

# PATROLLING

WINTER 2004 75TH RANGER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION, INC. VOLUME 19 ISSUE III



*Spencer T. Karol; E CO, 51<sup>st</sup> INF, (LRS)*

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The Officers and the Editor reserve the right to edit submissions for clarity and space constraints. Every precaution will be taken to preserve the intent and scope of the author. The Officers and Editor reserve the right to refuse any submission, that is in bad taste, offensive or that discredits unnecessarily any individual or group.

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# WEB SITE & MAGAZINE NEWS

The Association web site and *Patrolling* magazine are the windows of the 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment Association, Inc. They are the principal means of communication from the Officers and Unit Directors to our members and the principal means of attracting new members. These two media sources, like the Association itself, are the property and responsibilities of all the members. We are going to highlight, in each issue, new features of each, and what our members can do to support and enhance both.

## Web site:

One of the more crafty things I did right after I got elected President again was to talk Stephen Parker into being the Association Web Master. Parker will be the overall web guru. He's more geeky than I was ever willing to allow myself to be. Lofty out of this world web strategy is right down his ally. He actually speaks complete conversations and I have no idea what he's saying. I really didn't want to learn all that stuff. I was also working with another guy named Chris Koch who has a lot more programming knowledge than me and he is doing the actual redesigning of our web site as we speak. I know I've said that before, but remember, Rome wasn't built in a day either. My only requirement to these two guys was to provide the membership with absolutely the most amazing web site that has ever been seen, do it at no cost to the Association and they have to do it on their own time. Not too much of a request, was it? All I know was that there are a lot of really good pages with worthwhile information buried really deep and they need to bring all of this stuff forward where it is accessible and usable. I've been given a peek at the new site and I like it. It has capabilities that would have taken me another 10 years to learn to do. So have patience and you will be rewarded with a first class web site just as our *Patrolling* magazine is first class..

RLTW - Strength & Honor  
Emmett W. Hiltibrand

## Patrolling Magazine:

Well, I've got two Associate Editors out there now. That's twice as many as I had last week, but still a little short. Volunteers are still welcome.

You will notice a section in this issue that we call "Fiction?" There are a variety of reasons for this, suffice it to say that we are giving our more imaginative members an outlet for their hyperactive imaginations. You will notice that none of the stories begin "Once upon a time", or "This is no shit". If you would like to contribute to this section, free from the scrutiny of a Unit Director or other person of authority, send it in. It might get printed. (Or it might not). Remember, **there are no representations as to the presence or absence of the truth.** We might not even have the section in every issue. If it's there, it's there. If we have the material, and it's pretty good, we'll run it.

As much as I hate structure and rigid formality, it might be time for me to write a book of rules for submissions to the magazine. You wouldn't believe the format of some of the stuff I get. Last issue I got a bunch of photos, (hard copies) and some scribbled notes that were called captions. One guy has a word processing program that was written by Sherpas in Tibet at about the time of Alexander (the great). Check the next issue for submission rules.

John Chester

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Emmett W. Hiltibrand

Life is full of disappointments. Sometimes, there seems to be more disappointments at any given time than all positive events happening collectively. Considering the up's and down's of a rollercoaster, our cart of life would have left the tracks long ago. Many of us have seen a life wasted that has defied reason. Many of us have seen death defying acts of stupidity that even cause us to shake our heads. I've often wondered how many deaths have actually occurred, right after someone has said, "Watch this!" Maybe, just maybe, Darwin was on to something. On a daily basis, we sometimes structure our remaining life on set of beliefs based from past lessons or experiences but when those beliefs are later proven wrong, what condition does that leave our future prediction in? Principles are an ever presence in life but when those traits are eroded or cheapened where do we turn for guidance then? Perhaps the answer will present itself after my second cup of coffee and I've finally awoken and figure out what I've just typed.

.Our world as we know has in the past been turned upside down. Our efforts in Vietnam to keep the ugly world of communism and terrorism at arms length from the United States have been compromised by the acts of 9-11. This last Presidential election even had many of us divided as to the route we should take for the next four years. Many countries in the world are in turmoil or on the brink of internal destruction. It's so easy to look out the window and find reasons not to go out and about to resume a normal lifestyle. This is not who we are or what we are made of. This is not the way we were raised or are accustomed to living. So we adapt and find alternate reasons or paths to travel to accomplish our means. We are survivors and that is what makes us different from other peoples and cultures. We shall over come this too and good shall over come evil in the end. We just have to make sure we do all that is necessary to be there in the end to see the fruits of our labor. John

Chester once told me some words of wisdom, I'm not sure if he was the creator of them but he said, "America (the people) will get the President they deserve." I had to think about that several times to realize those words have merit. In the end I was willing to follow any President that was eventually elected not because we had no choice but because it would have been the will of the people.

I recently read a very interesting point given by a Vietnam veteran where he said in response to a comment that Vietnam was 35 years behind us and he countered with a statement that "NO, he visits there nightly". A very powerful and true statement for many of us. I seem to be getting quicker at recognizing my own anger and depression onslaughts than before. Quicker at recognizing does not necessarily mean I can stop them. I still find myself identifying the exits and acquainting myself with the location and make-up of occupants in a room before I sit down. I have caught myself in the radar mode of scanning my surroundings, for what, I can't tell you. Just scanning, constantly everything around me for signs of a potential threat. And as silly as it may seem, I think I still peek into a room before I go barging in unaware. Is this some sort of suppressed survival skill that stills lingers after all this time? How many of you are still doing this, and more? I don't consider this silly or bizarre, well strange maybe. I don't think I'm doing this intentionally but rather catching myself in the process or realizing it afterwards. The only thing that bothers me in my actions and conduct is that I find myself now teaching my wife these combat skills. And that little sweet darling just looks at me with love in her eyes and pats my arm assuringly and says something like, "That's cute honey or sure darling, what ever you say" and we go about our business.

I've just finished watching "We were Soldiers" for the umpteenth time. I've

lost count of just how many times I've actually watched it. I'm not sure I ever really noticed the acting. Parts of it are so real that I find myself traumatically locked inside the movie and that space / time continuum sort of thing. I'm not morbid or sadistic or anything for watching it over and over when it comes on. I see men of courage and honor pitted in a survival for their lives in an unrealistically hostile environment. Watching this movie reminds me of what real men were once made of. It reminds me of the noble men of this Association and what they have accomplished. It humbles me to stand in the shadow of you real men and being able to give something back to you while in this office.

This Association over the years has evolved more from just a fraternal organization to a support network of like kindred men and families. At this level of the organization I see so many good things happening around us. Of course I get the rantings and ravings of some weird people at times and there never seems to be an actual end to the work that needs to be done but there are good times. We have gotten big. NO, you didn't hear me or you glazed over my words, WE ARE GETTING BIG. We need to either start thinking big or we need to cut back on the things that got us so big. Both our membership and projects we're involved in have grown. Grown because our membership wanted them or a series of circumstances presented themselves that our members adopted as things they wanted to be involved in. In the beginning of this Association small was adequate and necessary to accomplish our needs. Now that we are BIGGER we are forced to think bigger to accomplish all that we do. Each position within the Association is now critical and necessary. If any one position is not effective, it causes a substantial failure of services. In the past, one officer could slack some and naturally one of the other officers took up the slack and we carried on. Now we cannot do that because everybody's plate

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (CONTINUED)

is full and for one to slack off causes an overload on all the officers.

The Association Bylaws clearly gives me the authority to appoint positions to facilitate the day-to-day operations of this Association. I'm going to stretch that meaning here a little bit by appointing a new Vice-President's position which later, I will lobby as a permanent change to our Bylaws. There are several good reasons for wanting to go this route and very few if any for not agreeing with it. My rationale behind this is that the VP's position has continuously been underutilized for so many years. Partial reasons for this have been the caliber of people in this position but for the most part is that this position, like the position of the President and Secretary is so overwhelming to the point that it is almost impossible to accomplish. Viewing the insurmountable tasks and workload could turn off even a good intentioned man. This has been an inherent obstacle in finding men willing to serve in these positions in the past.

Reason 1 is to assign specific tasks to each VP. A VP of Membership and a VP of Operations for example. This can be defined more specifically later.

Reason 2 is that hopefully the VP position is a stepping-stone and preparation platform for a future President of the Association.

Reason 3 is that the more people sharing in the work load eases the strain on any one man.

On the adverse part vision, if we were to construct too many VP positions, it would not be conducive to orderly control. Now, we can someday in the future have more than one or two VP's but the need and job description should be established first before the position is created. I will also recommend we go a step farther in our Bylaws change to remove the current term restrictions of the Office of Vice-President from 2 years and with the only option of succeeding the President -to what we have for the Secretary and Treasurer. Allowing the VP to serve at the discretion of the

General Membership for as long as we may allow him to serve. We may very well get a man in there who likes being a VP but has no desire to ascend to the Presidents office. Why boot him out if he is doing a good job and is willing to stay? This would also make the Presidents position not so scary if he knows he has an already proven team in place when he assumes a position. Maybe we need to look at rotating the elections into these positions in a staggered roll rather than changing all positions all at once. All this will be a topic for the Bylaws Committee to explore when they look at the Bylaws.

