



Thunder Run

Vol. 28 – NO. 4

“Together Then – Together Again”

4th Quarter, 2013

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

Flying to Viet Nam

By George Ruggles
How Battery, 3/11, 66-67

In an earlier issue of *Thunder Run*, Leo Deege described the ocean voyage of How Btry, 3rd Squadron, from the US to Vung Tau, RVN in August, 1966. Their trip took three weeks or so. There was another way to get in-country, and per Leo’s direction, (he was my boss), I took it: a USAF C-141 Starlifter from Andrews AFB, Maryland, to Tan Son Nhut, RVN, as a mem-

ber of the 11ACR Advance Party. We may have left from Dover, DE; I just don’t remember, I was too exhausted from the trip preparation. (The night before, I had gone to Bill Austin’s house and fell asleep at the dinner table.)

This trip took about two days, most of it in the air, with stops in Alaska and Japan, then a veritable nose-dive into TSN. All I can remember about Elmendorf AFB in Alaska

Please turn to **FLYING** on page 7

REUNION 2013

By Steve Page, Reunion Chairman

Now that the Indianapolis reunion is a memory and before I turn my attention to Las Vegas 2014, I have some facts about what goes into such an event.

- Our attendees traveled from 47 of these United States, including Hawaii. A combined round trip distance in the millions of miles.

- The food vouchers that were used added up to over \$11,500.00.

- Our 15% discount in the hotels outlets was well over \$7,000.00 or about \$7.00 per person, a savings for all who dined in the hotel.

- The soda consumption was over 550 cans, and the beer consumption was up with 18 kegs used, or about 126 cases of beer.

- At the banquet 56% of you picked the beef entrée and 42% chose the chicken. The vegetarian dinners came in at 2%. In all 1,050 dinners were served. The above information was taken from the 900 pages of receipts we received when the hotel bill was paid.

- The planning for the Indianapolis

Please turn to **REUNION 2013** on page 6



For an Act of Valor...

Trooper Flenrus Lee Murdock (L) (D Company, 69-70) is presented his Soldier’s Medal by COL John Lanier Ward (R) at the 28th Reunion. Trooper Murdock was awarded the medal over 43 years ago for heroic action while serving with D Company, 1/11 ACR.

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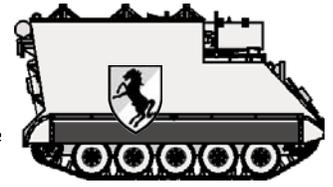




Allen Hathaway
President

From The Command Track

By Allen Hathaway, President



We're headed for Las Vegas in 2014. One of the activities planned for the reunion will be a trip to Fort Irwin to visit the troopers of the regiment. ...note the dates have changed to September 3-7, 2014.

The 28th annual reunion was held on September 11-15 in Indianapolis, Indiana. Over 1,030 people attended the reunion this year. Our thanks to all who attended and especially the volunteers who worked tirelessly to help make this another successful reunion.

People began arriving early in the week to take advantage of sightseeing opportunities and to meet up with their old friends. Registration officially opened on Wednesday afternoon and many were on hand to pick up their reunion packets. The "bunker" opened and the crowd began to filter in to meet up with buddies. Unit guidons were placed on tables throughout the bunker, which is the size of the banquet room, to make it easy to locate a particular unit. As the room began to fill troopers were seen with pictures, scrap books, newspaper articles and many other mementoes.

Thursday was the 22nd annual Marty Ognibene Golf Tournament. This is always a fun event for troopers, wives and friends; but unfortunately the weather didn't cooperate this year and many were forced to finish early. More attendees continued to arrive at the hotel throughout the day on Thursday. Many took the opportunity to visit some of the sites in the downtown Indianapolis area.

On Friday morning we held our annual Veterans Seminar hosted by Wayne Long and John Hickey. This year's topic was "Veterans Benefits". Over 250 attended the seminar including many wives. The information presented was very helpful and many questions were answered.

On Friday afternoon nearly 100 troopers and friends took a bus trip to the Ropkey Armor Museum in nearby Crawfordsville to see an impressive collection of armor vehicles and other military memorabilia.

More attendees arrived throughout the day. By that evening the large banquet room used for the "bunker party" was full and bustling with activity.

The silent auction was also held on Friday evening. This is always a fun and interesting part of the reunion. An incredible 191 items were on display this year and available for bid. The volunteers did an excellent job of

cataloging, sorting, setting up and monitoring the silent auction.

The Annual Business Meeting was held on Saturday morning where we reported on the state of the organization. Elections were held, the results of which are printed elsewhere in this issue. A thorough overview of the 2014 reunion in Las Vegas was given as well as a review of the 2015 reunion in Columbus, Georgia.

Chaplain Larry Haworth conducted the memorial service on Saturday afternoon. The names of departed Blackhorse troopers who have passed away since the previous reunion were read. Members of the audience had the opportunity to speak about friends or loved ones lost this past year. There were many heartfelt tributes to our departed Blackhorse troopers.

The Saturday evening banquet and program are the highlights of the reunion. We would like to thank our guest speaker, Major General John R. Landry (USA Ret), for his excellent remarks. As a captain he served as a B Troop commander in 1966-1967.

We would also like to thank the current regimental commander COL Lanier Ward, Regimental Command Sergeant Major Stephen Travers, and Regimental Adjutant CPT Anthony Bradley for attending the reunion and giving an update on the activities of the regiment. They included three outstanding videos mixing scenes of the regiment from the past and the present.

We were also honored to have 15 gold star family members attend the reunion representing four of our fallen Blackhorse troopers. Many were able to meet and talk with others who served with their loved one.

A total of 54 troopers attended their first reunion. These "first timers" were asked to stand and received a "welcome home" round of applause from the audience. Many of them commented afterward that they waited far too long to attend a reunion. A Troop had the highest attendance of any unit with 102.

This year we marked a very important milestone in our Scholarship Program. The

total amount of scholarships awarded has now exceeded the \$1,000,000 mark! A special recognition for this incredible achievement was highlighted during the Saturday evening program. The achievement was recognized with a banner and plaque thanking all our members who support this worthy program. Tim Rusteberg, Emma Ciborowski, and Kelly Wehner, three scholarship recipients attending the reunion, were also introduced by Scholarship Chairman Mike Rafferty. All of the scholarship recipients are the inspiration for our successful Scholarship Program.

The Saturday evening program was topped off by the Blackhorse Salute. This is always a very powerful and sometimes emotional portion of the program as we salute the service of the thousands of Blackhorse troopers who served with this great regiment in Vietnam.

We especially want to thank the many Blackhorse troopers, family, and friends who attend and support these great events. It's your participation that makes these reunions so successful year after year.

We're headed for Las Vegas in 2014. One of the activities planned for the reunion will be a trip to Fort Irwin to visit the troopers of the regiment. We're looking forward to that trip. Please note the dates have changed to September 3-7, 2014. For anyone who has never attended a reunion, what are you waiting for? We encourage you to make the effort to attend. Don't know what to expect? Call me or send me an e-mail. I'd be happy to talk with you. Want to meet an old friend at the reunion? Call me or send me an e-mail and we'll try to connect you. By the way, you always make new friends! We all have one thing in common. We all served in the Blackhorse.

The Rio All Suites Hotel is ready to take your reservations. See the information elsewhere in this issue. We expect another large turnout so start making your plans to attend the next reunion. **We hope to see you in Las Vegas in 2014.** It's great to be "together again" ALLONS!



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

Thunder Run (©2000 11th ACVVC) is the official publication of The 11th Armored Cavalry's Veterans of Vietnam and Cambodia (11th ACVVC), P.O. Box 956, Colleyville, TX 76034; a notforprofit organization. It is published four times a year by Finisterre Publishing Incorporated, 3 Black Skimmer Ct., Beaufort, SC 29907 (finisterre@islc.net) for members of the organization. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any way without the written consent of the 11th ACVVC.

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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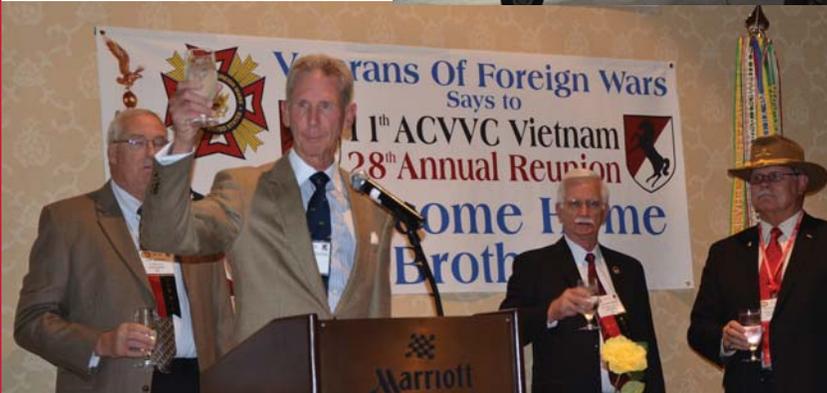
11th ACVVC Annual Reunion XXVII

Indianapolis, Indiana

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Date/Time	Event	Location
Wednesday, September 11	12:00PM - 4:00PM Registration Open	Marriott Foyer
12:00PM - 8:00PM Quartermaster Store Open		Shelton
2:00PM - 12:00AM Bunker Open		Marriott #4
Thursday, September 12	7:00AM - 10:00AM 22nd Annual Marty Ogilburn Memorial Golf Tournament (optional fee per golfer)	Marriott Foyer
9:00AM - 6:00PM Registration Open		Lincoln
9:00AM - 5:00PM Quartermaster Store Open		Marriott #5-10
2:00PM - 12:00AM Bunker Open		
Friday, September 13	9:00AM - 6:00PM Registration Open	Marriott Foyer
9:00AM - 5:00PM Quartermaster Store Open		Lincoln
10:00AM - 12:00PM Veterans Banquet		Marriott #3
12:00PM - 1:00PM Postcard Auction (optional fee per person)		Marriott Ballroom
12:00PM - 12:00AM Bunker Open		Marriott Ballroom
5:00PM - 8:00PM Head Auction		Marriott Ballroom
8:00PM Raffle Drawing		Marriott Ballroom
Saturday, September 14	9:00AM - 12:00PM Annual Membership Meeting (Members Only)	Shelton Ballroom
9:00AM - 12:00PM Women's Group Meeting		Marriott #2
2:00PM - 5:00PM Memorial Service		Indiana Ballroom
2:00PM - 5:00PM Registration Open for Little Antelope		Marriott Foyer
3:00PM - 5:00PM Quartermaster Store Open		Lincoln
5:00PM - 6:00PM Cocktail Hour		Marriott Foyer
7:00PM - 9:30PM Banquet, Presentations & "Blackburn Salute"		Marriott Ballroom
8:00PM - 1:00AM Dancing		Marriott Ballroom
Sunday, September 15	10:00AM - 11:00AM Chapel Worship Service (Non-denominational)	Marriott #7-10
10:00AM - 2:00PM Quartermaster Store Open		Lincoln
All Day Farewells and Departures		

Please Have a Safe Trip Home



Indianapolis, IN

Photos courtesy of Ken Jankel





I always make new friends at the reunions and know some folks only through the reunions. Come to a reunion, you may arrive a stranger, but you will not remain one for long.

The Indianapolis reunion was a great experience. With over a thousand people all sporting Blackhorse shirts, jackets, hats, pins, cars, motorcycles, wheelchairs, and yes even cookbooks! If someone can figure out a way to put a Blackhorse Patch on it, they will – whatever it is! All united as a large family. Even those who have never met before have a tie that really speeds up the process of making friends. I always make new friends at the reunions and know some folks only through the reunions. Come to a reunion, you may arrive a stranger, but you will not remain one for long. I was fortunate this year to have five guys I served with also make the trip. One guy I had not seen since 1970 and I and the other three were together as a group for the first time since Vietnam.

