shawano, WI.

Jerry W. Lovett, HHT Regt (1967-1969) passed away on September 25, 2011. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Hamilton, AL. He was laid to rest in Cooper Cemetery, Detroit, AL.

William M. Morrissey, HHT Regt (1969-1970) passed away on September 10, 2011. He was a member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Oceanside, CA.

Jackie B. Roysdon, HHT, 1/11 (1969) passed away on January 25, 2012. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Elgin, SC. He was laid to rest in Ft. Jackson National Cemetery, Columbia, SC.

William F. Slusser, M Company, 3/11 (1968-1969) passed away on March 1, 2012. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Stevens, PA. He was laid to rest in Indiantown Gap National Cemetery, Annville, PA.

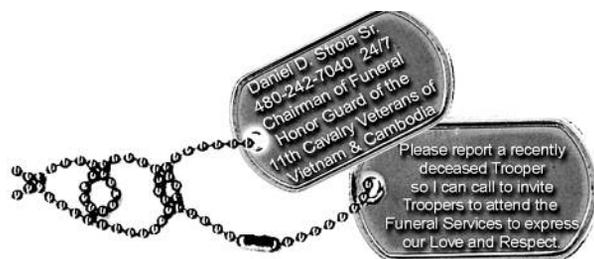
Kenneth R. Sheren JR., F Troop, 2/11 (1970-1971) passed away on February 23, 2012. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Alanson, MI.

Robert T. Stuedemann, K Troop, 3/11 (1967-1968) passed away on April 3, 2012. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Clinton, IA. He was laid to rest in Clinton Lawn Cemetery, Clinton, IA.

Dan B. Sutherland, F Troop, 2/11 (1967-1968) and F Troop, 2/11 (1968-1969) passed away on February 26, 2012. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Saltsburg, PA. He was laid to rest in Knox Union Cemetery, Knox, PA.

William D. Turner, L Troop, 3/11 (1968-1969) passed away on October 25, 2011. He was a member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Paramus, NJ and West Palm Beach, FL. He was laid to rest in South Florida National Cemetery, Lake Worth, FL.

You might want to make copies of these dog tags, place one on your refrigerator and extra dog tags on your adult children's refrigerators



Photos needed for 11th ACVVC 2013 Calendar

Note to all 11th ACVVC members! We need you to submit your high quality photos for possible inclusion in the 11th ACVVC 2013 calendar!

Please send copies, not originals. I can work with any format; preferred would be a digital scan that you e-mail me or a DVD that you surface mail; however, I can work from prints, slides, negatives, etc.

The best photos for reproduction purposes are 35mm transparencies (slides) or prints that have good contrast and high resolution (not blurry or grainy). Photos of groups, vehicles, landscapes, villages are all more interesting to the viewer than an individual photo of one soldier with his M-16.

Please consider submitting your photos to me at the address above or digitally by e-mailing images to: BasePiece70@verizon.net Thank you!

Pete Walter, Vice President, 11th ACVVC

HOOFBEATS from page 15

was spoiled, and 1,000 pounds of salt. All told, the Regiment uncovered and either destroyed or evacuated over 500,000 pounds of rice in the enemy's Cambodian stockpiles during May and June 1970, as well as over 3,000 pounds of salt, almost 23,000 pounds of medical supplies, 700 bicycles, and more than 30 trucks.

On 9 February 1972, Second Squadron was featured on the CBS Evening News with Walter Cronkite. The four-minute film showed Fox Troop ACAVs and Sheridans conducting a reconnaissance-in-force in the vicinity of Tan Uyen, northeast of Long Binh. Less than a month later, the Squadron began its standdown for rotation back to The World.

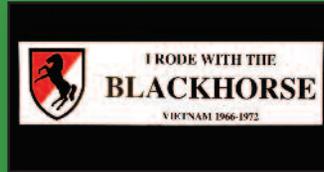
The 11th Armored Cavalry's Veterans of Vietnam and Cambodia QM Store