I have talked to Steve Crabtree who was the Unit Director of the G/75 organization and he has agreed to perform in the capacity of this appointed VP position I have created. This is not an elected position yet. It will not be an authorized position until we go through the balloting process and officially authorize it with a vote that amends our Bylaws. Until that time, I ask you to treat this position with respect and cooperate with this position as you would any other.

This is an innovated approach to improving the over all function of the Association and I hope you will see the merit in it. I have appointed this position and it will not be permanent until it is voted on. The Presidents position would remain as a 2-year only position as it is now in that he must step down with no exceptions.

I am about ready to begin the formation of another Bylaws Authorship Committee. The last time we tackled the entire Bylaws except the 'Finance' portion. I wasn't smart enough to think of forming a 'Finance Committee' to do the real work and present it to us for approval. I was smarter this time and have already formed the 'Finance Committee' and they are under way reviewing their portion. Rick Benner our Association Treasurer chairs the 'Finance Committee'. It is also manned by other financial wizards and accounting guru's

within this Association. We also have at least one legal eagle in there too. I'm looking at the beginning December time frame for working on the entire Bylaws and this only lasting about a week. No big changes, just little and minor tweaks. As mention above in the new Vice-Presidents position and removal on the time constraint and the creation of two slots instead of just one. The Bylaws Authorship Committee will consist of the Elected Officers (4), Unit Directors (23) and the Past Presidents (6) for a total of 33 members on the Committee. The above Committee encompasses the entire elected leadership of this Association and leadership of Officers from its' creation to present. I feel this will be a good foundation of people to form the document that will guide us into the future. I ask that each of you go to the Association web site and at the 'About Us' tab there is a copy of the Association Bylaws for you to review. Please do so before we begin and additionally, if you see an area that you think needs addressing, let your Unit Director know. John Chester just finished a membership renewal drive by sending out 'Invoices'. All of you got them, even Life Members. Even if your dues were paid up you got one. It wasn't an accounting error or management error in sending you one. If you were a Life Member or paid up, it was a means to ask for donations for either the Family Fund or the Association fund. The measure was a great success and we have more members now than the Association ever has. Numbers and money are not the issue here. It's audience that we can reach with the good information contained here in this Patrolling Magazine. If you're not getting the magazine, your not getting the information that you need and may help you. It's good logic so if your buddy you care about is not a member because he doesn't know any better and shy, how about buying him a 1 years membership as a Christmas gift and help him out.

We just had some very good and successful meeting with several of the 'Family Readiness Groups' within the Ranger Battalions. We know what they

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (CONTINUED)

need and they now know what we can do for, them. We should see a lot more requests coming in for real time help and support from the families. Your donations are well appreciated and meaningful in an emergency to these families. Working in conjunction with the FRG's we cannot solve all their problems but we can take the edge off many of them. We try to keep the single amount contribution small and reasonable so we can spread it around to many needs and do it all year long. In an example, we usually when asked to assistance to aid in a death provide around \$500 per incident. It doesn't sound like much but it is just the right amount at the right time. As I pointed out to one person, what if the next day, Heaven forbid, we have an entire squad get killed and we need to step in and help all nine families. We can't just go for the gusto on any one single event but have to plan and save for all contingencies. Most donations from you guys are just what you are able to afford. I applaud you all for it. No amount is too small. And no amount is too big either. Just try to give something, it all adds up in the end.

If you're still reading my gibberish at this point, I want to ask you some questions. Why was it that you joined this Association? No one forced you to. No one made you do it. It wasn't for free and you actually have to go out of your way to maintain membership in it. So, why did you join this particular Association?

Was it for 'Brotherhood'? Could it have been a dull Sunday and you had nothing else to do? Was it to relive the past with some old friends but more likely remain in touch with those that stood beside you in life and death situations? Could you have joined for the sharing of information, help with problems and the association with those who are like you and understand you? There are a multitude of reasons for joining this Association. There won't be a contest to see who can come up with the most reasons. The one that got you here and that kept you in this Association is the only important one. Now, ask yourself, what does this Association do for me now that I'm a member? Is it the Patrolling magazine? Maybe the web site is what you like about this Association? Could it be the reunions we have from time to time? There again, the benefits are too numerous to mention. Again, no contest it needed here. This Association has grown from the one-person manual typewriter production of the very first 'Patrolling' magazine, more like a newsletter than magazine. We cover many more areas, reach more people and do more than was ever imagined at this Associations conception. I'll let you in on a little secret. Neither magic nor trick mirrors make it happen. It's done by hard work and effort by a growing staff of people. No longer is all of this loaded on one, two or three men's shoulders. The staff has grown but so has the workload. For

all the reasons you joined, stayed and like this Association, someone had to do something right for your enjoyment. If you enjoy reading the articles in Patrolling, then consider that someone had to go to a lot of work to put that in there. If you like the self-gratification of knowing that your contributions and donations are helping others, then consider that someone had to put forth a lot of effort to tie that all together. All this putting and tying requires people. You cannot keep riding the same horse all the time. Every once in a while, that horse needs a break and you need to try out one of the younger horses to get them trained up for the future. Point being here, is that helping in the Association is not as scary as it used to be. Many of the jobs are broken down and manageable by one or two people. We always need help. No one man or job should ever get so big as the Association stops or falters if that man leaves. You really owe it to yourself to set in and try one of the jobs in the Association. It can be tailored to whatever level you are willing to give. We all need to give back something. Giving is good, because it will make you feel good to see the final product, what ever it may be. Contact one of the Association Officers or your Unit Director and they will assist you into what you feel comfortable doing. For whatever reason you joined or stayed in the Association is the same thing that you're missing by doing nothing. Until next time, You're your 'Strength' and protect your 'Honor'.

Emmett W. Hiltibrand – President, 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment Association

## VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Bill Bullen

BY: Bill Bullen

By now the elections are over and we have our President. Now the country needs to rally and support our military and our President as never before. We as an Association need to rally and support our Unit Directors and officers, if you as a member are aware of shortcomings or deficiencies in your leaders, speak up! Let us know how we are doing or what you as members think we should be doing. If everything goes on as usual we'll never grow. We need input from the members.

During the day if you have a thought about 75thRRA business, write it down, later on in the evening reduce it to writing or make

a phone call or an e-mail. Keep this thing going. If we hear nothing from members we feel everything is just fine. Maybe this is why Emmett Hiltibrand is always contacting me, because everything is not JUST SO! This is how we get things done, by communication. So please do something for the Association, at least once a week. Even if it is just picking up the phone and calling a fellow member, the effort is a function and a necessary deed.

Your unit director needs help contacting people, give him a call. Welcome and thank you Dennis Rick, A/75 and Michael Feller of O/75, both men have volunteered and been approved by their respective units as Unit Director, please give them your support.

## VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (CONTINUED)

Two jobs in this Association are very demanding, other than the Unit Director position, they are President and Secretary. I'd venture to say it is more difficult to find a man to do an effective job as secretary, than any other position in the Association. This being said, I'd like to bring our secretary John Chester front and center. The membership campaign has been a huge success, and John Chester deserves thanks for the initiative and the concept of this operation. It seems many people are just too busy to remember the dates of renewal for whatever reason. We now have more "paid-up" members than ever before. This has always been JOB#1 on the President, Emmett Hiltibrand's, operation order. Well, the envelope idea is a great one John, GOOD JOB! The Gold Star Mother and The Gold Star Wife programs are something I'm supposed to be interfacing with. I've got to say, I'm a slacker in this area, and I just don't know what to say. But

I do know if there is a mother or a wife I'd like to be in contact with, I'd talk to Sandy Harris, Gold Star Mother Advocate or Sandee Rouse, Gold Star Mother Advocate. Both these ladies' contact info is on the inside cover of "Patrolling". If you have the need or desire, please give either an e-mail or call.

We have nominated a man from the Association for "Static Line's", Airborne Man of the Year. If he is honored, a story will follow in the next issue of "Patrolling".

I'd also like to make sure everyone is aware of our Reunion being changed to this coming summer, 2005 rather than summer, 2006. This is so we will coincide with the Regimental change of command.

Just keep the, late July early August time frame open for our 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Rgt. Assn. Reunion.

## SECRETARY'S MESSAGE

By John Chester

### BY: John Chester

I am so filled with a sense of relief that the Presidential election is over, that I may not be able write any thing. All my sensibilities seem to be overwhelmed by the fact that all the recrimination, invective and hyperbola is finally over and done with. This was the dirtiest campaign, on the part of both parties, that I remember. Or maybe I'm getting older and less tolerant of politicians in general, to put up with all that mud slinging for 3 or 4 months. During the entire campaign, I kept asking myself, why go through all that crap and spend hundreds of millions of dollars, just to get a job that pays 1/2 million a year? There must be some fringe benefits that most of us know nothing about.