Especially at reunions, I am in awe of all the volunteers who make your organization run, they all work hard out of love for your organization. Some have worked thousands of hours over the years at very difficult jobs. Several people were recognized with awards this year and they are all deserving, a list appears elsewhere in this issue. The Trooper of the Year Award went to Jerry Beamon, your Quartermaster. Congratulations to Jerry on the much deserved award. An organization like ours and events like reunions take a lot of people giving of their time and

selves to make it work for all of us.

This quarter your *Thunder Run* is offering a lot of information about the Indy Reunion to help those of us who were there to recall the good times and to try within the limits of the printed page to give those who could not make the trip at least a hint of the flavor of it. In 2014 we will meet in Las Vegas, Nevada, from September 3 through 7. There is hotel information in this issue, so go ahead and start planning your trip now. In 2015, to celebrate our 30th Reunion, we will be in Columbus, Georgia so we can visit Fort Benning and mark the moving of our memorial from Fort Knox to Fort Benning.

We have again attempted to give you a variety of articles in this issue, hopefully we can inform, entertain, bring a smile, or maybe a tear of remembrance. Look for our section on the 2013 Scholarship winners, we have included information from ten of the nineteen winners for this year; the other nine will be in the First Quarter 2014 issue. Congratulations to all of them – they “do us proud.” This issue, our guest contributors are: Cheryl Lynn Stewart, George Ruggles, Joe Coopet, Joan Kyar Freyholtz, Elena Brown, Doug Braendel and Mark Crist; in addition to our usual columnists. Thanks to all who write for us for being willing to share a part of yourselves with the rest of us.

This is our last issue for the year, hard to believe that 2013 is soon to be in the history books. As the holidays approach please allow my family to extend to your family wishes for the warmest and most joyful holiday season possible. May the Good Lord bless and keep you.

From the Secretary's Desk

By: Adrian Vaaler

Election results from the Indianapolis reunion are as follows:

- President:Allen Hathaway
- Vice President:Peter Walter
- Secretary:Adrian Vaaler
- Treasurer:Ollie Pickral
- Director:Michael Rafferty

All were unanimously re-elected. The officers serve two year terms beginning January 1, 2014 and ending December 31, 2016. Director Michael Rafferty serves a three year term beginning January 1, 2014 and ending December 31, 2017.

REUNION 2013

reunion took over thirty months, as do most reunions. Many times during the year we are working on two and sometimes three different reunions at the same time.

For those who were not able to secure a room at The Marriott Downtown remember that room reservations need to be made as early as possible. In the contract with the hotel we must guarantee that all the rooms we block will be used otherwise we will pay for the empty rooms.

Many years we are not the only event at the hotel.

The Indy reunion was well attended and the comments have been positive. These reunions belong to the members; your feedback is very important. We are looking forward to another great event in Las Vegas and a trip to visit the Regiment in the desert.

We hope to see everyone again next year. Best wishes and good health.

2014 Newsletter Deadlines

The following are the due dates to submit articles for *Thunder Run*

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------|
| 1st Quarter | Jan 15 |
| 2nd Quarter | Mar 25 |
| 3rd Quarter | Jun 25 |
| 4th Quarter | Oct 1 |

All submissions for publication must be sent to: C.E. "Bill" Gregory, Editor, 421 Fallen Leaf Drive, Soddy Daisy, TN 37379-3577. E-mail: Battle46A@epbfi.com

FLYING from page 1

is that it was fairly light out at night in August. Japan, for an hour stop, I don't remember a thing. Saigon, I'll never forget.

A few words about that airplane: I don't know what it was, maybe the shoulder-wing design, could have been just the weather, but those were the smoothest flights I've ever been on. The seats, along the side and really just webbing, weren't the best, but that airplane is a beautifully-engineered flying machine. Made the trip bearable, if not really pleasant.

On to RVN. Passengers had been warned beforehand to expect a precipitous drop into Saigon, a steep approach to reduce the chance of being hit with VC groundfire. It was a roller-coaster ride down to the runway, 30,000 feet to sea level, but the landing was uneventful. No gunfire.

The 11th ACR was initially based in Long Binh, and the bus ride from Saigon took about an hour but seemed like forever with all the traffic. The bus had heavy wire mesh over the windows to repel grenades, our first clue that not all the city folk were friendly. With no weapons, we were defenseless but too green to be that worried about it.

Long Binh was huge. The squadron tents had already been set up, I suppose by some engineer battalion, but there were no floors like we eventually had at Xuan Loc. However, the first order of business was to get sandbag barriers built outside each tent to provide cover during mortar or rocket attacks. We used local Vietnamese labor for this work, and rumor was the VC sympathizers among them were pacing off distances for later use by those same mortars.

Our days were spent scrounging for gear at the Long Binh supply depot. Wooden skids were in high demand, to get the troop's feet up off the mud, as were metal storage lockers, wooden picnic tables, anything else useful we could liberate.

In our off time, it became important to find just the right leather gun belt for our .45 caliber pistols. The most popular version had loops for bullets all around the back. Those of us who bought these less-than-regulation items looked like Wyatt Earps in OD.

It soon became apparent that one of our big problems was water. Not the kind to drink, (remember the Erdlater?), we had plenty of that, but the kind that falls from the

Passengers had been warned beforehand to expect a precipitous drop into Saigon, a steep approach to reduce the chance of being hit with VC groundfire.

sky. August is the height of the monsoon season in Viet Nam, with more rainfall than any other month. Trenches had to be dug around each squad tent, and a drainage system figured out for the entire complex. I'm sure there are mixed recollections as to how this all worked out. The rains usually hit in the early afternoon, as I recall, and all sandbagging work ceased for the duration of the deluge. "Sandbag" is a misnomer; mudbag is more like it. Fortunately, How Btry was on the relatively high side of the valley the squadron occupied, so we weren't as hard hit as others. It later turned out that our location was well-planned, as our tents were just yards from the cannons that arrived later.

A few words about those later-arriving howitzers: by the time they arrived at the Saigon docks, we felt well-acclimated to our RVN surroundings, veritable veterans at this point. That was before we spent a night at the wharves of Saigon. The guns were not to arrive until the next morning, and we were ill-prepared to bivouac in the low-life part of the city. The biggest problem was the rats. We posted guards to shoo away the biggest ones, the man-eaters, and tried to sleep through most of the night. Next day, the road march back to Long Binh surely impressed

the local citizenry. They'd probably never seen M-108 cannons before, likely thought they were a new version of a tank, and the VC sympathizers surely passed the word up the enemy grapevine that there was a new element to the American forces.

The boat trip Leo described sounds like it might have been a great way to go, but I'm happy to have had the opportunity to get in on the ground floor of RVN, so to speak. All of us were lucky to go to Viet Nam as a unit, having trained together for nearly a year and knowing each man's capabilities. The guys that followed us, the replacements, probably had a much rougher go. Plus, they flew over and were in-country right away, as opposed to the boat-riders that landed in '66.

You see, a trooper got credit for overseas service starting with the day he left the USA; per AR 614-30, "the period of creditable time starts on the day of departure from a CONUS port for overseas service". You can look it up. In other words, time on the water was considered time in-country. I've never let my batterymates forget that I spent three more weeks with a chance of being shot at than they did. No shots were fired in that time that I recall, but that's not the point... ..

Incoming...

Information provided by and for our Troopers

Rocky Angone, Air Cav Troop, will be escorting the First Lady of Maine, Ann LePage, as the Wreaths Across America caravan makes its way from Harrington, Maine to Arlington National Cemetery. The caravan will leave Maine on December 8 and arrive at Arlington on December 14. The Ladies Group has donated 10 wreaths to this project this year. Several Blackhorse troopers volunteer each year to accompany the caravan or to lay wreaths at Arlington and other national cemeteries throughout the country.

The Irish Vietnam Veterans Memorial Project is a single purpose organization consisting of volunteers who have committed to establishing a permanent memorial in Ireland to honor the 2,500 Irish citizens who served with the United States and allied services in South East Asia during the Vietnam War. The memorial will list the names of those who lost their lives in the Vietnam War. Of the 2,500 Irish citizens who served, 29, including one woman, an Irish nurse, lost their lives. For more information please see the web site: www.ivnvm.org

At the 2012 reunion in Orlando, members of G Troop took up a collection and donated \$1,000 to the Scholarship Fund. In 2013, G Troop once again collected \$750 and challenged other troops to meet this amount. L Troop met the challenge by collecting \$875. Thanks to all who helped by making a donation!

A tribute to donors

The 2013 Silent Auction

Thanks to all who participated in the silent auction. A special thanks goes to all those who donated items for bid. The auction is totally dependent on your support and those who participated came through once again. An incredible total of 191 items were donated this year for a net of \$12,020 toward the Scholarship Fund. This amount is equivalent to three scholarships. Many of the items had military or 11th Cavalry themes which are always very popular.

Special thanks go to Paul and Teresa Gissible (G Trp, 2/11), Ron and Janet Krueger (HHT, 1/11), Greg Mason (HHT, 3/11) and Don LaFountaine (HHT Regt) for again coordinating the silent auction during the reunion. There were also a number of other volunteers who helped in collecting, organizing, tagging items, setting up and monitoring the silent auction. Their help was invaluable and we thank them.

The following is the list of donors for our silent auction in Indianapolis. Several individuals donated more than one item. Start thinking of items that may be donated for next year!

- 11th ACR (6 items)
- Charles & Lauren Amagost
- Dale & Marguerite Austin (2 items)
- David & Linda Bailey (6 items)
- Sherri Bowman (2 items)
- Ronald Brockwell (5 items)
- Tim Brooks
- Ervin Brune
- Frank Church (3 items)
- Dee Cofty
- Dennis Creal (3 items)
- Dante Diecanini
- Bill England
- The Ben Fields Family
- Gary L. Floyd
- Harold Fritz (2 items)
- Kimberlie Gerlach (2 items)
- Paul & Teresa Gissible (4 items)
- Wayne Goad (2 items)
- Karen Gowrie (3 items)
- James Graham
- Gary Grams (4 items)

- Allen Hathaway
- Michael Henschel
- Carol and Russ Hess
- Joe Hessberg
- John Hill
- Rondo Jackson (4 items)
- Roger Karels
- Ernest & Jean Kauppi (12 items)
- Earl & Margie Klein (2 items)
- Ron Krueger (4 items)
- Wilma Kujawa (10 items)
- Ladies of the Blackhorse
- Don LaFountaine (2 items)
- Dale & Patricia Leesman (6 items)
- Paul Middaugh (2 items)
- Bob & Barb Moreno (4 items)
- Raleigh Moreno (3 items)
- Chuck Morrison
- Jake Morrison (13 items)
- Tom & Terie Morrison
- Louis A. Mulrath
- Kenneth L. Nelson
- Eric Newton (4 items)
- Kyle Newton
- Renata Newton (6 items)
- Bill Pion
- Fred & Cherry Platt (2 items)
- John Poindexter
- Barbara Powers
- Wanda Schumann (2 items)
- Dave Seymour (2 items)
- Fred Sheetz
- Vincent Sinervo (6 items)
- Crystal Smith
- Ken Smith
- Roger Sonnenberg
- John Stark
- Lauren Tandberg (5 items)
- James Trier (7 items)
- Clinton Waldroop
- Dale Walker
- Rufus & Doris Waugh (9 items)
- Dennis & Patricia Weachter (2 items)
- Mike Weynard
- Jerrell Whitten
- Eddie Wood (2 items)

Golfers Overcome Elements & Course

By: Joe Coopet,
A Troop 1969

Early reunion week was Vietnam hot in Indianapolis. Thursday dawned the same, reminding one of an August morning during monsoon season. After an hour's delay to form a new strategy, our 11th Cav golfers and guests began their endeavor. Four short hours later, the Blackhorse contingent overcame the adversity (as usual).