#1 Coffee Mug \$10.00



#2 Key Ring \$3.00



#3 Bumper Sticker \$2.00



#5 Blackhorse Watch w/Leather Band (men's only) \$35.00



#7 Blackhorse Patch Colored \$4.00



#8 Blackhorse Patch Subdued \$4.00



#12 Lighter, \$18.00



#4 Window Sticker \$2.00



#6 Blackhorse Watch w/Metal Band (men's only) \$35.00



#11 Flag, Indoor/Outdoor \$50.00



#10 Belt, \$30.00



#16 Tote Bag, Embroidered \$20.00



#17 Blackhorse Pin \$5.00



#13 License Plate, Blackhorse \$5.00



#15 Attache Case \$30.00



#14 License Plate Frame, Black w/white letters \$7.50

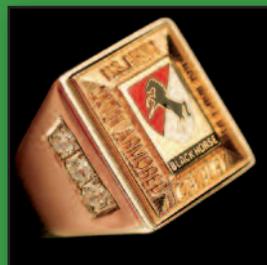


#21 Blackhorse Women's Sterling Pendant \$45.00



#23 Men's Ring, Gold & Silver \$325.00

#24 Men's Ring, Gold & Silver w/Diamonds \$380.00



#18 11th ACR Regimental Crest \$5.00



#20 Vietnam Blackhorse Pin, Wreath \$5.00



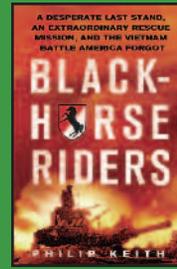
#19 Blackhorse Cavalry Pin \$5.00



#25 Blackhorse Coin \$15.00



#26 Magnetic Blackhorse \$5.00



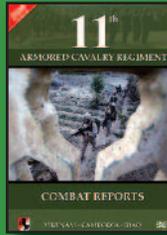
#31 Book: Blackhorse Riders \$25.00



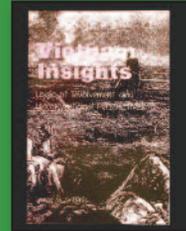
#22 Gear Bag, Red \$35.00



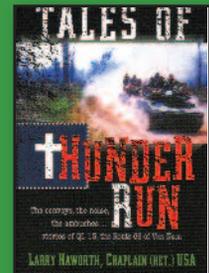
#27 Magnetic Ribbon \$4.00



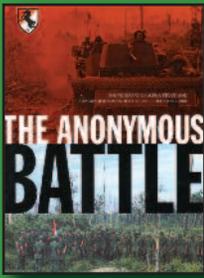
#28 Video (DVD) Combat Reports \$30.00



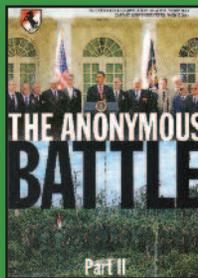
#30 Book: Vietnam Insights \$10.00



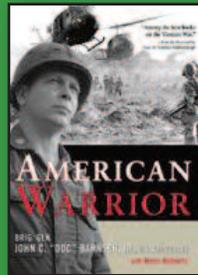
#33 Book: Tales of Thunder Run \$11.00



#34 Book: The Anonymous Battle \$16.00



#32 Book: The Anonymous Battle : Part II \$16.00



#37 Book, "American Warrior" by 'Doc' Bahnsen \$20.00



#36. T Shirt, "My Grandpa Rode With The Blackhorse" (Youth sizes: S, M, L) \$20.00



#38a Old Blackhorse Hat \$12.00



#38b New Blackhorse Hat \$12.00



#39a/b T-Shirt, gray/dark gray \$18.00



#40a/b/c Golf Shirt, w/BH Insignia & VN Ribbon, red/white/black \$32.00



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



#41 Denim Shirt (shown), w/BH & VN Ribbon, or Blue Dress Shirt (Mens) \$32.00 each



#42 Blackhorse Jacket, 100% Nylon \$95.00





Reunion is getting closer and closer and life around our house is beginning to show it. There are now name tags and registrations absolutely everywhere. I have revised the name tags and meal tickets at least 3 times but now think I have finally settled on one design. Or at least I better have settled on it as I have already run at least 100 registrations if not more, and really don't want to redo them all again.

As I sit here writing, there are a million thoughts going thru my head. Lists and lists of things to get done. We leave for Florida and Bob's mid-year meeting with the other board members in exactly 1 day and 16 hours. Not that I'm counting mind you.

Actually we are arriving a week early as we have decided to take our yearly vacation to Disney early this year. We usually go in the winter to escape the Midwest cold and snow, but since I have always wanted to see the parks when all the flowers and shrubbery were in bloom, we decided that this would be the perfect time to go. And besides the military has a special sale on Disney World tickets that we just couldn't pass up. If any of you who are retired from the military are planning on visiting any of the parks while you are in Florida either before, during or after the reunion, or at least before the end of September you might want to check with your local MWR and see about these rates.