Regardless of who your candidate was, we must now stand behind our leaders and our troops who are in harm's way, and do everything in our power to defeat our common enemies.

### Editor:

I will be sending out a set of requirements for submissions to the magazine. I think there are enough new unit directors that this has become necessary. We really do need to get submissions into a form that can be easily used. I will not be doing this forever. Who ever comes after me should have the right to expect that submissions will make some sense and be in a format that can be used, with out a total re-write. I spend as much time editing some articles as I do writing mine.

We have enough people advertising to almost pay for two of the four issues that we publish each year. The goal has always been to pay for all four. We're getting there, still a ways to go. If you know anyone who would profit from a card ad, give me a call.

### Secretary:

The dues invoices are mostly back and were successful. There

were enough old members who had lapsed that re-joined, to justify the expense. Next year, we will not need to mail out as many, so there will be fewer returns and fewer printed in the first place. I would estimate that we will send about half as many as we did this year, the good news is, most of them will come back with dues. The more constant we can keep our membership means that we can more accurately budget our expenditures, magazine printing costs, etc., from year to year. That will allow us to keep smaller amounts of money in checking accounts, and to put more substantial sums in longer term investments. Having most of the funds come in at one time in the year is a lot of work for that period of time for the secretary, but once done, it is finished for the year for the most part.

I was in a Home Depot the weekend after Thanksgiving, looking for some chicken wire. (Did I mention that my wife has chickens?) People were building up to that annual madness that I call the Christmas Feeding Frenzy, ie, they were getting more nasty and irascible than normal. All because of Christmas. Anyway, I was outside in the yard, looking for chicken wire, when two individuals in pajamas, of obvious Middle Eastern descent, came around the corner in my direction. I was on the right hand side of the aisle, as is the custom in this country, while these two individuals, in the same lane but going in the opposite direction, headed straight for me. I stopped and they stopped their basket a few inches from mine. One said that he was in the lane first & that I should move. I was surprised that as I felt the first surge of anger, I was also aware, on another level, of what was operating within me. I curtly reminded him where he was and that he would have to move or stay there 'till hell froze over. A few more words were exchanged, culminating in a gentle reminder from me that I could well be the last thing he ever saw, when they abruptly reversed direction and walked away discussing me in a language that was quite foreign to me.

## SECRETARY'S MESSAGE (CONTINUED)

It was interesting to me that I had once again, despite all that counseling, therapy and medication for the last 15 years go directly to the default setting on the PTSD dial, the one marked "ANGER". I was ready to write it off to the fact that they were obviously Middle Eastern, despite my belief that I am reasonably tolerant. But I wonder if that was true. I had not had a good dose of anger for a while, maybe I just seized on the chance when the chance was presented. I used to direct the same anger toward Orientals when I first left the Military, but was it really the fact that they were Oriental? Or that the only safe emotion, the only one that would not make me think and examine myself and my motives was anger?

I keep saying that PTSD can't be cured, but that it can be managed. Well, I didn't manage it too well at the Home Depot. Maybe I should stay out of Home Depot Stores from now on, but the problem is with me, not with the store. What should I have done differently? Should I have begged the guys' forgiveness and slunk out of the way? Probably not, that would have just become something else to loathe myself about. In retrospect, I guess I handled it about as well as I could. I didn't hit anyone or offer to. I didn't raise my voice or threaten anyone. And after all, I didn't start it. But I was acutely conscious of the white hot anger at the center of myself. I kept control, but you know the real scary part? The anger felt good.

Since this is the Holiday Season, I thought I'd add a little humor to lighten the long dark nights. The first is from Jim Cooke of the 35<sup>th</sup> INF Assoc. (Cacti)

### The Dachshund

A wealthy old lady decided to go on a photo safari in Africa. She took her faithful pet dachshund along for company. One day, the dachshund starts chasing butterflies and before long the dachshund discovers that he is lost. So, wandering about, he notices a leopard heading rapidly in his direction with the obvious intention of having lunch. The dachshund thinks, "OK, I'm in deep trouble now! Then he noticed some bones on the ground close by, and immediately settles down to chew on the bones with his back to the approaching cat. Just as the leopard is about to leap, the dachshund exclaims loudly, "Boy, that was one

delicious leopard. I wonder if there are any more around here." Hearing this, the leopard halts his attack in mid-stride, as a look of terror comes over him, and slinks away into the trees. "Whew," says the leopard. "That was close. That dachshund nearly had me." Meanwhile, a monkey who had been watching the whole scene from a nearby tree figures he can put this knowledge to good use and trade it for protection from the leopard. So, off he goes. But the dachshund saw him heading after the leopard with great speed, and figured that something must be up. The monkey soon catches up with the leopard, spills the beans and strikes a deal for himself with the leopard. The leopard is furious at being made a fool of and says, "Here monkey, hop on my back and see what's going to happen to that conniving canine." Now the dachshund sees the leopard coming with the monkey on his back, and thinks, "What am I going to do now?" But instead of running, the dog sits down with his back to his attackers, pretending he hasn't seen them yet... and just when they get close enough to hear the dachshund says.....

"Where's that damn monkey? I sent him off half an hour ago to bring me another leopard!" The following is from my wife, Mary Anne's, uncle, John Colledge. John was career military and served in Vietnam as a medical technician. It should be obvious that he retired as an NCO.

### Subject: Insignia History

A young Second Lieutenant approaches the crusty old General and asked about the origin of the commissioned officer insignias. The General replied, "It's history and tradition ... First we give you a gold bar representing that you are very valuable and also malleable. The silver bar also represents significant value, but is less malleable. When you make Captain, your value doubles, hence the two silver bars. As a Colonel you soar over military masses, hence the eagle. As a General, you are, obviously, a star. Does that answer your question?" "Yes," said the Second Lieutenant, "but what about Majors and Lieutenant Colonels?" "That goes waaaay back in history," the General said, "... to the Garden of Eden. You see, we've always covered our pricks with leaves."

## TREASURER'S MESSAGE

By Richard K. Benner

### Treasurer's Report

The Association is enjoying fine financial health. Our members continue to be extremely generous, and we have been able to support the three active Ranger Battalions and 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment Hqs with several programs throughout the past year. At present a Finance Committee is considering alternatives for managing and protecting the funds that we have. We are getting very low interest rates on the money market funds and we are

looking at municipal bonds of varying terms that will maximize our gains with a minimum of risk. Here is a breakdown of the funds on hand:

Money Market.....	\$ 22,111.72
.....(Yield is .75%, that's less than 1%)	
Checking Accounts.....	\$ 103,027.05
.....(Yield is .75% on <u>part</u> of the balance)	

## TREASURER'S MESSAGE (CONTINUED)

Family Fund Account..... \$ 24,544.21 (No interest paid)

The above Family Fund balance is after each Battalion was given \$3,000.00 and the Regimental Hqs was given \$1,200.00 for the children at Christmas, (a total of \$10,200.00). We also bought a number of turkeys for members of Hq Co, 75<sup>th</sup>, at Thanksgiving.

We will also purchase turkeys at Christmas. We have financially aided family members in order that they could visit wounded Rangers in the hospital, and will continue to aid the various Family Readiness Groups attached to each Battalion.

## WEB MASTER

By S.J. "Peter" Parker

### The Origin of the Ranger word "Hooah".

If you search the Web, you will find many different stories of the origin and the meaning of the word "Hooah". The meaning is pretty clear, it's a definitive "YES", however the origin of the word is not clear. Once I found a site claiming that when Christopher Columbus arrived in America, he was greeted by the Indians with a "Hooah". Many other stories exist. I believe I can shed some light on the actual events that lead me to a different conclusion, a conclusion that the modern day usage of the word "Hooah" is directly attributable to LTC AJ "Bo" Baker, and nobody else.

In February of 1975 (That's 2/75 for those of you who are still paying attention), I enlisted in the US Army with a guarantee of station/unit of 2nd Battalion (Ranger) 75th Infantry at Ft. Lewis, Washington. I was shipped out to Ft. Polk, Louisiana for Basic and AIT. I would end up being assigned to B-1-1 on North Fort.

While in Basic/AIT one night we were told that anybody who had enlisted for the 2nd Ranger Battalion had to go to a meeting (After hours, no less!) because "Somebody wanted to brief us". So off we went to some building that was not too far from the barracks on North Fort.