Thirty four players participated in this year's 22nd annual Marty Ognibene golf tournament. The event is held in honor of Marty who served in RVN 1968-1970 with A Troop and Air Cav Troop. Marty was a bona fide golf nut and lost his battle to Agent Orange complications in 1991.

Next year's event will be held on Thursday, September 4. ... we'll be staying at the Rio Suites just off of "The Strip" in Las Vegas. Bill Wagner of HHT 3rd Squadron was the overall champion with a fine net score of 72. Apparently, Bill has found something to do in lieu of his day job. Melanie

Scheumann pretty much swept most of the prizes in the Women's division. Yes, Ladies! We have plenty of room for you next year. It should be noted that virtually every participant received a nice prize. These prizes were due to the continued extreme generosity of Ed Buening—F Troop, Pete Walter—3rd How Battery, John Quinn—B Troop, Tom Doll—HHT 3rd Squadron, Harold Mann—K Troop and Richard Kenyon.

Next year's event will be held on Thursday, September 4. As most of you know, we'll be staying at the Rio Suites just off of "The Strip" in Las Vegas. Our event golf course is still undetermined, but, we have a couple of dandies in mind. All information will be posted in our 2014 2nd quarter newsletter as well as on our website. Won't you please join us in Las Vegas?

Allons

Thank You, Volunteers!

THANKS to the many volunteers who helped make the 2013 reunion in Indianapolis a success:

- Reunion Chairman:** Steve Page
- The Board:** Pete Walter, Ollie Pickral, Adrian Vaaler, Bob Moreno, Steve Page, and Mike Rafferty
- Guest Speakers:** MG John R. Landry (USA Ret), B Troop Commander, 1966-1967, COL Lanier Ward, 65th Colonel, CSM Stephen Travers, 20th Command Sergeant Major, CPT Anthony Bradley, 11th ACR Adjutant, Fort Irwin, California
- Registration:** Bob, Barb and Raleigh Moreno
- Chaplain:** Larry Haworth
- Historian:** Don Snedeker
- Quartermaster:** Jerry and Jan Beamon, Jerry and Pat Mitchell
- Thunder Run Editor:** Bill Gregory
- Veterans Seminar:** Wayne Long, Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs and John Hickey, Department of Indiana American Legion.
- Silent Auction:** Paul and Teresa Gissible, Ron and Janet Krueger, Greg Mason, Don LaFountaine
- Golf Tournament:** Joe and Jaci Coopet, Pete Walter
- Reunion Photos:** Ken Jankel
- Reunion Shirts:** Chuck and Cathi Bower
- Ropkey Armor Museum Trip:** Len McFarling, Kenneth Cain
- Internet Coordinator:** Otis Carey, Bob Kickenweitz
- Public Affairs:** Eric Newton
- Women's Group Coordinators:** Barb Moreno, Kathy Tandburg

And many thanks to the scores of people who stepped up and volunteered a few hours of their time to help in the Quartermaster Store, registration desk, the silent auction and to sell cook books!

2013 REUNION - GOLD STAR FAMILIES

Fifteen (15) Gold Star family members attended the reunion representing the 4 fallen Blackhorse Troopers listed below.

- ★ Kurtis A. Berry July 6, 1969 C Troop, 1/11
- ★ Lanny J. Norman November 11, 1968 F Troop, 2/11
- ★ Robert L. Bolan July 24, 1970 HHT, 2/11

A Daughter's Special Note

By: Cheryl Lynn Stewart

My father is James Vaughan Stewart III, a graduate of the class of 1965 from West Point. On September 12th he will be attending his yearly reunion with the 11th Cavalry in which he was a Lieutenant. These courageous men fought in a war that was very unsupported. Yet, they believed in their efforts for they believed in America. I have never really seen my father shed a tear, except at funerals or for an ill family member. He never speaks about the horrors of being in Vietnam nor has he ever complained about serving his country.

One day my father and I were awaiting my airplane and we heard clapping. What we witnessed was a crowd of people with a huge banner reading, welcome home, we love you! Then all of the airport employees stood up from their posts and clapped and cheered while this brave soldier returned safely. I looked at my father and saw a tiny tear. He said to me, "Now this is a hero's welcome."

My father's return was nothing like this. His mother, father, and I think my mother welcomed him home. There was no cheering, clapping, respect, or thank yous from anyone. He came home to draft dodgers, and men that hid other places to avoid becoming soldiers. People outside of the brave men who fought this war treated many of them like outcasts. To this day I am still haunted by the treatment many of American soldiers endured.

I have been so lucky to get to meet some of the 11th Cavalry soldiers, who are all amazing, heroic, men. One of them I still refer to as my Uncle. My wish to these brave men for this upcoming reunion is to know that this daughter will always be proud of not just her father but also the 11th Cavalry and all of the Vietnam Vets.

Love to you all,

Cheryl Lynn Stewart

(Editor's note: James V. "Jay" Stewart, III served with C Troop, 1966 - 1967)

The 11th ACVVC Annual Awards

The following awards were presented at the 2013 annual reunion for service "Above and Beyond" to the 11th ACVVC and its membership.

Trooper of the Year Award

Jerry L. Beamon, Quartermaster

Women's Award

Cherry R. Platt

Outstanding Trooper Awards

Kenneth G. Jankel

Dean W. Bacon

Leslie Ken Smith

Charles G. Watkins

Meet Our 2013 Scholarship Winners

This issue contains brief statements from 10 of our 2013 Scholarship Winners. Future issues will feature the remaining 9 Scholarship Winners.

Dylan T. Graham



This scholarship is truly a blessing for me and my family and it helps us out so much. With two other siblings in college this really helps out with our financial situation. It gives me a chance to pursue my goals at Michigan State next year. To me this is an incredible honor. To be thought of as a leader and to receive the Colonel Charles L. Schmidt Leadership scholarship is amazing. Thank you so much for this opportunity to strive for success at Michigan State.

Dylan Graham is the son of Richard T. Graham, A Troop, 67-68, and this year's Colonel Charles Schmidt Leadership Award Winner.

Lara E. Bacon



It is hard to express how thankful I am to receive this scholarship. Without it, I would have had to postpone continuing college to earn my degree in veterinary technology at least a year. I would like to thank the veterans of Vietnam and Cambodia for their honorable service and the 11th ACVVC for their kindness and generosity

Lara Bacon is the daughter of Dean W. Bacon C Troop, 69-70. KIA dedication to Loren D. Le Beau, A Troop, (KIA: 2/1/1971).

Brian B. Baughman



Thanks so much to the 11th Armored Cavalry's Veterans of Vietnam and Cambodia for selecting me to be one of the scholarship recipients. I would also like to thank all those that have donated to the 11th ACVVC making these generous scholarship awards possible. Your donation is not wasted, but used with frugality and humility. At the age of 30, my wife and I both decided to leave a career of sales and return to school in order to pursue new careers in nursing. This has required that we cut our costs and make numerous sacrifices over the past 3 years. My spouse will graduate from her nursing program in December. I have completed an Associate's degree, required prerequisites, and am now in the application process to start a nursing program in January. My long-term educational goal includes a Master's Degree Program to become a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist. I am honored to be the son of an 11th ACVCC member, and I also have two sons

(ages 3 & 6) who are grateful and proud 11th ACVVC grandchildren. Thank you for your service and support.

Brian Baughman is the son of William R. Baughman, K Troop 68. KIA dedication to John A. Marr, Air Cavalry Troop, (KIA: 5/9/1970).

Emma B. Ciborowski



I am honored and humbled at being selected to receive an 11th Armored Cavalry's Veterans of Vietnam and Cambodia \$4000 scholarship award. My dad and I attended the 2008 11th ACVVC annual reunion in the Chicago where I enjoyed meeting many members of your group who so selflessly served our great country. Your generous

financial gift will help me to attain an Engineering degree from the University of Iowa. Thank you for your kind support—I will not let you down.

Emma B. Ciborowski is the daughter of Dennis Ciborowski, D Company, 1967. KIA dedication to James R. Gentile, B Troop (KIA: 3/26/69).

Airisa A. Durand



I cannot begin to thank you enough for the generous scholarship that has been awarded to me. I have worked very hard to be where I am today and it means a lot that this organization deems me worthy of their support. Thank you again!

Airisa Durand is the daughter of Steve H. Durand, HHT 3/11, 67-69. KIA dedication to Bobby G. Haynes, C Troop, (KIA: 9/6/1969).

Kimberlie S. Gerlach



Being awarded one of the 11th Armored Cavalry Veterans of Vietnam and Cambodia Scholarships is truly an honor. I want everyone responsible to know how thankful I am. I know I am blessed to have the support of my family, and my extended Blackhorse family. I want nothing more than to make them all proud. This scholarship will most certainly help me attain that goal and aid me in my culinary school pursuits.

Kimberlie S. Gerlach is the daughter of Ronald L. Gerlach, HOW 2/11, 69-70. KIA dedication to Herbert Koliba, D Company, (KIA: 5/15/1969).

Emily M. German



I would like to thank the 11th Armored Cavalry's Veterans of Vietnam & Cambodia for this wonderful scholarship opportunity. I am honored to represent the 11th ACVVC and its members as a scholarship recipient! Thanks to the 11th ACVVC scholarship I am able to pursue my goals and dreams and continue studying Clinical Laboratory Science at Kansas State University.

Emily German is the daughter of Ronald L. German, E Troop, 69-72. KIA dedication to Johnny C. Preston, E Troop, (KIA: 5/24/1967).

Michael J. Hansen



Thank you very much for this generous scholarship, it is an honor. My family is proud of me for receiving this award and I am very proud of my father for his service to our country. This financial help will enable me to devote more time to my education. Thank you to the 11th ACVVC!

Michael Hansen is the son of Sidney R. Hansen, L Troop, 67-68. KIA dedication to Albert H. Smith, H Company, (KIA: 1/6/1967).

Karalee M. Herweh



I am truly honored to receive the 11th Armored Cavalry's Veterans of Vietnam and Cambodia scholarship. Because of this scholarship attending university is more affordable for my family. I plan to study Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at Xavier University and later on study medicine to fulfill my dreams of becoming a hematologist. I am truly so thankful for the generosity of everyone in the 11th ACVVC. I hope that I will be able to honor the memory of Dewitt J. Wolf who was killed in action and for whom this scholarship is dedicated.

Karalee Herweh is the daughter of Terry W. Herweh, 541 MID, 70-71. KIA dedication to Dewitt J. Wolf, M Company, (KIA: 1/12/1968).

Olivia R. Jones



I am so honored to have been awarded the 11th ACVVC scholarship. It means so much to me to have support from you to continue my education at the University of Rhode Island. Thank you very much for the consideration, I truly appreciate it. Olivia Jones is the daughter of Daniel F. Jones, 541st MID, 68-69. KIA dedication Joseph W. Sell, K Troop, (KIA: 6/20/1969).