In our meeting this year, we are going to be making fabric squares that will be put together to make a quilt which will be placed in the silent auction when we go to Indianapolis next

We will have our newest (and probably last) cookbook available this year. This is the one that we had planned to have available a couple of years ago. But due to circumstances beyond our control we had to postpone its publication.

year. This is NOT a home project. We will be breaking into groups of probably 3 or 4. You will be given a fabric square and some fabric paint pens. Each group will then decide on a design and using the pens you create your design on the fabric. I will then take them home and use them to create a very nice quilt. So start thinking about possible designs that your group may like to do. Remember we only have a couple of hours to do this in. so do not make any really complicated designs.

While you are all working on the fabric squares we will also be conducting our regular meeting. They say women are good at multi-tasking!! We also will be presenting our Women's Award. To whom will it go this year? Of course we also have our traveling treasure chest to pass on. So whoever got it last year, don't forget to fill it with items from Florida to pass on this year. So as you can see we will have a VERY busy 3 or 4 hours together. We hope you will join us and bring a lot of joy to our little group as well as giving you some of our enthusiasm. We always seem to have a load of fun together.

We will have our newest (and probably last) cookbook available this year. This is the one that we had planned to have available a couple of years ago. But due to circumstances beyond our control we had to postpone its publication. Finally this year we will have it. Hopefully it we will be as popular as our first one. We are only ordering 300 - 400 of them and they will be costing \$15 each. We will not have any pre-orders on them nor we will hold any for anyone so be sure you get yours before they are gone. You can purchase as many as you like, but note that this year we will ONLY be accepting cash. NO checks or credit cards!

Once again we will be offering lanyards. I really like them this year and think that you to will like them. Since so many of you have requested them and told us that you collect them, we thought that we would also add the city of where the reunion is being held to them. Therefore we chose to do them in a black with white lettering that reads ORLANDO and have the Blackhorse logo on them. We have only ordered a very limited amount of them, so be sure you get yours as soon as you can. In years past we have sold out of them the first day they were offered. They certainly are not going to last long at the price of just \$5.00. They are sure to be a wonderful reminder of your weekend with your old and new, friends from the 11th ACVVC.

While we were in Florida recently we did check on the cost of these same type of lanyards at the amusement parks and found that they we costing anywhere from \$10 on up. So why not get them from the ladies group and - 1. Pay less, 2. Show your pride in your unit, 3. Have something great to remember your weekend by and most importantly help us donate to the 11th ACVVC Scholarship Fund. Remember - *everything* we sell is for the benefit of the Scholarship Fund.

I have also decided, after checking things out in Florida, that we will not be playing mini golf this year. The nearest course is about 8 blocks (if not more) away. That is just too far for many of our ladies to walk. So we will just put this off till some other year. But we will still have a great time at our get together, so plan on joining us.

Well I guess that's about it for this time so all I can say now is *See You In September* — Barb

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



Quartermaster

ORDER FORM • 1st QTR 2012

11TH ARMORED CAVALRY'S VETERANS OF VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA

Item No.	Product Description	\$ Amt	Size	Qty	\$ Total
1.	Coffee Mug, white Acrylic 11oz w/full color Blackhorse insignia	10.00	—	—	—
2.	Key ring, 1.5" Acrylic square w/full color Blackhorse insignia	3.00	—	—	—
3.	Bumper Sticker "I Rode With The Blackhorse" w/full color BH insignia	2.00	—	—	—
4.	Window Sticker, full color BH insignia and Vietnam service ribbon	2.00	—	—	—
5.	Watch, BH insignia on face, leather band (indicate choice) <input type="checkbox"/> Man's	35.00	—	—	—
6.	Watch, BH insignia on face, metal band (indicate choice) <input type="checkbox"/> Man's	35.00	—	—	—
7.	Blackhorse Shoulder Patch, Colored	4.00	—	—	—
8.	Blackhorse Shoulder Patch, Subdued	4.00	—	—	—
10.	Blackhorse Belt – One size fits all	30.00	—	—	—
11.	Flag, indoor/outdoor 3'x5' with color insignia	50.00	—	—	—
12.	Lighter, brushed chrome w/full color BH insignia	18.00	—	—	—
13.	License Plate, metal red & white background with crossed sabers & 11	5.00	—	—	—
14.	License Plate Frame, metal, black w/Blackhorse 11th US Cavalry in white	7.50	—	—	—
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	20.00	—	—	—
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.	Blackhorse Women's Pendant w/chain, sterling silver w/full BH insignia	45.00	—	—	—
22.	Gear Bag, red with color BH insignia (11x11x21)	35.00	—	—	—
23.	Men's Ring, gold & silver w/full color BH insignia on face (specify size)	325.00	—	—	—
24.	Men's ring, gold, silver, & diamonds	380.00	—	—	—
25.	Blackhorse Coin	15.00	—	—	—
26.	Magnetic "Blackhorse"	5.00	—	—	—
27.	Magnetic "Support Our Troops" Ribbon	4.00	—	—	—
28.	Video: "Combat Reports" (DVD Only)	30.00	—	—	—
31.	Book: "Blackhorse Riders" <i>NEW!</i>	25.00	—	—	—
30.	Book, "Vietnam Insights" by James Griffiths	10.00	—	—	—
32.	Book, "Anonymous Battle II" (Picture not available)	16.00	—	—	—
33.	Book, "Tales of Thunder Run" by Larry Haworth, Chaplain	11.00	—	—	—
34.	Book, "The Anonymous Battle" by John Poindexter	16.00	—	—	—
36.	T Shirt, "My Grandpa Rode With The Blackhorse" (Youth sizes: S, M, L)	20.00	—	—	—
37.	Book, "American Warrior" by "Doc" Bahnsen	20.00	—	—	—
38.	Hat, Black Poplin adjustable w/full color direct embroidery Blackhorse insignia. <input type="checkbox"/> a (old) <input type="checkbox"/> b (new)	12.00	—	—	—
39.	Blackhorse T-shirt, 100% cotton, preshrunk, full color BH insignia. Specify color: <input type="checkbox"/> dark gray <input type="checkbox"/> gray	18.00	—	—	—
40.	Golf Shirt, w/BH insignia and VN Ribbon: Specify color: <input type="checkbox"/> Red <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Black	32.00	—	—	—
41.	Denim Shirt or Blue Dress Shirt (Mens): <input type="checkbox"/> Denim <input type="checkbox"/> Blue Dress	32.00	—	—	—
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.	OTHER: Sale Items, Etc. _____	—	—	—	—

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)	\$2.00	—	\$5.00	=	\$3.00
B)	\$6.00	—	\$15.00	=	\$6.60
C)	\$16.00	—	\$60.00	=	\$10.85
D)	\$61.00	and over		=	\$14.55

Visa Mastercard Card # _____ Exp. Date _____

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. Maximum per order form charge is \$14.20. Checks or Money Orders should be made payable to **11th ACVVC**. Allow six weeks for processing and delivery. **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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

NONPROFIT ORG.
 U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
 JACKSONVILLE, FL
 PERMIT NO. 3



From the Quartermaster...

Jerry Beamon

Hello to all BLACKHORSE Troopers,

Things are looking up here at your Quartermaster Store; we got off to a great start to open the 1st quarter of this year. Please take time to look over your copy of the *Thunder Run*. In the last issue we had to change the way we do shipping I think this will be easier to tally shipping charges. ONLY trouble is I forgot to change the shipping cost the pricing has increased once again, and I did not catch it in time. Sorry—.

Oh yea, Jerry Mitchell & Wayne Jacobit both informed me I got the dates on Texas Round- Up was wrong (as usual), Instead of May 5th as stated it *is set in stone* for May 12th, at Tyler State Park just off Interstate 20. If anyone is living in the area come on over for some fun and entertainment. We are looking forward to seeing everyone so come on out. If you need directions you can contact Jerry at 903-894-3951 or you can E-mail him at

jmittchell5@nctv.com, or call Wayne at 903-588-2898.

On that note, I have the *Reunion in Orlando* on the right day & time, so if you have not made your reservation you had better gitt 'er done. Time is creeping up on us and will be here before you know it. Hurry!!! You might catch me at Disney Land some time during the reunion; I'll be one of the big kids in line. No wait. . . I'll be wearing a Blackhorse T shirt so I will be in disguise, hope you find me. If not, I'll be in the Quartermaster Store so come on. Oh!! Bring the wife, kids, & grandkids they will want to come also, but don't tell them until you are on the way to Orlando.

And as always, we need volunteers to help us out in the store as you have time that permits. We will need you, so please come on by & spend some time with us.

ALLONS!!

QUARTERMASTER CLEARANCE & FEATURED ITEMS

Please fill out your desired clearance & featured items as OTHER on the QM Order form. Fill them in on the describe item line with your choice and fill in the blanks provided for \$ Amt., Size, Qty., and \$ Total.



#41 Denim Shirt, w/BH & VN Ribbon, Mens \$32.00



#36. T Shirt, "My Grandpa Rode With The Blackhorse" (Youth sizes: S, M, L) \$20.00