There we were introduced to none other than LTC AJ "Bo" Baker, and his CSM Walter Morgan. LTC Baker and and CSM Morgan were on a tour recruiting NCO's and Officers to come to 2/75, and wanted to meet the enlistees who were headed their way. There was a grand total of 8 people in the room. LTC Baker spent about an hour with us, and told us stories of what we could anticipate in the 2nd Ranger Battalion. The PT, the Road Marches, the Training. The effect we were having on the morale on post. One of the things that Baker explained was that they had a Vietnamese word that they had adopted, and would say a lot. The word was supposed to mean "Yes". This didn't really make a lot of sense to me, why would anyone run around saying some Vietnamese word? But LTC Baker didn't mention what the word was. So I asked, "What is the word?" Oh, the word is "Hooah", answered LTC Baker. I had never heard the word before, and didn't hear it again until I arrived at 2/75 on Ft. Lewis several months later.



I arrived at 2/75 on July 24th, 1975. Battalion HQ was still on North Fort, but the line companies had just moved the month before to permanent barracks on main post. HHC and Alpha Company shared the Southeast building with a Leg Unit (yes there were actually LEGS in the building!), and Bravo and Charlie Company shared the Northeast building in what is now the Ranger quad. Several months later, Battalion HQ got a building across the road. It was not until the early 80's that the 9th and 10th Aviation companies vacated the other two buildings in the quad, and the companies settled into where they are today.

One of the jobs in Battalion HQ was to produce a Battalion newsletter. It was called the Sua Sponte. Apparently it was supposed to be called the Whoah, but there was an argument about how to properly spell "Hooah". The officer in charge wanted Whoah, but people were mispronouncing that as in "Whoa, Horsey, Stop". The argument was ended when the Officer in charge said "Fine. We're calling it the Sua Sponte". "Hooah" was scrawled in various places, and there were still some differences in the spelling. I remember seeing Whoa, Whoah, Hooah, and a few other variations. Hooah was the one that stuck.

Ranger School, Pre Class 8-76, March 7-9th, 1976.

## WEB MASTER MESSAGE (CONTINUED)

Arriving at the famed Benning School for boys in early March of 1976, we arrived a few days before the class started, and were promptly put on details while waiting a few days for the class to fill up. While in the Detail phase of (pre) "City Week", we were mixed in with 1/75 Rangers, Officers, enlisted from other units, and some foreigners. Of course the 2/75 boys would occasionally sound off with a vigorous "Hooah" to show we were motivated, especially when in formation. One day the RI in charge of the group gave us a disgusted & confused look, and remarked that we were supposed to be growling. He was clearly unfamiliar with the phenomena that "Hooah" was (or was to become). The 1/75 Battalion boys concurred, we were supposed to be growling. Several mentioned that yes, we were supposed to be growling. They clearly were not familiar with the word, and didn't understand, nor use the word at that time, though some had heard it. We were a little confused, wasn't Hooah supposed to be THEE Ranger word? Not yet, it seemed, not yet. The 1st Battalion Boys

still growled. We didn't "Hooah" so much thru Ranger school. They didn't understand.

Twenty Nine odd years later, many stories have grown about where the word "Hooah" originated from. From my memories and observations, I believe that the credit for the Ranger adoption and usage of the word "Hooah" came about as a phenomena as a direct result of LTC AJ "Bo" Baker and his 2nd Ranger Battalion's adoption and proficient usage of the word on every occasion! **Photo is LTC Baker.**

I was there. S. J. 'Peter' Parker C-2/75 75-79 8-76 San Dimas, CA 91773 <[peter2005@airborne-ranger.com](mailto:peter2005@airborne-ranger.com)>  
<http://www.airborne-ranger.com/>  
PS. If any Vietnamese speakers are out there, could we confirm this translation/dialect?

## GOLD STAR...



Can you believe it? We are getting ready to go into the fall of 2004 already. It seems like just yesterday I was writing the June Patrolling article and saying we were going into the summer season. Boy, how time gets away from you!

As I try to gather my thoughts about all I want to share with you I am still overwhelmed and in awe of what all has transpired over the last month in my life.

There are no words to express how I feel about becoming an Honorary Member of the 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment. I was in awe of just being nominated but to have our active duty Rangers select me, honors and humbles me. July 8<sup>th</sup> 2004 will forever be one of the greatest days of my life. I can only hope I will be allowed to continue to serve the families of our fallen Rangers for a long time to come. Thank all of you, especially Linda Davis, Secretary for the Regiment and Col. Nixon from the bottom of my heart.

My Congratulations to all the Rangers inducted into the Ranger

Hall of Fame especially Ranger Brown

The following week was spent in Savannah at 1/75 celebrating their 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary. We were blessed to have Jim's 14 year old daughter Britnay with us. She got to attend the ball and meet several people who knew her dad. We ate lunch at the RDF and saw a demonstration at the Sgt. Bradley Crose Advanced M.O.U.T Training Facility. Last but not least we visited the newly name Markwell Street. Also in attendance for the weeks activities were, Gold Stars Judy and David Anderson (Ranger Marc Anderson) Sheila Maghun, (Ranger Bradley Crose) Pat Marek, (Ranger Matt Commons) and Bonnie Powers (Ranger Brandon Miller). The week concluded with the Change of Command. That is always such a bitter sweet time. It is hard to say good bye to good friends like LTC & Mrs. Kershaw and still, great to look forward to getting to know LTC & Mrs Clark. A Special thanks to Sheila and the Rangers of 1/75 for a great week After that it was back home to Florida to show up at work for a few days, do laundry and repack to fly off to Seattle/Tacoma for the 75<sup>th</sup> RRA Reunion. What a great time we had and what a

## GOLD STAR... (CONTINUED)

privilege and honor for Bill & I to meet some of you for the 1<sup>st</sup> time and to once again feel the pride that I always do in being associated with such a fine organization. While there we were also privileged to meet some of our Rangers from 2/75. They treated us to a tour of their place including sharing some of their great MRE cuisine. The 75<sup>th</sup> RRA had their Change of Command as Dana McGrath stepped down as President and Emmett Hiltibrand took over. Dana was great to work with and I will miss him and his sense of humor. What a class act. Emmett I look forward to the next year working with you and as always am here when you need me.

I am pleased to say that while in Seattle our 2/75 Unit Director Rich Hecht put me in touch with the widow of Ranger Tillman. Marie is a lovely young woman and I am glad we will be able to care for the Tillmans in 75<sup>th</sup> RRA fashion.

At the beginning of this piece I spoke about how time gets away from us. Those of you that were at the reunion know where I am going with this. I once again am pleading with you to find the families of your fallen buddies. You have a wonderful gift to give them. But time is running out. None of us are getting any younger. Don't wait until it is too late to that family. To those of you who have found families I want to thank for stepping up to the mission. When you find a Gold Star please forward the following to your unit director for approval **AND PLEASE COPY ME. It is so important we have accurate and up to date info on our Gold Stars. The info needed is: Gold Star Name, Address, phone, email, fallen Ranger name, rank, unit, KIA location and date.**

I want to address something that often comes up. I am asked

“What if they do not want to talk when I find them?” Let me say that has happened and that's OK. I would like you to leave your contact info with them. Tell them how much you cared about their Ranger and let them know you are available if and when they would like to talk to you at a later time. Then let them take the lead. You can know in your heart your buddy would be so grateful that you tried. I must tell you we have run into this in the past and we have had the Gold Star change her mind or have been contacted by other family members who do want to hear your stories.

**Please act Now !!!**

Until next time I am as always Honored and Privilege to serve you God Bless and RLTW

Sandee



## PAST PRESIDENT

By Dana McGrath

Rangers,

Please forgive the lateness of this “Past President” article. There were a few Hurricanes at our house in August immediately after returning from the Reunion in Tacoma (what a GREAT party that was). We were a bit busy trying to find new ways to make water, electricity and food for a while. Even Rangers get too old to remember to keep some LRRP rations hidden somewhere just in case, it seems. All is well, the storms have done their thing and time & effort will cure the rest. We again live in the Paradise of Southwest Florida, the weather is GRAND, the beaches are clean and gorgeous and the blue-tarp roofs add a certain flare to the experience.

I want to thank:

The Board of Directors, Unit Directors and Members I served with for my two-year stint as your President. Any of you who

know me at all must realize it would have been a comical tragedy if I hadn't been surrounded by such Men of distinction, commitment and willingness. In each position or project, there was a Ranger who was capable of his job or willing and ready to learn to be capable. Some had “LIFE” jump on them during the term, but that happens to each of us one time or many and it was handled immediately by the other Board Members without complaint. If you ever want to feel again the pride you felt when working with the absolute BEST, just volunteer for a job with the 75thRRA and you'll get a taste of what's been missing since ETS. With that comes some of the parts you didn't care for, but they don't matter once your LBE is adjusted and you realize you're going to live through it one way or the other, or the end will at least be swift and relatively painless!

The current Board of Directors for lifting my ruck and taking the reins of this organization forward. The current Ranger Team is committed to the tasks at hand and have already added important

## PAST PRESIDENT MESSAGE (CONTINUED)

objectives to be reached – brave souls, but they know we will support them whenever they hit the transmit button.