SCHOLARSHIP UPDATE

by Mike "Doc" Rafferty, Director and Scholarship Chairman

Our 2013 Scholarship Winners

Since the inception of the 11ACVVC scholarship program in 1996, our organization has awarded 337 college scholarships totaling \$1,046,000! These scholarships include the nineteen scholarships totaling \$78,000 we were able to award this year. Our 2013 scholarship winners submitted outstanding applications and are well-deserving of their awards. You can view some of the winner's photos and their feelings about receiving a scholarship in this issue of Thunder Run.

Each year one applicant is selected to receive the Colonel Charles L. Schmidt Leadership Scholarship Award. This year's winner is Dylan Graham, son of Richard Graham (A troop, 67-68), who was selected by Bonnie Schmidt, Colonel Schmidt's widow.

As we have done for the past few years, each scholarship this year is dedicated to one of our Blackhorse brothers who was

The fact we have been able to help so many children of our members attain their educational goals is a tribute to your generosity.

killed in action in Vietnam or Cambodia. Each recipient received a certificate suitable for framing honoring the KIA name assigned to their scholarship. Duplicate certificates were sent to next of kin where possible. We received a number of thank you notes from next of kin who were very appreciative their loved one was honored and remembered in this manner.

The fact we have been able to help so many children of our members attain their educational goals is a tribute to your generosity. Your support of the calendar, raffle and silent auction have provided the bulk of the monies given to these deserving students. As you read their thank you notes in this issue, you can see they truly appreciate your generosity.



Special Words

"Boo-coo rain! Boo-coo rain!" I was assigned to a small airfield in Soc Trang deep in the Mekong Delta. The monsoon rains had begun in earnest. Our airfield had been built by the Japanese in WWII so our hootches were situated beside the runway rather than at an angle away from the runway like Americans built. Whenever we were hit (attacked), many incoming artillery rounds would land among our hootches (where we lived), missing the helicopters parked along the runway. That was very undesirable for us. Anyway, I had hired a mama-san who did my laundry and cleaned my hootch (she needed a job & I needed a clean hootch). One day she was all excited because we were having a gully-washer of a rain beating on the tin roof. She was hollering, "Boo-coo rain!, Boo-coo rain!" I got excited because it was my first tour in Viet Nam and I'd only been there a few weeks. I thought, "This is great! I've learned my first word of Vietnamese." It didn't take long to find out that it wasn't Vietnamese she was hollering. Boo-coo was French. She thought because it was a foreign word and I was a foreigner that I'd know what she was saying. I knew what she meant but I sure didn't know what she was saying. To this day I don't know how to spell boo-coo in French. I think it's boup-coup which sounds almost like an old chicken coop. Anyway, you understand, don't you?

Here are two special words we used over there: "Number One" or "Number Ten," as in "Numba One GI" if a Vietnamese kid liked you. Or "Numba Ten" if he didn't like you because you didn't buy his trinkets or you just didn't think his "sister" was very beautiful when he was pimping for the boom-boom girl nearby looking at you. (You didn't think chaplains knew about such things, did you?)

There were a lot of special words over there. You remember a few yourself. You might still use some. Those words had special meanings that fit the circumstances. Do you remember "Incoming!, doc, chow, R & R, C rations, rear, Gook/Dink/Victor Charlie, AO, Medevac, the bush, mail, outgoing, active trail, canopy, arc light, mad

What about "Dinky-dow?" Is that the right way to spell it? I guess so. Anyway, it was a funny word. What did it mean? Close as I recall it meant you were off your rocker, and I don't mean Granma's old rocking chair.

minute," and many others? Those were some clean ones. A strong special word was "stuff." Sometimes it meant things you possessed and other times it meant to ignore something very bad that happened because you couldn't deal with it at the time ("stuff it"). Relax for a while and think of other special words you used that fit your place and circumstances. I don't mean dirty words that you didn't want to bring home. I mean particular words that fit the situation.

Special words were loaded with power and meaning. Some planted themselves permanently into our brains. Some we like some we don't. Many are long gone. We don't remember them and never will. Other times something happens and words automatically come back that we hadn't thought of for decades, maybe not since we were there. Many of these special words were positive and happy like mail, care package, or donut dolly. Some weren't so happy in the circumstances but were necessary for survival like medevac, first light, or "trooper down!" Maybe others are problematical for you even today.

Think about it. You know what I'm saying. Take "doc," for example. That's a fine word. After all, you probably had a buddy whose name was Doc. He was the troop or platoon medic. His name was a friendly handle, a nickname, a good memory for a good buddy. When the stuff was flying, when you were ambushed, or landed in a hot LZ, the word was still the same but now it took on a new importance. Now you weren't just talking to a buddy whose handle was Doc. Now another buddy was hit and needed medical attention right now! So you hollered, "Doc!" the medic and he came running.

What about "Dinky-dow?" Is that the right way to spell it? I guess so. Anyway, it was a funny word. What did it mean? Close as I recall it meant you were off your rocker, and I don't mean Granma's old rocking chair. I mean off your nut, as in wacko. It

wasn't a compliment. When you used it about someone, it meant you were ticked off, like at the ARVN artillery the day when they were "walking" shells toward our position and wouldn't shut off. Or the kid who came up to your tank wanting something and you treated him rather badly. He called you "Dinky-dow" and left in a huff. Right? Am I using the word according to your memory (which may be better than mine today)?

What about "incoming?" That was never a fun word, but it was special. It meant you were in the process of getting hit with rounds landing, maybe near where you were situated regardless of the position or location you were in at the time. I remember at Soc Trang, which place you may not know about, I took pride in how fast I could run in my shower clogs to the nearest bunker when "incoming" started. I could run so fast that I almost beat my feet to the bunker. Then someone said that running upright really wasn't smart because you made a better target when upright. It wasn't easy to just hit the deck when the rounds were landing. However, that's what I learned about incoming and what to do at the time. I have to say that it didn't always matter a lot because I had to rush to the aid station anyway, because that's where they took the casualties and where I was needed, what with being the chaplain.

I think it's fun to remember and talk about special words, at least usually. I can't resist one more - "skunion." It was a great and dynamic word that involved a lot of action, trouble, harassment, and firepower. A few months ago I defined it this way (maybe you remember, maybe not): "skunion = very bad stuff, mostly being at the receiving end of lots of bullets and various other deadly things." I've never seen the word used anywhere except in Viet Nam. It was a desirable word when we were bringing skunion upon the heads of the bad guys. It was undesirable when they brought skunion upon our heads which we continually

tried to avoid, as you can understand.

The final special word for now is "Word of God" which could fill a set of encyclopedias except I don't write encyclopedias. So I'll be short and quote from the Holy Bible, which is the Word of God. God uses other words too, in speaking to our hearts, minds, and consciences. But the Bible is the Word of God, which the Bible describes like this: "For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing of soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account." (Hebrews 4:12-13) This is really clear and transparent (another fine word).

I hope the Word of God is special to you or soon will be. It is for me. Like I've been

saying, special words in Viet Nam meant a lot. Some still do. God's Word is more special than those. After all, God is God and no words are more special than his, even today. Are you listening?
God bless you. God loves you. So do I.

MOVING?

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



Name: _____

Old Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

New Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone _____ Effective Date: _____

Email: _____

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.**

VIETNAM REVISITED

(Return visit after 44 years)



Author, Doug Baendel (L) with former ARVN soldier who was helped by the mission.

east on the road from Bien Hoa to Xuan Loc. Again, this road (National Route 1) was full of traffic with build up along both sides of the road all the way to Xuan Loc. I remembered that part of the road as being quite rural in 1969.

In Xuan Loc we headed south toward Vung Tau (road is now paved) hoping to see some vestige of Black Horse Base Camp. SFC Phong would often stop elderly Vietnamese men and ask them about where Black Horse might have been. We finally found the possible location, which is now occupied by a Vietnamese military installation. As you might imagine we were not about to photograph the gate, given where we were.

The following day, Saturday, we took a hydrofoil on the Saigon River to Vung Tau. From September to November 1969 I was on the staff of the 36th Evac Hospital in Vung Tau. The US beach that I remember is now crowded with beachside hotels. The city has expanded out to the former air base upon which the 36th Evac Hospital stood. It is now a heliport – no need to fly from Saigon with the convenient hydrofoil. My AF Vet friend remembered a medical conference he had attended in 1967 at the Grand Hotel in Vung Tau. The Grand Hotel is still in operation although expanded, and is now a 4 star hotel.

On Sunday our whole team, including veterans and health care professionals, flew to Da Nang where we were involved in two clinics, providing medical care to Vietnamese people. Da Nang is the third largest city in Vietnam and is on the beach (“China Beach”). A whole row of luxury resort hotels (5-star) and condominiums stretch from Da Nang to Hoi An to the south. During a three day break I accompanied my AF vet friend to Tuy Hoa where he had served in 1967. Tuy Hoa Air Base is now a combination civilian airport and air base for Vietnam’s air force. The

By: Doug Braendel
7th Surgical Hospital (MA) 1969

In June and July I was in Vietnam on a humanitarian mission with Vets With A Mission (www.vetswithamission.org). We arrived in Saigon (Ho Chi Minh City) on a Friday morning and a friend (AF Vet) and I engaged SFC Phong (ARVN) to guide us to the location of Blackhorse Base Camp. I was a member of the staff of the 7th Surgical Hospital

(MA) from January to April 1969. I am a life member of the 11th ACVVC.

We traveled out of Saigon in a van along the highway from Saigon to Long Binh and Bien Hoa Air Base. Long Binh has been converted into an industrial park with many international corporations. The road was extremely busy with businesses, homes, and churches side by side. Bien Hoa AB is now exclusively used by the Vietnamese Air Force. We then headed

Water borne disease is common in Vietnam – no source of safe water. These filters are good for 1,000,000 gallons of water. ...They now can pour the well water or spring water into the bucket and draw clean, clear, bacteria free water for their families.

population of the unified Vietnam has exploded in the 38 years since the end of the war. Where there had been around 35 million the population is now 89 million. It took us 8 hours in a van to drive the 200 miles from Da Nang to Tuy Hoa. There were lots of motorbikes, trucks, buses, and even a few ox carts moving along the National Route 1. I've attached a photo of me with a wounded former ARVN soldier. Vets With A Mission was able to procure a new prosthetic leg for this gentleman – to replace the “peg” leg that you see in the photo.

After our second week of clinics the Vets With A Mission team departed while I remained to spend time with old friends who operate Orphan Voice (www.orphan-voice.org). My wife and I have become affiliated with this ministry that is operating one orphanage, provides substantial support to another orphanage, and has been providing therapy and food support to families with disabled children in Quang Nam Province south of Da Nang. They have also become active in anti-trafficking of humans. The many resorts attract men from Asia and Europe who are looking for sex with the young women of

Vietnam. Also, young men (as young as 14) have been spirited away to Europe (through China and Russia) to work as slaves in illegal drug factories in Europe. We met a Welsh policeman who described a marijuana factory in Great Britain that was operated entirely by young Vietnamese who were virtual slaves within a large industrial building there. My friend, Tony Brewer, had asked me to bring 10 water filters with me – to provide to ten of the families in Quang Nam Province. The filters cost \$53 and will not only filter out contaminants but also bacteria and protozoa. Water borne disease is common in Vietnam – no source of safe water. These filters are good for 1,000,000 gallons of water. I had the opportunity to demonstrate the filters to the ten families after attaching them to bright red buckets. They now can pour the well water or spring water into the bucket and draw clean, clear, bacteria free water for their families. They'll also save fuel as they no longer need to boil their water to make it safe. I'll attach a photo of the bucket with filter.