My Family for letting me play for a couple years in the world of Rangers. They met some of you and were highly impressed. They finally got to see what a Ranger is today, and were in awe of those young hard-chargers both for the ability and the reasons given for their service – the old, timeless reasons we all know. My Family put up with a lot of distraction, but was all in favor of the priorities set by the job – RANGERS first, everything else second.

Now, for two years I've "owed" Patrolling a "War Story". Below is one, but I'm not really in it – mine are interesting mostly to me, and not particularly noteworthy unless you are me and it's late at night or real early in the morning...

This is how I remember this mission, and it is quite likely it didn't go exactly this way. If there are mis-statements, they live here in my head and I'd be happy to have the straighter scoop if someone else has the details:

On November 13 1969, K/75<sup>th</sup> Rangers Luis Hilerio-Padilla (TL), Eddie Dean Carpenter (ATL) and one other Ranger (a new Ranger I didn't know) conducted a POW-snatch mission in the Pleiku, RVN AO.

I spent a couple days prior to their mission trying HARD to talk my buddy (Carpenter) out of this idea, but his mind was set and he was determined to carry out the mission – not unusual for a Soldier, and there was that 3-day R&R if they could get it done. Ranger Carpenter was 19 years old and an OLD Man already – one of the finest Rangers I'd met and had all the courage a young Warrior could hold. I also spoke with the TL (Hilerio), who was a fine 20-year-old Ranger TL and dedicated to the given mission as planned.

The birds left, the mission began, insertion went well. The mission ended on a trail not long after insertion. We listened as the initial SITREP came in – CONTACT! – one "Bee Sting", one "Wasp Sting" – the code words of the moment for friendly WIA & KIA – chilling words in all cases. We continued to listen as all hell broke loose – no birds available, no way for us to reach the two living Rangers, with small arms and grenade background music on the horn. All who listened to the radio traffic felt what you feel when you can't close the distance between your Buddies in trouble and the help they so badly need.

The mission story as I recall: Carpenter was the Pointman and stepped out in front of 3 ditty-bopping NVA, telling them to "Chieu Hoi" (surrender), and they laid down immediately. The God-knows-how-many NVA behind the point element killed Carpenter with small arms & grenades, and wounded Hilerio. Hilerio was in the prone position in cover position for Carpenter. Hilerio took a round through the shoulder/neck area, and it ended

up in the lower abdomen. He spoke for a LONG time calmly and professionally on the radio – directing what support could reach them and reporting the SITREP as if he wasn't hit at all. His voice grew weaker and we suspected he was the Bee Sting, but he would not say so over the clear net – a PRO in the worst of conditions, and one fine Ranger to have known.

First Sergeant Don Keller and one other Ranger found & commandeered the Brigade Commander's bird – the first we knew of it was when they came up on the horn to tell the Team they were inbound. They had found a couple gunships enroute and had some cover for the insertion. They only had ONE pistol (from the pilot), yet they landed and made their way through the contact and located the team. The only one capable of standing was the new Ranger (I believe it was his first mission?), who was pretty frazzled until the 1SGT helped him get squared away on the work at hand. Carpenter and Hilerio were carried through the now-quiet contact AO to the bird and lifted out. Ranger Hilerio died at the Hospital soon after arrival.

I remember well the faces of these three Rangers. When that fades, I will be disappointed, but they will understand. I thought for years there was a 4th Ranger on the team, but recently learned from then-1SGT Keller there were only three. It was not as unusual as it sounds, as there were still a few 2-Man Teams working in 1969 in K/75<sup>th</sup> Rangers.

It is a fine day to remember, and the worst of the memory has passed into time's special place. I don't think I'll forget the sadness, helplessness and hopelessness of that day, as that was the day I threw all hope for the future out the window. When some of the best Rangers you know have been taken down, the world around you changes its shape and purpose, and anger can become your best friend.

First Sergeant Don Keller (now CSM, Ret) was the most courageous Leader I ever knew, yet he will tell you today he was "just doing his job". He's the same Soldier who stood so tall and walked so calmly around our Company AO during the night sapper/mortar attack on K/75<sup>th</sup> on my 6th day In-Country. He was one tough nut to crack then and is one tough nut to crack yet today, by the way. The SOLDIER matters in combat and everything else is second – every Leader should know that rule and live it.

The "other" Ranger on the rescue bird was then-SGT/E5 Gates, who would later become "Command Sergeant Major of the Army Julian Gates" during his career – one STRACK Ranger even in a combat zone and a good example for any who followed his path. I remember his personal AO in the hootch looking just like the one in Basic training, and it stayed that way throughout the time I knew SGT Gates – I wouldn't be surprised if it's still that way.

Rangers, there's the "war story" from this end of the world. I am proud to have been "your" President and am thankful for your

## PAST PRESIDENT MESSAGE (CONTINUED)

support during my term. I did NOTHING noteworthy, while WE did several good things together. SUPPORT the Board in its tasks and get involved in making this Association DRIVE ON into the future, remaining the Best of the Best in Ranger Brotherhood. Support the Soldiers in harm's way today and remember what you KNOW they need – send 'em a package and let them know we're here, and the BIG PX is open and delivering if they need something. They're carrying our Colors and adding more glory to them every day – one day they'll be "FOGs" and take Association Colors forward, too.

Did I say THANKS yet? Yeah, I believe I did, but it doesn't quite cover the gift of having been chosen to serve again in the world of Rangers. I have walked again with Giants and tried not to be a Lilliputian.

Rangers Lead the Way, and SUA SPONTE,

Dana McGrath,

Pres 2002-2004 K/75<sup>th</sup> Rangers '69-'70

## APPOINTED VICE PRESIDENT

By Steve Crabtree

"Just when I thought I was out, they sucked me back in!" In my next life I will have a phone with caller ID. That way when Emmett calls I won't answer the phone. He called a couple of months ago and I, like an idiot, answered it. He asked if I would take the appointed Vice-President position and I accepted. For those of you who don't know me, here is a short autobiography.

I was orphaned at the age of seventeen and lived with, Preston Hogue, one of Darby's Rangers for the next couple of years. In 1968 I received my draft notice, reported for duty and a year later was sent to Vietnam. I volunteered for the Americal's Ranger Company and completed my tour with G Company Ranger, 75<sup>th</sup> Infantry. I make no claim of being a hero, just a guy who pulled the duty and did what was expected. I am pretty proud of the oak leaf cluster on my "Emergency Leave" Ribbon! I received an eighteen day early out (thank you President Nixon!) came home & got on with my life.

In 1990 I received a call that our unit was going to have a reunion and would I be interested in attending. I agreed and took my wife and two of

my three daughters. They couldn't believe the love & comrade we all had for each other. Neither could I. We agreed to find more of our brethren & meet next year. We formed G Company Ranger Association and located over 200 former LRRPs & Rangers from our unit. 120 of us met the following year at the Wall. I became heavily involved with our new Association and served as President, Chairman of the Board of Directors, and Concessions Officer. I also joined the 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment Association about the same time.

My wife, Lori, bought me a brick at the Ranger Memorial as a Veteran's Day present in 1994. A year later I had a friend take a picture of it & send it to me. I put it on my mantle at home but every time I looked at it I thought of John Bennett, Bob Pruden, George Olsen and all the other men from our unit that didn't make it home. I finally turned the picture face down because I didn't think it was right for me to have a brick and them not. Like an answer from God, I received a letter from my employer, McDonnell Douglas, telling me of a charitable matching funds program that would match donations dollar for dollar. I sent out letters to every former G Company Ranger/LRRP asking for

money and within three months I had enough to buy (with the matching funds) 30 bricks. I sent the money to the RMF along with the paperwork for matching funds but something was missing. There were many more Ranger/LRRP Companies that lost men and most of them didn't have bricks. I contacted Rick Ehrler, President of the 75<sup>th</sup> RRA, and made the arrangements to work on getting a brick for every one of our KIAs. In two & one half years we made nine purchases for 392 bricks, \$33,760 of money donated by you and the same matched by McDonnell Douglas. In 1998 at the Ranger Memorial we held a service on Veteran's Day and read the 407 names of every Ranger/LRRP killed in action in Vietnam.

Somewhere around the end of 1997, McDonnell Douglas merged with The Boeing Company. Concerned with possible change of policy, I contacted the POC of matching funds at Boeing and was promised, "You keep collecting the brick money and we'll match it." After the merger we submitted \$13,360 in matching fund claims and expected them to be paid to the RMF. Thirteen months later we received notification that memorials were no longer candidates for the Boeing matching funds and that they

## APPOINTED VICE PRESIDENT MESSAGE (CONTINUED)

declined our request. I will find a way to make this debt good to the RMF someday, somehow.

On November 19<sup>th</sup> I will met with Colonel Chinn, Co of the 5<sup>th</sup> RTB, and retired MG Ken Leuer, Chairman of the RMF, to discuss several issues. We will discuss the corrections that need to be made due to typos, errors and just plain screw ups. The unit representatives will be receiving notification of the outcome of this meeting in a few weeks and I will

cover whatever transpires in my next Patrolling letter.