I am not able to attend the reunion – but – I did want to share with you my recent experience in Vietnam. This was my third trip in the past four years. Two years ago my wife and two grandchildren flew with me to Saigon and then to Da Nang to spend two weeks with the Orphan Voice ministry. Thus, I was able share a little of Vietnam with my wife. Although the airfare is somewhat pricy, the cost of hotels, restaurants, taxis, in-country flights, etc. in Vietnam is not high. The Vets With A Mission team stays in 5-star hotels. Our hotel in Saigon was the Riverside Marriot with a swimming pool on the top (21st) floor. Several of us had dinner at the famous Rex in Saigon (on the terrace). In Da Nang we stayed at the Furama Resort (5-star) on the beach. Vietnam is making an effort to attract tourists with their reasonable rates and luxury accommodations.



Water filtration system provided by the author.

The Vietnam Vet

By: Joan Kyar Freyholtz

**The Vet, the Vet, the Vietnam Vet,
Marches to a different tune.
He was sent to a foreign land,
Where the seed of hate had been sown.**

**Land mines, booby traps and snipers,
Each danger did abound.
He had to walk a tightrope,
The enemy was all around.**

**Woman, child or Charlie,
The enemy wasn't always clear.
What's a guy to do?
Sometimes the result was drear.**

**An ambush was always a reality,
It was the Viet Cong way.
Never knowing his fate,
Would he make it through the day?**

**Getting back from patrol,
Just as evening fell,
His buddies glad to see him said,
“Welcome back from Hell!”**

**Some didn't make it through
A fierce fought attack.
His efforts were gallant, but now,
They would send his remains back.**

**“He was a good soldier,
He was honorable and brave.”
These words stayed in the hearts,
Of loved ones 'gathered round the grave'.**

**The Bronze Star Medal, and Purple Heart,
Were a few of the merits given.
For valor, good conscience and courage,
Honoring the dead and the living.**

**The Vet, the Vet, the Vietnam Vet,
A battle in hell he won.
Welcome back to freedom,
You are our nation's son.**

(Editor's Note: The author is the sister of Larry Kyar KIA over 45 years ago, March 28th, 1968. This was written in his honor.)

Blackhorse Hoofbeats

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

By: Don Snedeker, 11th ACVVC Historian

• **Air Support Lesson Learned.** From the lessons learned section of the Combat Operations After Action Report for Operation Atlanta (20 October – 8 December 1966): “During an ambush [on 21 November 1966] there were four observation aircraft, four UH1B gunships, a medical evacuation helicopter, and one command helicopter all over the ambush site at one time or the other... In addition high performance aircraft [Air Force jets] were making strikes on each side of the road which resulted in a few near misses.” The lesson learned from this situation: “One airborne element should coordinate the airspace above the battle area when more than one type of aircraft is operating in the area. The old rule of thumb that the slower aircraft should temporarily leave the area until the faster ships have delivered their ordnance would be very appropriate in this case.”

• **Mortarmen under Fire.** During the Battle of Slope 30 in the early morning hours of 19 June 1967, the mortarmen of Third Squadron were put to the test. At that time, the Squadron's 4.2" mortars were consolidated into a Provisional Mortar Battery that was located inside the Night Defensive Position (NDP) perimeter formed by Mike Company's M-48 tanks. The Squadron Command Post, Kilo Troop, the Howitzer Battery, and the 3rd Platoon of the 919th Engineer Company were located in a separate NDP several hundred meters to the south. At ten minutes past one in the morning (0110 hours), mortar fire from elements of the 5th Viet Cong Division began to rain down on both NDPs simultaneously. The official after action report tells about the bravery and effectiveness of the mortars that night: “The fire directed at team M and provisional mortar battery was apparently delivered to destroy the firing capability of the mortar battery and to create a diversion from the main attack. In spite of the fire which lasted for approximately thirty minutes on this position the mortarmen never faltered; instead they started what was to be a fire mission that would last for over one hour. Throughout the fire mission, key personnel remained exposed to call out fire commands and to replace the aiming stakes that were blown down by the mortar attack... Within two minutes after the enemy initiated his attack, the provisional mortar battery fired illumination rounds in support of [the] Team K perimeter. This fire quickly shifted to high explosive and illumination due east of the perimeter. After the initial volleys the fire was walked through the coffee plantation and finally through the jungle to the south of the perimeter.”

• **Stop the Presses.** On 30 December 1968, Echo Troop, acting on intelligence information from the 541st MI Detachment, captured four Viet Cong east of Ben Cat near the Catcher's Mitt. The prisoners related that they were on a mission to get rice for their units, and that a number of their comrades were still in the area. Based on the information provided by these ‘bastards’, Second Squadron piled on – with elements from Echo and Golf Troop, Hotel Company, the flame thrower tracks from 2/11 Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, Air Cavalry Troop's Aero

Rifle Platoon, a light fire team (consisting of one AH-1G gunship and one OH-6 light observation helicopter), and part of Alpha Company, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry (from the 25th Infantry Division). All these pile-on forces converged on the enemy base camp just 100 meters from where the original prisoners were captured. The battle was at close quarters and lasted for over five hours, with Second Squadron suffering four wounded and one Golf Trooper – SP5 George Bailey from New Sharon, Maine – killed in action. An OH-6 LOH, piloted by Second Squadron's CPT J.W. Thurman, was hit five times by enemy ground fire and forced to land – but not before CPT Thurman won the Distinguished Service Cross for his actions over and in the jungle. When the enemy finally broke contact, they left the bodies of thirteen guerrillas killed in action, as well as five more VC captured – most of whom were from the Dong Nai Regiment. The base camp itself contained numerous weapons and ammunition, a Chinese Communist-manufactured radio, five pounds of documents (including enemy signal operating instructions and radio codes, which proved invaluable to the 409th RRU), and 50 pounds of rice. The biggest prize, however, was a full-sized printing press for forging South Vietnamese identification cards, complete with counterfeit identification cards and replica Government of Vietnam rubber stamps to make the cards official.

• **Home Sweet Home.** From the June 1969 edition of the Blackhorse Newspaper: “Headquarters and Headquarters Troop of the Blackhorse Regiment moved into the Blackhorse base-camp May 15, ending a 13-month absence during which the Regiment's troopers dispatched more than 1,796 enemy soldiers. The move to Blackhorse came only a day after the Regiment returned to Bien Hoa from the 32-day Operation Montana Raider near Dau Tieng and Quan Loi. Despite the damage and wear on the vehicles during the long operation, the road march was accomplished in 3½ hours. March music and a large sign reading ‘Welcome Home’ greeted the troopers as they wheeled their trucks, jeeps and tracks onto the regiment's old home ground. Blackhorse headquarters Tactical Operations Center (TOC) moved from the basecamp to the Bien Hoa Army Base in April 1968. From there, it moved to coordinate actions in the Lam Son, the Iron Triangle, and around Bear Cat, Lai Khe, Loc Ninh, the Hobo Woods, Dau Tieng, An Loc, and Quan Loi. During the absence of the Command Post, the basecamp has been staffed by each squadron on a rotating basis, and by the replacement detachment, a skeleton crew of admin and support personnel and elements of the Regiment's combat service and support units. The move enables the 11th Cav to work in conjunction with the 18th ARVN [Army of the Republic of Vietnam] Division, the Royal Australian Task Force, elements of the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), and the 4th Battalion, 12th Infantry of the 199th Light Infantry Brigade.”

• **War Zone C.** From the May 1970 edition of the Blackhorse Newspaper: “On April 13, Blackhorse armored cavalrymen from

1st Squadron's B Troop killed 14 enemy soldiers and detained one in three hours of fighting in thick scrub jungle 20 miles north of Tay Ninh City. The action began shortly after noon when the troop's lead Sheridan stopped to check out the hulk of a burned-out ACAV [Armored Cavalry Assault Vehicle], received rocket-propelled grenade fire from a hidden enemy bunker. The blast wounded Staff Sergeant Norman T. Bellomy and his crew who dismounted the flaming vehicle as the rest of B Troop hosed down the area with M60, .50 caliber, and Sheridan main gun fire. After 15 minutes of firing, the troop moved to a LZ [Landing Zone] 300 meters to the rear, where the wounded men were dusted off. The troop then returned to the contact site and swept through the area on line. Again an RPG was fired at them, but this time the enemy round hit a tree and exploded harmlessly.

As the tracks passed enemy bunkers, troopers dismounted to check them out. Three enemy soldiers were killed by M60 machinegun fire as they tried to escape the area. Fragmentation grenades hurled in a bunker killed another four enemy. A wounded enemy soldier pulled from the bunker was treated and sent to the rear. Recovered in the area were several AK47 rifles, an RPG launcher, eight RPG rounds and boosters, parts for a .51 caliber machinegun, and numerous medical supplies."

• **Turn on the Radio.** From the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment Redeployment After Action Report, dated 5 March 1971: "The Regiment's primary means of communications was push-to-talk FM radio with over 800 radios mounted in tracked vehicles operating on 95 frequencies to support tactical operations."



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		409th RR DET		HHT, 2/11		I TROOP, 3/11	
Keppler, Lothar E	68-68	Crouthamel, Roger P	68-71	Hanes, Curt D	68-69	Gill, Roger L	66-67
Moody, Ronald L	67-69	Pardew, James W	69-69	Hendrickson, Richard	69-69	K TROOP, 3/11	
Tranas, Donald E	67-68	D COMPANY, 1/11		E TROOP, 2/11		Markin, Roger W	69-70
AIR CAVALRY TROOP		Smith, Willard E	68-69	Chrisple, Woodrow L	68-69	HOWITZER BATTERY, 3/11	
Murphy, James D	70-70	HOWITZER BATTERY, 1/11		HOWITZER BATTERY, 2/11		Turner, Philip L	70-71
33rd CHEMICAL DETACHMENT		Bagwell, James E	70-71	Gragnano, James C	68-69		
Hafer, John D	71-71						

11TH ACVVC DONATIONS

Donor Levels:	Platinum Level \$500+	Gold Level \$100-\$499	Silver Level \$50-\$99	Bronze Level \$1-\$49
Memorial Fund	Riley, Robert Wilson, William	Sinclair, Robert Smith, Willard	Farrell, Thomas Floyd, Gary Jarvis, Gene Karels, Roger Miller, George Minor, Earl Mollenkopf, Jim Monalbano, Frank Money, Patrick Moore, David Platt, Fred Points, Richard Schultz, Carl Sutherland, Harland Trosper, Ed Vasquez, Luisa Wilk, Robert Yochum, Tom Ziesmer, Carl	Calendar
Platinum Level	Trooper Assistance Fund	Silver Level	Gold Level	Bronze Level
Suhre, William	Bradley, Linda In Memory of Richard J. Reed	Dehne, Ron & Sharon In Memory of Msgt. Richard J., Reed	Dunn, Hunter	Bridgeford, Charlene
Gold Level	Gold Level	Dunn, Hunter	Quinn, John	Farrell, Thomas
Atkeson, Edward	Beers & Story Inc.	Quinn, John	Ruiz, Joe	Frantz, Wild Bill
Hervatin Linda	Burr, Chuck	Ruiz, Joe	Urrea, Bernardo	Halladay, Jay
Hukill, Wayne	Scholarship	Urrea, Bernardo	Watts, Wayne	Hughes, Sid
Kalbitz, April	Platinum Level	Watts, Wayne		Lee, Larry
Navarro, John	Schmidt, Bonnie	Silver Level		Luke, Craig
Penn Sport Embroidery	Gold Level	Tidwell, Phillip		Mikluscak, Michael
Silver Level	Cartwright, Wavely	Waugh, Rufus		Patton, Wayne
Puglisi, Tony	Gulley, Gerald	Young, James		Riley, Robert
Bronze Level				Schneeman, Frederick
Heise, Daniel				Stephenson, Ronald
				Stumbo, Gregory
				Van Horn, David
				Witzel, Terrence

Thunder Run Editorial Policy

When submitting written items or photos to us, please keep in mind:

- *Thunder Run* is a publication of the 11th ACVVC used to communicate events, ideas, nostalgia, and helpful information to our members. The 11th ACVVC is a non-profit, non-political, corporation organized and operated within the provisions of 501c (19) of the Internal Revenue Code and is limited in activity by that charter.