I will also plead a case for allowing Spencer T. Karol to have a brick engraved at the Memorial. Karol was KIA in Iraq while serving with E/51 LRS. Our (G Company) parent LRP Company was E/51 LRP and we claim lineage to E/51 LRS. The 75<sup>th</sup> RRA also acknowledges the lineage. The request for Karol's brick has been turned down once but I sincerely hope for a overruling of that decision after

all the evidence is presented.

My health might be of some concern as I have had three major operations in the last five years (colon cancer, incisional hernia and spinal fusion) but don't let that worry you. If cancer and the entire North Vietnamese army can't kill me, neither can a little work for the 75<sup>th</sup> RRA.

RLTW!

CRABS

### Beating the Bush

I made it home from the war, it's been so many years,  
I remember the good, the bad and yes, even the fears.  
Fears are many when fighting for your life,  
Their always with you, like your weapon and knife.

Dog tags taped, all gear tied down,  
You tried like hell not to make a sound.  
Heat so unbearable, sweat poured down your face,  
The jungle wasn't hell but it was just a hot a place.

I remember my friends, to young to drink, to young to die,  
Deep down inside I asked myself why.  
You busted your ass during the monsoons, humping in the mud,  
Keeping the bug juice ready for the leeches filled with blood.

From the Rock Apes in the mountains, the F.Y. lizzards on the ground,  
Wild Orhids in the Ashu, no stranger mix of beauty to be found.  
The guys I served with, became more like my brothers,  
My only hope was that when it counted, I'd be good as the others.

Many times out of water, we carried empty canteens,  
There is no sweeter taste than from a cold mountain stream.  
I thought my war was over when I made it home.  
As I dwell into my memories, I can't help but feel alone.

Michael D. Monfrooe  
9 Sept 2004

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

DISCLAIMER

DISCLAIMER: This series of articles entitled 'LEGISLATIVE HELP LINE' is meant to be an informative aid in assisting you in protecting your rights. It is also meant to keep you informed of the ever-changing legislative forum that may affect you. There is a caveat here. The 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment Association is not allowed to assist you in this effort. Our Constitution has a stipulation that forbids this. Article IV: Sec. 2. The Association shall not endorse any political candidate, platform or party. Sec. 3. Officers, Directors and Members shall not engage in any form of activity that implies or specifically relates the Association to any form of public activity without first obtaining approval from the Association. Therefore, no Officer, Unit Director, Advocate or Member may present himself as a representative speaking for or on the behalf of the 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment Association. Now, this does not prevent you from acting for yourself on your own behalf, I quote Article IV, Section 5: The foregoing does not restrict or prohibit members from engaging in activities which are the constitutional right of any citizen. As I said, this section is provided as a service to inform you. You must act on your own. Do not attempt to act on behalf of the Association. Thank you, Emmett Hiltibrand - President

**VA HOME LOAN UPDATE 03:**

The house approved a bill on 23 JUN 04 that would increase the VA maximum home loan amount from \$240,000 to \$333,700. It includes a provision to link the amount to the national Freddie Max index to guarantee the VA limit increases each year. H.R. 4345 would offer qualified vets the opportunity to receive a loan guaranty of up to 25%, or \$83,425, on a mortgage of \$333,700. Currently VA provides loan guarantees of up to \$60,000 on a maximum mortgage of \$240,000. In the last 60 years, VA's home loan program has financed more than 18 million mortgages. Before the bill can become law it must go before a conference committee of the House and Senate members to iron out any differences and then be forwarded to the President for signature. Information on the VA home loan program is available at [www.homeloans.va.gov](http://www.homeloans.va.gov). [Source: VFW Magazine AUG 04]

**COLA 2005 UPDATE 02:**

Last month a 2005 COLA in the neighborhood of 3.4% was projected. This week, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) announced that the monthly Consumer Price Index (CPI) dropped about 0.2 percent. The size of the 2005 COLA now depends on what the CPI will do in the last two months of the fiscal year, which is anybody's guess. The BLS will post the final percentage on October 15th. The last time there was a drop in the July CPI was 2001, after which it was flat in August and gained 0.6% in September. In five of the last six years, the CPI has gained at least 0.5% in the last two months. The exception was 1998, when it gained 0.2%. So the best guess is that the 2005 COLA will be somewhere between 2.8% and 3.1%. One caution to bear in mind, is that in two of the last three years, the

December CPI number actually ended up lower than the July-through-September average. That kind of volatility makes any projection pretty iffy. To view detailed CPI data and COLA calculations for the last six years, refer to [www.moaa.org/FinancialCenter/CPI.asp](http://www.moaa.org/FinancialCenter/CPI.asp). For a more extensive history of military COLAs refer to [www.moaa.org/FinancialCenter/COLAincreases.asp](http://www.moaa.org/FinancialCenter/COLAincreases.asp). [Source: MOAA Leg Up 20 AUG 04]

**NATIONAL DEBT:**

The National Debt on July 12, 2004, was \$7,265,299,676,980.06. The U.S. population on July 14, 2004 at 8:59 am EDT was estimated to be 293,735,011. If you divide the National Debt of 7 trillion dollars by the number of men, women, and children, we each owed \$247,341.97 on 14 July. To track at any given time the amount you owe you can get the latest figures on debt at [www.pubicdebt.treas.gov](http://www.pubicdebt.treas.gov) and population at [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov). Intragovernmental holdings, such as the Social Security Trust Fund make up 40% or approximately three trillion dollars of the National Debt (\$3,044,908,289.853.89). [Source: NAUS Update for 16 JUL 04]

**USFSPA LAWSUIT UPDATE 05:** A group of 58 military retirees and active duty service members who are divorced are suing to overturn a federal law that enables their ex-spouses to share in their retainer or retirement pay. Their group, the USFSPA Litigation Support Group (ULSG), is challenging the constitutionality of the Uniform Services Former Spouses' Protection Act in court after legislative efforts to amend it failed. The ULSG wants to return to the policy that applied before 1981, the year that the U. S.

## LEGISLATIVE UPDATE MESSAGE (CONTINUED)

Supreme Court ruled in *McCarty v. McCarty* that divorce courts could not touch veterans' retainer or retirement pay. The USFSPA undid that Supreme Court ruling. In JUL 2004, the government filed a motion to dismiss the ULSC's lawsuit on several grounds. ULSC, in turn, filed an in-depth rebuttal. A hearing on the government's motion is scheduled for September 10 in the U.S. District court in Alexandria, VA. [Source: NAUS Leg Up 27 AUG 04]

**AAFES 2004 HOLIDAY CATALOG:** The 2004 Holiday Electronics Exchange Catalog is now available at all Army and Air Force Exchange Service main stores and online at [www.aafes.com](http://www.aafes.com). Prices in this all-services catalog are valid 10 SEP thru 31 DEC 04. Anyone with Exchange privileges can order from it. Orders can be placed by mail, fax or

phone. To place orders toll free from the United States, Puerto Rico or Guam call (800) 527-2345. The Exchange Catalog center is open 7/24 and complimentary international access calling is available from several countries. Authorized customers can also shop the 2004 Holiday Electronics catalog on the Internet at [www.aafes.com](http://www.aafes.com), [www.usmc-mcss.org](http://www.usmc-mcss.org), [www.mavy-nex.com](http://www.mavy-nex.com) or [www.cg-exchange.com](http://www.cg-exchange.com). Earnings generated by purchases in the Exchange and Exchange Online Store as well as Exchange Catalogs such as Holiday Electronics are returned to the military community in the form of funding for Morale, Welfare and Recreation facilities and programs. [Source: Air Force Retiree News Release No. 09-11-04]

## SO PROUD

THIRTY YEARS AGO I MADE IT HOME,  
THIRTY TEARS LATER I FEEL ALONE.  
NAM WAS UNPOPULAR AS WARS SHOULD BE,  
THEIR PURPOSE IN COMMON, OPPRESSED PEOPLE TO FREE.

AGAIN WE ARE AT WAR IN LANDS FAR AWAY,  
WORD OF OUR LOSSES COME EVERY DAY.  
POLITICS ASIDE, WE ARE IN FOR A FIGHT,  
WE MUST STAND TOGETHER, GATHER OUR MIGHT.

I WANT TO DO MORE, I'M A SOLDIER AT HEART,  
I WANT TO DO MORE, TO DO MY PART.  
I'VE RIBBONS ON MY TRUCK, WISHING THEM WELL,  
AS ANY VET WILL TELL YOU, WAR IS HELL.

I'D DO ANYTHING TO TAKE THEIR PLACE,  
FOR I HAVE SEEN COMBATS UGLY FACE.  
WHEN THE FIRST SHOTS FIRED, ARGUMENTS FOR WAR GO MUTE.  
POLITICIANS START WARS, THE MILITARY SHOOT.