- *Thunder Run* will consider all submissions but does not guarantee their publication. All submissions are subject to editing, including adaptation to our publications style at the sole discretion of the Editor.

- *Thunder Run* will not advertise except to promote our organization and to promote items for sale through the 11th ACVVC Quartermaster Store.

- Photos must be sent as at least a medium size “.jpg” file at 300dpi. Digital photos are preferred, but “hard copy” is acceptable. Photos for “Show Pride” are expected to contain highly visible Blackhorse or 11th ACVVC indicators or symbols. The viewer should be able to note a link to Blackhorse or the 11th ACVVC and the item pictured. Please indicate if you want any photo returned and enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope.

- *Thunder Run* will accept poetry and short fictional articles, although personal experiences in Vietnam or Cambodia or within the 11th ACVVC are preferred. It is expected that submissions be formatted in “Word” or a word processing program compatible with “Word”. The document should be on a disk or sent as an email attachment. Very short, typed hard copy will be considered.

- *Thunder Run* accepts articles from members and occasionally others. We request articles be limited to 1000 words or less. Longer articles will be considered, but shorter ones are preferred. Publication of any submission is not guaranteed. Again, all submissions are to be formatted and submitted as laid out in the paragraph above. Hard copy items (pictures or written) should contain an email address and telephone number so the Editor may contact the sender with questions, should that be necessary. All potential writers are reminded that *Thunder Run* is a family oriented publication meant to educate and entertain our members and their families and editing of inappropriate language will be done with this in mind.

- “Letters To The Editor” must be signed, contain the name and address of the writer along with a telephone number and email address through which the writer may be contacted. Letters should be no more than 200 words to be considered for publication. As with all items we publish, letters may be edited by the editor for form and content. Political letters or letters that could be construed to have a political motive will not be published.

Any items published are the product of the writer and do not necessarily reflect the views of the 11th ACVVC, its Officers/Directors, or any governmental agency.

Send material for publication to: C. E. “Bill” Gregory, 421 Fallen Leaf Drive, Soddy Daisy, TN 37379, or email to Battle46a@epbfi.com.

Firm deadlines for the four quarterly editions are January 15; March 25; June 25; and October 1.



From the 65th Colonel of the Regiment

COL John Ward



COL John “Lanier” Ward

Greetings Blackhorse Troopers, Families, and Friends! Fall has arrived in the high desert. Like many of you, our Troopers are eager to catch a few football games when they can. I’ve tried to convert them all to University of Georgia fans but I have been largely unsuccessful. I’ll hope for a UGA and Michigan matchup in a bowl game to get a few more converts. Regardless of their football affiliation, I do know it is an honor to have them all on the Blackhorse Team and I am thankful for the opportunity to continue to serve with all of you as Blackhorse 6.

From 13-15 September, I had the opportunity to travel to Indianapolis to meet with many of you at the 11th Armored

Without skipping a beat, we will roll into the 14-01 and 14-02 Rotations this fall in support of units preparing to support operations in Afghanistan. Our Troopers will continue to serve as our Army’s World-class Opposing Force for these rotations.

Cavalry’s Veterans of Vietnam and Cambodia Reunion. I am always awestruck at the chance to share in the brotherhood and pride our Veterans still share having served this great Nation. I was enough lucky to meet and spend some time with the incredible Family members of a few of our Veterans. I feel that I’ve made friendships that will last a lifetime and picked up a new favorite of “Fat Tire” beer. It was a privilege to be able to experience the time-honored Traditions that provide a link to our past and that we continue to pass on to our Troopers today.

Since my last note, Troopers were all given the opportunity to take advantage of our summer opportunity-leave program. They were able to reconnect with their distant Family and Friends prior to moving right into our busy year ahead. 156 new Troopers joined the Regiment this summer and 114 Troopers departed to serve in various assignments throughout our great Army. 21 Troopers returned home safely from supporting missions overseas, while 17 answered the call to continue to support various missions in places such as Afghanistan.

In August, 528 Troopers deployed to Fort Polk, Louisiana. They served as Host-Nation and Opposition-Forces in support of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division prior to their deployment to Afghanistan. The mission served as not only an opportunity for us to contribute to that fight, but also gave us the chance to place our Troopers into a very different environment where they could learn more on how our sister Combat Training Center (CTC) conducts operations – allowing them to bring those lessons learned back to the Regiment.

Without skipping a beat, we will roll into the 14-01 and 14-02 Rotations this fall in support of units preparing to support operations in Afghanistan. Our Troopers will continue to serve as our Army's World-class Opposing Force for these rotations. Troopers also continued to expand their own knowledge and experience as US Army Infantrymen by participating in the Expert Infantry Badge Competition, held by the Regiment during the month of September. 42 Troopers earned their badge during this strenuous test.

After a decade of war, CTCs have been focused on counterinsurgency and small unit tactics. As the Army plans for reorganizing a number of Brigades by the end of fiscal year 2017, a new emphasis is being placed on CTCs to prepare combat units for more complex strategic and tactical challenges centered on Decisive Action. As the Army places this new emphasis on CTCs, I am confident in the role the Blackhorse will continue to play in serving as the measuring stick for the rest of the Army.

The Regiment is keeping the Cavalry Warrior traditions alive and remember that the door is always open at Fort Irwin for you and your Families. I also encourage you to stay up with us at our 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment's Facebook page. Allons!!

Blackhorse 6

Proofreading is a Dying Art!

Proofreading is a dying art, wouldn't you say? Here are a few headlines to ponder:

Man Kills Self Before Shooting Wife and Daughter
(He was a trick shot)

Something Went Wrong in Jet Crash, Expert Says
(Really? Ya think?)

Police Begin Campaign to Run Down Jaywalkers
(Now that's taking things a bit far!)

Panda Mating Fails Veterinarian Takes Over
(What a guy!)

Miners Refuse to Work after Death
(No-good-for-nothing' lazy so-and-so's!)

Juvenile Court to Try Shooting Defendant
(See if that works any better than a fair trial!)

War Dims Hope for Peace
(I can see where it might have that effect!)

If Strike Isn't Settled Quickly, It May Last A while
(Ya think?!)

Cold Wave Linked to Temperatures
(Who would have thought!)

Enfield (London) Couple Slain, Police Suspect Homicide
(They may be on to something!)

Red Tape Holds Up New Bridges
(You mean there's something stronger than duct tape?)

Man Struck By Lightning: Faces Battery Charge
(He probably IS the battery charge!)

Astronaut Takes Blame for Gas in Spacecraft
(That's what he gets for eating those beans!)

And the winner is....

Typhoon Rips Through Cemetery, Hundreds Dead
(Did I read that right?)

2014 11th ACVVC Calendar Appeal

...all scholarships awarded as well as the printing and mailing costs associated with the calendar are paid directly from donations made to the Scholarship Fund. Membership dues are not used to pay for the calendar.

*By: Pete Walter,
Vice President, 11th ACVVC*

The first of our 2014 Scholarship fundraising efforts will be in your mailboxes in early December. The 2014 11th ACVVC Calendar will once again feature 12 new photos submitted by you and our second issue in color! We thank all who have sent in photos for consideration. The calendar contains significant historical events of your regiment in Vietnam with the photographs documenting many of our daily activities. The 2013 calendar was our first effort at a full-color production and based on your comments and incredible generosity it appears the color version was much enjoyed by our members.

We once again appeal to your generosity as we ask for donations to support our Scholarship Program. The Scholarship Fund is a separate, self sufficient fund. That is, all scholarships awarded as well as the printing and mailing costs associated with the calendar are paid directly from donations made to the Scholarship Fund. Membership dues are not used to pay for the calendar. The number of scholarships awarded each year depends on the total donations made during that year. Without your support the program would not be viable.

The calendar you receive is yours to keep and use whether you donate or not. We do however ask for your support with the most generous tax-deductible donation that you can make to assist the children of the 11th ACVVC members begin or continue their post-secondary education. The scholarships can be used for college, trade school, or any other educational training following high school.

Your donations to the 2013 calendar appeal generated over \$60,000! At our 28th annual reunion in Indianapolis, Indiana in September, Scholarship Chairman Mike "Doc" Rafferty presented President Allen Hathaway with a plaque signifying over \$1,000,000 in scholarships awarded by the members of the 11th ACVVC!

For the 2014 calendar appeal we again have two goals. Our first goal is to once again generate over \$60,000 in donations. We will need your help in maintaining this unprecedented level. Many of you have generously donated \$100 to \$500 for this cause. We ask you to continue your ardent support.

The second goal is to continue to increase the percentage of members making calendar donations. Over the past four years we have slowly increased the number of these making donations from 20 to 22 to 23 percent. We strive to increase this number

Continued on page 23

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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. 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. Funeral Honor Guard, please check daily at www.11acr.com/hg.htm.

Michael N. Austin, H Company, 2/11 (1967-1968) passed away on June 22, 2013. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Mexia, TX. He was laid to rest in Forest Glade Cemetery, Mexia, TX.

Gerald J. Brzuchalski, E Troop, 2/11 (1969-1970) passed away on August 10, 2013. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Toledo, OH. He was laid to rest in Restlawn Memorial Park Cemetery, Perrysburg, OH.

Kenneth W. Cox, L Troop, 3/11 (1968) passed away on June 30, 2013. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Rockledge, FL.

Vincent J. Delorenzo, G Troop, 2/11 (1970) and Air Cavalry Troop (1970-1971) passed away recently. We were notified by his sister. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Alexandria, Egypt.

Lonnie B. Gatewood, HHT, 2/11 (1969-1970) and F Troop, 2/11 (1969-1970) passed away on May 28, 2013. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Denver, CO. He was laid to rest in Ft. Logan National Cemetery, Denver, CO.

Michael G. Healey, A Troop, 1/11 (1969-1970) passed away on August 29, 2013. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Williamsburg, VA. He was laid to rest in Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, VA.

Donald E. Horn, HHT REGT (1967-1968) and HHT REGT (1969-1970) passed away on August 28, 2013. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Copperas Cove, TX.

William S. Hummers, HHT REGT (1967-1968) passed away on August 13, 2013. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Greenville, SC. He was laid to rest in Christ Episcopal Church Cemetery, Greenville, SC.

Lincoln K. Keanini, HHT, 2/11 (1970-1972) passed away on July 20, 2013. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Kaunakakai, Molokai, HI. He was laid to rest in the Molokai Veterans Cemetery in Hoolehua, HI.

Fred T. Kitzmiller Jr, M Company, 3/11 (1967-1968) passed away on September 18, 2013. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Gray, TN. He was laid to rest in Mountain Home National Cemetery, Johnson City, TN.

Loyd E. Mayberry, B Troop, 1/11 (1966-1967) passed away on September 8, 2013. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Rockford, IL.

Morris G. Nielsen, G Troop, 2/11 (1970-1971) passed away on July 21, 2012. He was a member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Elmo, UT. He was laid to rest in Elmo Cemetery, Elmo, Emery County, UT.

Terrence K. Peiffer, HHT, 2/11 (1968-1969) passed away on July 21, 2012. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Jackson, MI.

Thomas L. Prater, Air Cavalry Troop (1968-1969) passed away on June 21, 2013. He was a member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Springfield, OR.

Richard C. Quick, G Troop, 2/11 (1967-1968) passed away on September 13, 2013. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Louisville, KY.

Raymond R. Rodarte, 919TH Engineer Company (1967-1969) passed away on August 1, 2013. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Watauga, TX.

Eric M. Saunders, Howitzer Battery, 2/11 (1969-1970) passed away on June 15, 2013. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Hubert, NC. He was laid to rest in Coastal Carolina State Vet. Cemetery, Jacksonville, NC.

Richard C. Sharp, K Troop, 3/11 (1969) and F Troop, 2/11 (1971) passed away on June 28, 2013. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Frazee, MN. He was laid to rest in Lakeside Cemetery, Burlington, MN.

Henry J. Shields III, 409TH RRD (1968) passed away on July 21, 2013. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in West Grove, PA. He was laid to rest in All Souls Cemetery, Coatesville, PA.

Lemuel L. Smith, K Troop, 3/11 (1966-1967) passed away on August 14, 2013. He was a member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Springfield, MO. He was laid to rest in Missouri Veterans Cemetery, Springfield, MO.

Ellis D. Stafford, M Company, 3/11 (1967-1968) passed away on January 3, 2013. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Irving, TX. He was laid to rest in Dallas - Ft. Worth National Cemetery, Dallas, TX.

Lawrence M. Walls, HHT, 3/11 (1967-1968) and HHT, 2/11 (1969-1970) passed away on August 18, 2013. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Chico, CA.

Jerry P. Woolverton, F Troop, 2/11 (1971-1972) passed away on March 19, 2013. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Star City, AR. He was laid to rest in Mountain Home Cemetery, Star City, AR.



**Membership is
Our Strength**



**It's not the price you pay to belong,
It's the price you paid to become
eligible to join**

29th ANNUAL 11th ACVVC REUNION

SEPTEMBER 3-7, 2014

Rio All Suites

3700 West Flamingo Road
Las Vegas, NV 89103

<https://resweb.passkey.com/go/SRACV4>

RESERVATIONS: 1-877-603-4389

ROOM RATE: \$109.00 SINGLE/DOUBLE + 12% tax

- Rate honored 3 days pre and post reunion
- No resort fee
- Complementary parking
- Complementary in-room internet
- Complementary shuttle to the strip

Reservations must be made by August 11, 2014

MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS EARLY

Show Your Pride



Little doubt about Jimmy Rogers' (K Troop, 1968) pride in the Blackhorse as he drives around near Sulpher Springs, Texas. ➤

◀ All who enter Phil Stephens' (M Co, 3/11 66-67) work area have no doubt about his Blackhorse pride when they see his tool cabinet.

When Bruce Overbee, C Troop, (68-70) races his car, he arranged for the competition behind him to easily see where his loyalties are! ➤



THE PATCH

FILLING THE VOID OF VIETNAM

By: Elena Brown

In 1993 Robert O'Neal awoke to normal summer weather and went about his normal day. But this day would prove anything but normal. As the day cooled and his shift at the post office ended he made a trip downtown to get a ham sandwich before heading home. He stood in line waiting to pay when something familiar caught his eye. The generally sturdy and reserved man was instantly filled with a burst of once buried emotions. His body tingled and shook with ecstatic energy. He tossed his money on the counter, not waiting for his change, and began to run after the three men walking leisurely to the downtown Indianapolis Westin. But it wasn't the men he knew. It was what they were all wearing. They wore 'The Patch'.

The patch he saw triggered pride, respect, sacrifice, honor and a history of exceptional endurance, he said. The U.S. Army's 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment's patch is a left facing rearing black horse against the traditional cavalry colors red and white.

"I hadn't seen that patch for 35, maybe 40 years," O'Neal said of the memory. "It was a trigger, that's for sure. But in a good way."

O'Neal, 66, wasn't sure where this feeling would take him but he followed the men back to the Westin. The men walked and explained they were attending the Vietnam veterans' Blackhorse reunion.

Once at the hotel, everywhere he looked he saw the Blackhorse patch. It stood out, big and bold, on the welcome sign with the words, 'Together Then, Together Again'.

It was the last day of the 5-day reunion and many people had already left. "I couldn't believe it. The Blackhorse were here, in my city. And I missed it" he said.

The 11th ACVVC is a non-profit corporation founded in 1985 and began having annual reunions in 1986. He found a list of names of those who

attended, left his contact information and was given the details of the upcoming reunions. "I made sure I knew about them and they knew about me," he said. O'Neal made it home from his unimaginably extraordinary day, thankful it wasn't so normal.

These are exceptionally intense reunions of men who served in an unpopular war. There is a bond between them that defies race or religion. It is a place to remember and a place to heal. The Blackhorse 11th Armored Cavalry Veterans of Vietnam and Cambodia (11th ACVVC) aims to ease any open wounds and preserve and strengthen friendships formed in the Regiment.

It would be three years before he attended his first reunion in Louisville, KY. "I was sad I couldn't make the reunions right after finding about them," said O'Neal. "But I'm not missing anymore. These reunions are my priority." The return to Indianapolis makes his 18th reunion as he joined nearly 1000 others (about 980 people attended the 1993 reunion in Indianapolis).

"Heading to my first reunion I was driving down I-65 and I felt like the whole car was shaking. I was nervous. But once I got closer to the hotel and saw that patch again and all those troopers, I felt like jumping out the car I was so happy," he said. That year the reunion saw one of its largest turnouts with more than 2020 people in attendance. "K Troop usually has the largest showing at the reunion." According to Blackhorse board member and registration director Bob Moreno (G-Trp 2/11 69-70).

O'Neal served with K-Troop 3/11 in Vietnam from 1967-1968. He was 18, married and as the soul-surviving son had to get special permission to go. "I didn't want to 'get out of it', I wanted to go. It was the right thing to do," he said.

Like many, O'Neal's memory of Vietnam is a patchwork of good and bad. "Sure, there is an ugliness of war, the firefights, the ambush and night

patrols, the listening post, and when it was late in the month and the moon was out our silhouettes became easy targets," he said. "But the worst for me was when it was quiet—too quiet. I still have issues when there isn't any noise."

An estimated 58,000 US soldiers were killed in action and like a weighted backpack, many survivors carry the Vietnam experience with them in the form of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Although PTSD (a.k.a Battle Fatigue and Shell Shock) is often associated with Vietnam veterans, it appears in veterans of all wars and eras. The symptoms may include intrusive thoughts, distressing dreams, flashbacks and irritability. Many suffers have a reduced ability to concentrate, experience pleasure, feel tender emotions or imagine a positive future.

"But there were good times in Vietnam. And good friends," he said. "And being here is a joy I have never experienced," said O'Neal. Once O'Neal knew about the reunions he felt compelled to reach out to others. He wanted and needed to find some of his buddies and began looking for men including Gerald Porter, Tony Richman and Terry Cioffi.

When Terry Cioffi (K-Trp 3/11 67-68) got the call his wife knew right away whom Robert O'Neal was. "She was yellin Robert O'Neal is on the phone! It's Robert O'Neal!" Cioffi was in shock from the call but welcomed hearing from his Army buddy. "We talked and talked and talked. And he told me about the reunions. My first was in 2000 and this makes my 13th." Cioffi's right leg was amputated just above the knee last year due to circulatory issues. "This didn't stop me from my golf game and it sure wasn't going to stop me from attending the reunions," he said. You feel normal here because it's where you're supposed to be," Cioffi said. O'Neal agrees, "It's [attending reunions] something I have to do, for me and for those that won't or can't make it," he said.

The fellowship is visible as stories

flow in 'The Bunker', where one can usually find O'Neal and Cioffi together. In military terms the bunker is usually a reinforced concrete underground shelter. Here, at the reunion, it's a Blackhorse themed ballroom where the men embrace each other with the welcome they never received when they returned home from the war decades ago. The Bunker is where small knots of men sit at a table and laugh and sometimes cry over memories, photos and occasionally have a beer or three.

According to the 11th ACVVC website, 730 men of the Blackhorse Regiment died during Vietnam. "Everybody here knows at least one of those guys that we lost. And we take this time and remember the guys that we lost," said Moreno. "Vietnam wasn't all bad; we had some good times that we remember now."

Both men are still seeking out buddies they lost contact with or those that need the healing power that the reunion provides. "And that's why I wear this patch," said O'Neal. "I want someone to see it. To recognize it. To know he isn't alone. And, like the guys did for me, to give him the welcome home he deserves."

(Editor's Note: Elena Brown is the daughter of Ed Brown, Jr. A Troop, 67 - 68. Ms. Brown has written several articles for Thunder Run.)

CALENDAR from page 19

each year. If only half of our members participate, we could award scholarships to all qualifying applicants. To help meet this goal and to ensure that you receive a calendar every year we are asking that you please make a donation.

A limited number of calendars will be available while they last. Instructions on how to order extras will be included with the calendar. Watch for your calendars in the mail in December then use the convenient envelope enclosed to return your donation. Every donation counts, regardless of the amount.

I also ask our members to submit any photographs you have from Vietnam to be considered for publication. Preferred format is a color print, but negatives and slides are also accepted as are digital scans of any of your photos, negatives or slides. Clear photos of interesting activities and/or group photos are the most suitable for reproduction. As always, "Thank you!" to those who have submitted photos in the past.

The annual calendar is the major fund raising project to benefit our Scholarship Fund. We also conduct a Silent Auction of donated items at the reunion. Each of these activities has flourished over the years. *We thank you in advance for your generous support!*

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@com-cast.net; for listing in "Journey to Fiddler's Green."

Donald Horn, CSM, USA, (Ret), 1927 - 2013

Submitted by: Peter Walter
Vice President, 11th ACVVC

Donald E. Horn, Command Sergeant Major, United States Army (Ret) died on August 29, 2013 at his son's home in Colorado Springs, CO.



RCSM Don Horn circa 1973 (L) and 2004.

Born in 1927 in Ohio, CSM Horn enlisted in the Army in 1945 at the age of 18 and honorably served his country and fellow Troopers for 28 years, retiring in 1973. In addition to numerous stateside postings, he served overseas in Panama, Germany, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam. These assignments

included three combat tours, one in Korea and two in Vietnam as the Regimental Command Sergeant Major (CSM) of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, serving as the top Enlisted Soldier for six Regimental Commanders: Colonels Roy Farley, Jack MacFarlane (WIA), Leonard Holder (KIA), Charles Gorder (WIA), Jimmy Leach and Donn Starry (WIA).

CSM Horn was appointed First Sergeant (1SGT) during the Korean War at age of 23 with less than six years service as he fought with A Company, 6th Tank Battalion. He would go on to serve in 1SGT/CSM positions for more than 22 years. While serving as the 3rd Squadron, 11th ACR, Sergeant Major, he was recommended and selected Command Sergeant Major (CSM) on the first list published by the Department of the Army (DA) in 1967 while still serving in Vietnam; becoming the first Regimental CSM of the famed "Blackhorse" Regiment in October 1967. His first tour included some of the heaviest fighting in the first half of the conflict including TET '68. Returning to the United States, he was posted to Fort Hood, TX where he served briefly as the CSM of the 2nd Armored Division. In July 1969 he returned to Vietnam at the request of Colonel Donn Starry and again served as the Regimental CSM - first under Colonel Jimmy Leach followed by Starry. CSM Horn was the Regiment's top soldier during the Cambodian invasion in May and June 1970 and was at the RCO's side when Colonel Starry and Major Fred Franks were seriously wounded at the Battle of Snuol on May 5, 1970.