I STILL REMEMBER MY FRIENDS THAT DIED,  
I STILL REMEMBER, REMEMBER THAT I CRIED.  
WHEN OUR TROOPS COME HOME I'LL BE IN THE CROWD.  
I'LL BE STANDING TALL, STANDING PROUD.

Michael "Poet" Monfrooe

## H E A L T H

## DISCLAIMER

*The following articles dealing with health issues that concern or could concern our members are presented for your information and should not be construed as an endorsement of any of the treatments, medications or procedures outlined herein. It should be understood that there are new medications and treatments being developed that are largely untested, and though they show promise in the treatment of a given illness or condition, they may not be effective or safe for all individuals.*

**Washington, D.C.** - The Government Accountability Office (GAO) today released a report, requested by Representative Lane Evans (D-IL), indicating that greater efforts and information are needed to fully address a likely increase in demand from military service personnel and veterans for treatment of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Reporting that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) lacks even a count of the total number of veterans currently receiving such treatment, the GAO report concludes that “VA cannot estimate the number of additional veterans its medical facilities and Vet Centers could treat for PTSD.”

Rep. Evans, ranking Democratic member of the House Veterans’ Affairs Committee and senior member of the House Armed Services Committee, also asked GAO to review the Department of Defense’s (DoD) efforts to identify servicemembers at risk for PTSD. Evans intends to use GAO’s findings to support a comprehensive PTSD bill he plans to introduce later this month.

The GAO report reveals that DoD currently has only two approaches to identifying whether servicemembers are at risk for PTSD - a combat stress control program that trains servicemembers to recognize the early onset of combat stress and a post-deployment health assessment questionnaire.

“I’m far from convinced that DoD and the military service branches are doing all they can to address the mental health concerns of our troops. In my view, the GAO report, while pointing to worthy initiatives, also uncovers a paucity of effort in this regard,” said Evans. “I particularly believe that an optional four question survey doesn’t do the trick when these individuals come home from combat, and I’m concerned that the stigma associated with seeking mental health services is an obstacle for many who might need them,” he said.

“There should be aggressive personal follow-up with returning troops since some symptoms do not become manifest for weeks and even months. DoD must work much more closely with VA and share the data VA needs to plan appropriately, and VA must review its own capabilities and position its resources accordingly to ensure a robust response to veterans’ mental health concerns,” Evans continued.

According to GAO, mental health experts predict that because of the intensity of warfare in Iraq and Afghanistan 15 percent or more of the service members returning from these conflicts will develop PTSD, a rate that approximates the experience of Vietnam War veterans. An Army report published in the July 2004 edition of the New England Journal of Medicine indicated “15.6 percent to 17.1 percent of returning soldiers from Iraq exhibited signs of anxiety, major depression or other mental health problems.”

“We cannot afford to waste any time in preparing to address this important matter. Our troops will be coming home to a system that, in many cases, is treading water just to meet current veterans’ mental health needs,” said Evans. “GAO’s independent findings should send a message to us all that DoD and VA must improve their preparation and capacity to meet the increased demand in mental health services from returning troops and their families.”

Evans’ legislation will focus on early intervention, comprehensive services quality follow-up, family involvement and counseling, and enhanced outreach.

The full GAO report can be found at: [www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-04-1069](http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-04-1069)

## VA rewrites rulebook

By Cory Reiss Washington Bureau

**WASHINGTON** — Bill Kline fought a battle 35 years after his service in Vietnam when the Department of Veterans Affairs gave him a 40-percent disability rating for colon cancer that the agency links to Agent Orange exposure. On July 27, about two years after the Sarasota, Fla., veteran submitted his claim, he won an administrative review that yielded a 100-percent disability rating, Kline said. That means more compensation and better access to medical care. But to Kline, who has another case pending, the cause of the mistake by a low-level claims processor was obvious. “They simply didn’t know their own rules,” he said. The number of vets like Kline who argue with the outcome of

## H E A L T H

their claims, mostly for disability benefits, is surging — from less than 44,000 in fiscal 2001 to more than 114,000 in fiscal 2003, according to government data. The trend is jeopardizing the department's effort to reduce backlogs. Congress and the VA have changed several rules that may give vets more reason to protest claims decisions, but many people agree that a factor is that vets and regional VA employees just don't understand what a court described in 1991 as the "confusing tapestry" of regulations. It's an old story — the little guy versus the vast government bureaucracy.

The VA, however, has given it a new twist. In a move that appears unparalleled for a federal agency, the VA is rewriting huge chunks of its regulations, a jumble of legalese and cross-references amassed over more than 70 years. The VA says disputes and appeals will drop if its rules are made comprehensible to the agency's front-line employees and the average vet. An expert on regulations for the libertarian Cato Institute said he knows of no similar effort to rewrite rules in plainer language at another federal agency. The effect could be far reaching. More than 735,000 veterans submitted benefits claims last year, about 20 percent of them new claims with the rest applications to increase previously established disability ratings. At least one major veterans group is refusing to cooperate with the VA out of concern that the agency may be stripping vets of their legal rights. "The stated intent is laudable, which is to translate bureaucratese into English," said Rick Weidman, director of government affairs for Vietnam Veterans of America. "The way they are doing that is insidious." The VA is starting with rules governing disability compensation and pensions, which will emerge in about 20 packages through at least the end of this year. The first proposed section was released Jan. 30 and a second was published last month. Rules governing education and other benefits will get similar treatment.

The VA has asked veterans groups for advice, but Weidman said the piecemeal approach prevents vets from seeing how sections fit together. They might miss changes the department later would argue the groups helped write, he said. Joe Violante, head of legislative affairs for the Disabled American Veterans, said his group sees some problems. For example, he said, one proposed rewrite appears to undercut a 2000 law that requires the department to help vets put together their claims rather than denying incomplete applications. "The VA looks like they're trying to shift the burden back to veterans," he said.

VA officials say they are not trying to change the substance of rules unless they have become obsolete. Agencies write rules to implement laws that Congress passes. They are subject to court scrutiny and infused with precedent, in this case since 1988, when Congress established the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims. Barton Stichman, co-executive director of the National Veterans Legal Services Program, which provides representation before the court, said rewriting the rules could

reopen questions the court has settled and create new ones in the short term. "In the long term, it's certainly going to make things easier for courts and the agency adjudicators to know what things mean," he said. "The most important effect should be, if it's successful, eliminating disputes."

A VA official said the department tried twice in the 1990s to accomplish this task but failed. The regulations currently under revision cover about 210 pages of small print. VA officials produced 2,000 pages of analysis before embarking on the rewrite, said retired Major General William Moorman, formerly the Judge Advocate General of the Air Force, who is in charge of the project. "The net result of this is we are going to see a process that is more straightforward, results in fewer instances where seemingly similar claims are treated differently," said Moorman, who wants final rules on disability and pensions approved by fall 2005. "There will probably be fewer disputes over their applications and thus fewer appeals." The VA's project stemmed from a 2002 report on the causes and potential cures for a claims backlog that peaked at 432,000 with a processing time that averaged 200 days. VA Secretary Anthony Principi set a goal to have no more than 250,000 pending claims with an average processing time of 100 days. The department got close to the goal last year, but a court decision, an increase in claims from veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan, and possibly changes in the law and VA rules have shot the claims inventory to 324,000, the VA says.

Rules changes beginning in 2002 may have prompted some veterans to reopen their disability status, which many veterans try routinely as their condition worsens. Changes that may prod vets to reopen cases, which is not considered an appeal until a vet disputes the decision, include the VA's exclusion of higher-income veterans without service-connected disabilities from VA health care, and a decision by Congress to allow retired vets who are 50-percent disabled to receive their pensions and disability pay at the same time, known as concurrent receipt. More veterans also are protesting VA decisions at the regional level and lodging appeals in Washington. As a result the average time it takes to get a decision from the Board of Veterans Appeals beginning with an initial review at the regional level has increased to just shy of three years. An appeal to the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims takes another year. The board expects to add 10,000 to 12,000 appeals to its backlog each year, a 67 percent increase over a projection a year ago. Of the 114,000 initial disputes that went before regional case officers last year, nearly 42,000 went on to the appeal level at the Board of Veterans Appeals, and about 2,500 went to the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, all substantial increases from 2002. Robert Angeli, a state veterans' service officer for the southeastern corner of North Carolina, said it's time for clarity in the VA's rule book. Plenty of baffled vets seek help from him and veterans groups, and misunderstandings are common on both sides. "That would help a lot of veterans," he said of the rewrite. "It is a cumbersome process."