CSM Horn's awards included the Silver Star, Legion of Merit, Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star with "V" Device and three Oak Leaf Clusters (OLC), Meritorious Service Medal w/OLC, 23 Air Medals, Army Commendation Medal with "V" Device and three OLC, Purple Heart, the Combat Infantryman's Badge and the Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Silver Star. CSM Horn was one of only six enlisted men to be awarded the Gold Medallion of the Order of St. George. In 1987, CSM Horn had been appointed by the Department of the Army as the first Honorary Sergeant Major of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment serving along with General USA (Ret) Starry, the Honorary Colonel of the Regiment. Prior to his recent relocation to Colorado Springs, CO, CSM Horn had been living in Copperas Cove, TX where he retired in 1973.

Rest in peace...

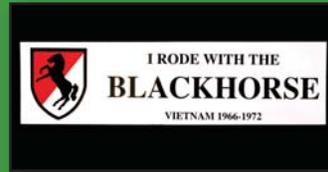
The 11th Armored Cavalry's Veterans of Vietnam and Cambodia QM Store



#1 Coffee Mug \$10.00



#2 Key Ring \$4.00



#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



#4 Window Sticker \$2.00



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



#9 Cavalry Hat \$225.00



#11 Flag, Indoor/Outdoor \$50.00



#16 Tote Bag, Embroidered \$20.00



#10 Belt, \$30.00



#15 Attache Case \$30.00

#17 Blackhorse Pin \$5.00



#13 License Plate, Blackhorse \$5.00



#14 License Plate Frame, Black w/white letters \$10.00

#24 Men's Ring, Gold & Silver w/Diamonds \$430.00



#18 11th ACR Regimental Crest \$5.00



#20 Vietnam Blackhorse Pin, Wreath \$5.00



#21 Blackhorse Women's Sterling Pendant \$45.00



#23 Men's Ring, Gold & Silver \$380.00



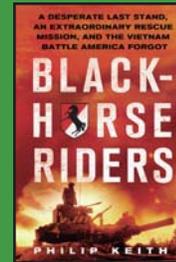
#19 Blackhorse Cavalry Pin \$5.00



#25 Blackhorse Coin \$15.00



#26 Magnetic Blackhorse \$5.00



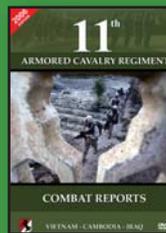
#31 Book: Blackhorse Riders \$25.00



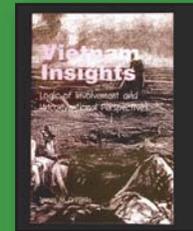
#22 Gear Bag, Red \$35.00



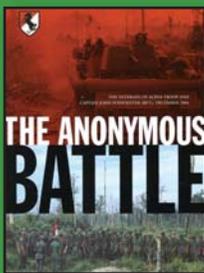
#27 Magnetic Ribbon \$4.00



#28 Video (DVD) Combat Reports \$30.00



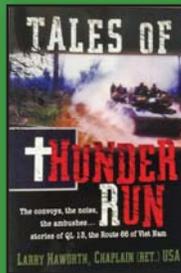
#30 Book: Vietnam Insights \$10.00



#34 Book: The Anonymous Battle \$16.00



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



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



#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



#39 a/b T-Shirt, Ash/Black \$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 Blue Dress Shirt, w/BH & VN Ribbon \$32.00



#42 Blackhorse Jacket, 100% Nylon \$95.00



We awoke one morning and were briefed on “working the Rome plow” that day. “Okay, what’s rome plow?” We pulled off the road and lined up abreast sweeping thru a large area of bushes and logs. I was new to the field and just assumed this area was just another part of the Vietnamese landscape. There was jungle, rice paddies, and “Rome plow.” As usual on these recons, be on the lookout for anything suspicious.

A couple of weeks later we were briefed on working “with” the Rome Plows. “Okay, I give up, what the heck is a Rome Plow? “Bulldozers man!” And? “They knock the jungle down!” I then got an accelerated course in Rome Plow 101.

We joined up with the Combat Engineers, their 18 wheeled flatbeds, and my first glimpse of a Rome Plow. As I understand, they were D7 bulldozers built by Caterpillar, but the 20 foot wide plows on the front were built by a company in Rome, Georgia. Hence, Rome Plows! There were about 16 of them. Aside from the huge blades on the front they sported a mesh cage around the driver’s seat. They were also adorned with large nicknames on the sides, something we were denied unless the lettering was the same as that of the serial numbers on the side of our track. Their task was indeed to plow the jungle under, thus eliminating large expanses of it providing cover for our enemy. This was an alternative to Operation Ranch Hand, the spraying of the defoliant Agent Orange. A large expanse of jungle around Saigon, especially to the north, had been eliminated by these beasts. I say “beast” since some of that jungle looked impenetrable. I would get more of an education later on.

The drivers of these things seemed a certain breed after talking to a few and watching them in action. A cover all term in those days was “crazy.” I think they were just exuberant, maybe with a touch

Those Crazy Young Men In Their Rome Plows

By Mark S. Crist | I-Troop 1969

As I understand, they were D7 bulldozers built by Caterpillar, but the 20 foot wide plows on the front were built by a company in Rome, Georgia. Hence, Rome Plows!

of the eccentric. Maybe I just identified with them, now that I think about it.

Our Troop Commander met up with their boss and off we went securing their flank as they staggered their machines and went to work. They were like a weed eater on steroids. I’d “busted jungle” before on the track, but these things added a new dimension. The jungle crumpled before them. If they came to a tree that bordered on a Sequoia they would work the lateral steering side to side and literally saw the tree down. They seemed invincible to whatever they came up against. Maybe that’s an understatement. We were break-

ing for lunch with the C’s when we heard a large explosion. I looked off to my left and saw a column of smoke and dust rising up above one Rome Plow. He’d run over a mine. Judging by the explosion our track would have had a tread severed and a road wheel or two blown off. But what’s this? Clank clank clank, after a minute for the driver to get his composure back. As with a Timex watch, took a licking and kept on ticking!

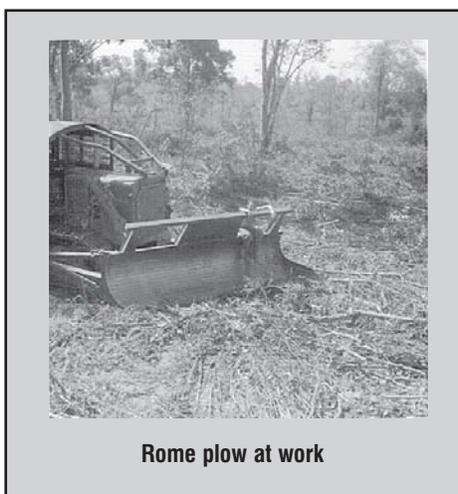
If mines weren’t enough we’d occasionally see a driver jump out of the cab swatting at something, either wasps or those devilish red ants. Then there were snakes and monkeys. Hmmm, looks familiar!

Another Plow hit a mine and a little while later everything came to a screeching halt. One driver happened upon an empty bunker complex. Time to go to

work! There were a number of bunkers and “we” now had the pleasure of reconing and digging them up. What we found was a mine factory. One bunker contained hundreds of empty soda, beer, and C-Rat cans. Another was filled with blasting caps and detcord. I guess the whole area was wired. It would explain the mines the plows ran over.

Several weeks later we worked with them again. This time I mingled with the drivers as they sanded their blades down to razor sharpness. One day my TC and I grabbed our M-16’s and some hand grenades and went for a walk as we often did. I smelled something dead. We walked up a creek bed and found a body. On top of the bank were several piles of dirt with shovels stuck in them. We crept up and saw what looked like the construction of some kind of base camp, but nobody was home. We radioed it in and it wasn’t long before a couple of plows came up, crews asking what we were going to do with the body.

We hear about pilots, LRRP’s, ARP’s, Special Forces, Tankers, Tracks, etc. Then there are those combat engineers who maybe go unrecognized for the job they did. From what I saw they had their own thing going too.



Rome plow at work



Quartermaster

ORDER FORM • 3rd QTR 2013

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" Embroidery square w/full color Blackhorse insignia	4.00	_____	_____	_____
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	_____	_____	_____
9.	Cavalry Hat (Brown in color, rope and pin included in price)	225.00	_____	_____	_____
10.	Blackhorse Belt - One size fits all	30.00	_____	_____	_____
11.	Flag, indoor/outdoor 3'x5' with color insignia	50.00	_____	_____	_____
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	10.00	_____	_____	_____
15.	Attache Case w/shoulder strap 11.5" x 15.5" w/dir emb. BH insignia & VN rib	30.00	_____	_____	_____
16.	Tote Bag, red & black, 14x11x6 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)	380.00	_____	_____	_____
24.	Men's ring, gold, silver, & diamonds	430.00	_____	_____	_____
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"	25.00	_____	_____	_____
30.	Book, "Vietnam Insights" by James Griffiths	10.00	_____	_____	_____
32.	Book, "Anonymous Battle II" (Picture not available)	16.00	_____	_____	_____
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, "Tales of Thunder Run" by Chaplain Larry Haworth	11.00	_____	_____	_____
38.	Hat, Black Poplin adjustable w/full color direct embroidery Blackhorse insignia. <input type="checkbox"/> a (old) <input type="checkbox"/> b (new) NEW!	12.00	_____	_____	_____
39.	Blackhorse T-shirt, 100% cotton, preshrunk, full color BH insignia. Specify color: <input type="checkbox"/> ash <input type="checkbox"/> black	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.	Blue dress or denim shirt (men's)	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					_____

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

Shipping and Handling _____

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A)	\$2.00	—	\$5.00	=	\$3.00
B)	\$6.00	—	\$15.00	=	\$6.60
C)	\$16.00	—	\$60.00	=	\$12.35
D)	\$61.00	and over		=	\$16.85

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Check if address change

Please include the largest of chosen items S/H costs with your order. Maximum per order form charge is \$14.55. 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**



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From the Quartermaster...

Jerry Beamon

Hello to All Blackhorse Troopers;

Jan & I were glad to see everyone who was at the past Reunion in Indianapolis. We all had a great time visiting with one another, catching up on what's been going on.

We would like to express our heartfelt Thank you to all our helpers who helped us out in your Quartermaster Store, Jerry & Pat Mitchell, and Mr. Gregory Mason, They did as usual a great outstanding job, Jan & I are so thankful to have such great helpers, who know how to serve others to accomplish all that needs to be done when the store is open.

Also I would like to take this time to thank all of you for selecting me as the TROOPER of the YEAR. It was a humbling experience when Allen called out my name to come and accept this award. Again, thank you all who work so hard to have another

great reunion. And I sure cannot leave out my two other helpers who do a lot back behind the scenes , Otis Cary who takes care of our web-site, & Bill Gregory editor of the Thunder Run. These men do a lot of work that makes your Quartermaster Store look so good in print & on the web.

Hope all of you made it home ok. I talked Jan into taking a detour on the way home. We went by gps to a buddy's house, and caught up with a fellow trooper from K troop, back in 1970. Had a good visit and will be more in touch with him in the days to come. So if you guys have someone you haven't see at a reunion give him a call or go by and see him. As many of you know, attending a Reunion is a great time to reconnect with your buddies from back then to be together again. Looking forward to your orders for Christmas Time. ALLONS to All,

Jerry

QUARTERMASTER CLEARANCE & FEATURED ITEMS



Cavalry Hat
\$225.00
 (Item #9)