## FEATURE ARTICLES

# The Battle of the Invoices

BY: John Chester

One of the interesting things about working in almost any capacity in this or, I suppose, any Association is the wide variety of reactions that the same act will generate. In this particular case, I am, of course, talking about the mailing of the dues and contribution invoices in September, 2004. In the September issue of *Patrolling*, I mentioned, in the Secretary's/Editor's column that we were going to start sending annual dues invoices, that all members, including Life Members would get an invoice and that if no dues were due, the invoice would be another point of contact and that it could be used for Family Fund or Member Fund contributions. In other words, if you don't owe any dues, disregard the invoice. Another purpose of the invoices was to gather as much information as possible on members with whom there has been no contact for a number of years. We have over 4,300 names in our data base, and at the time of the mailing, there were about 1,600 active members. We were faced with almost twice the number of inactive folk as we had active members, clearly we needed to mine the ranks of these inactive people and return them to the active ranks, and failing that to remove them to a separate data base from the active members.

The invoices were mailed from the mailing company in late September and the invoices (and the comments) began to arrive a few days later. The first inundation of returning invoices were pretty much without any rancor. The Post Office box was overflowing the first time I visited it, about a week after the invoices were mailed. There were many that were returned as undeliverable or deceased, but the bulk were simply paying dues or making contributions. I did receive a few from Life Members stating that they were Life Members. I even got a few calls from folk that were actually insulted that they received invoices, despite the notice on the invoice. After many somewhat tedious explanations, some appeared mollified, a few were not. I used to work for an old General who used to say, "If you're not pissing someone off, you're not doing your job." Well, apparently, I'm doing my job.

Another old friend used to say that there were only 4 rules for doing volunteer (unpaid) type work. They were 1. Show up. 2. Pay attention. 3. Tell the truth. (And most important,) 4. Let go. There is no question that volunteers, for the most part, do what they do out of some sort of belief in the rightness of what the organization is doing or trying

to do. Why then do you suppose that others in the organization choose to make an issue out of something done for the best of intentions? I suspect out of a sheer love of conflict, or as Mary Anne says, "Just because they're mean old SOB'S." I was going to apologize if anyone was offended, but to hell with it. I guess that's why I get the big bucks.

### Some statistics:

Current Life members:	540
New LM (since invoices)	44
Members Pd by invoice	802
Current Active Members	1,812

We are closing in on the elusive goal of 2,000 active members. The marked increase in Life members leads to another question, can we as an Association continue to offer Life Memberships for \$250.00. It will take a consensus among members at the next membership meeting (Columbus, GA, 2005), to make a change. I sort of feel that the dues should be contingent on age, decreasing as the individual gets older. Life Membership is a sort of pyramid scheme, the people joining later paying for magazines and services for those coming earlier. (After 10 years, a life membership is fully amortized, at \$25.00 per year.) After that magazine cost, etc., is paid by annual members and those joining later. Depositing life member funds in a dedicated account is not the answer; with interest rates at an all time historical low, the funds generated are simply not enough to defer the cost of the magazine alone. The answer might just be a graduated life membership dues arrangement.

After opening hundreds and hundreds of envelopes, a pattern began to emerge. A few were confused by the Envelope sealing in the front. A couple of folk actually sealed the envelope, (the front) and re-wrote the Address on the back of the envelope. Quite a few only got the portion that was designed to be torn off, because the Post Office lost the other part, (envelope) in the mail. (They tore it off). A great many had already paid their dues for the current year. If that was the case, I just added the years to their dues, (ie., they were good to 2006 instead of 2005). When you get this magazine, check your address for your year of expiration. If it is later than 2005, you may apply the difference to Life Membership if you wish. A few other things became apparent during the process.

Many of our members are members of other service

## FEATURE ARTICLES (CONTINUED)

organizations, as evidenced by the presence of the MOPH, DAV, VFW, VVA and other return address labels sold by these organizations.

Our members are extremely patriotic. I saw very few envelopes that did not have “support our troops” or “God Bless America”, or some other patriotic type stickers on them. Quite a few had the recently issued Purple Heart postage stamps on them. (Talk about idiotic, I couldn’t bring myself to throw these away, I saved them to burn in the fireplace.)

As evidenced by an extremely high number of John Wayne (the movie star), postage stamps, we also have quite a few romantics in our ranks. Perhaps that because all of us were volunteers of one sort or another.

We are fortunate indeed to have so many patriotic and generous members. If any sort of profile emerged, it was one of patriotism and generosity. There were a few messages. Most were of the “good idea” or “nice job” variety. A few were anatomically impossible, (at least for

me). A few were pretty bizarre, and 1 or 2 were just silly. All in all I think the idea worked and was generally a success. Next year, the invoices will go out in June, (our membership year ends June 30), and will incorporate the following lessons learned from this year’s exercise.

Improve the invoices so that they do not come apart in the mailing process. Put each member’s year of expiration and member number on the invoice. Make it more clear, (if possible) to Life Members, that this is not for dues, (for them).

I think that being able to pay by credit card contributed to the big jump in Life Members, (in fact, I ran out of Life Member lapel pins), even though many did pay by check. If any of you have any ideas relative to how this process could be improved, please call or e-mail me. If any one was offended by getting an invoice, I’m sorry. (That you were offended, not that you got an invoice). I think another point of contact with the membership is something positive. I would appreciate your thoughts.

## TRADITIONS OF SERVICE

By: John Chester

In August 2004, two members of our Association had occasion to welcome their sons into the Airborne Community, as their sons graduated from the Basic Airborne Course at Ft Benning, GA.

Bill Bullen, Vice President of the 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment Association, Inc., and former K Co. Ranger and Harold Strassner, a former N Co. Ranger watched their sons, Brad Bullen and Sam Strassner, graduate from jump school.



*From left to right, Bill Bullen, his son Brad, Sam Strassner and his father Harold. Harold was an N Co. Ranger in Vietnam, and Bill Bullen was a K Co. Ranger there.*

Bill and Donna Bullen, Emmett and Rebecca Hiltibrand, Wayne and Fran Mitsch and Mary Anne & I had planned to be a Brad’s graduation. Meeting Harold and his son Sam was a happy co-incidence. What are the odds that the sons of two active members of the Association would graduate from the same Airborne class? Not very

significant, I suspect. I contributed my first jump wings, (Brasso’d almost smooth), and Wayne Mitsch pinned them on the new cherry trooper, (Brad). Congratulations to the proud parents. Service to our country is clearly a tradition in these families. Photos follow.



*Attendees at Brad’s graduation. From left, Wayne Mitsch, Bill Bullen, Brad Bullen, John Chester & Emmett Hiltibrand.*

## FEATURE ARTICLES (CONTINUED)



*Wayne Mitsch pins on Brad Bullen's jump wings.*



*Brand new paratrooper. L to R Brad, Wayne & Bill*

## K/75 -THE COMPANY RAID -A PAGE IN RANGER HISTORY

BY: CSM Don Keller (RET)

There's more to this saga, there's 219 other stories that could all be part and parcel, individuals that have personal views of that day, and the days leading up to it and even the months before. This represents my personal "touch". What has to be told is the story from the beginning—many months before the raid. It all began with the evolution of Company K (Airborne) 75th Ranger Regiment. In February of 1969 Company E, 58th Infantry was re-designated as Company K (Airborne) 75th Ranger Regiment. Company K became one of thirteen companies of Rangers assigned to other major units in RVN. With this reorganization and re-designation came a proud and unique heritage from the



history of war. The Rangers were once again reborn. The very type of war had changed in RVN, changed dramatically different from the Ranger units of WWII and Korea. A different tactical concept had to be employed and the helicopter played a dramatic role in all of this. The Ranger units from RVN gave birth to the

Rangers of today. Now, once again, the Rangers would proudly live on.

From February to June 69, CPT Siverling was the Company Commander and operations were in 4-6 man teams. But Cpt Siverling had "lit" the spark in the hearts and minds of these fine young men—the finest men who would ever walk the jungles of RVN. That spark glowed brightly at 0100 hours, 7 June 69, when NVA decided they wanted to take on these Rangers who were now "rooming" on the perimeter of this sprawling base near Pleiku called Camp Enari. The NVA penetrated the rows of outer defensive wires, thinking perhaps, they would get as far in as the flight line. Although the NVA were able to make a small dent in the armor of the Rangers they were repelled. Rebuilding began at sun up. Every single Ranger worked hard and long, but still conducted assigned missions. In two weeks the Company was "up and running again". The Company Hqs and Company Operations were now housed in one common building which became a place to visit, ("as long as the First Sgt wasn't there"). The young Rangers were proud, proud to be a part of and to be called "Ranger". Permission was given for the men to place a sign of sort, atop the Hqs building as long as it was in good taste. The sign was made of sandbags, painted yellow and read: "Ranger Sir". The very day the sign was completed the Div CG, MG Pepke, flew over the company area. Within minutes the General's aide called and said the General wanted him to pass on that "he liked the sign very much and that he saluted the Rangers, one and all".

During the Jun-Jul 69 time frame, Company K moved from the operational control of the 4th Div G2 to Div G3. This was a very critical step because of the types of missions the Rangers

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could/would be called upon now to execute. In addition to Intelligence gathering, there were hunter-killer teams, ambushes,



directing artillery fire, close-air support, bomb damage assessments, POW snatches, and general combat patrols. These missions widened the combat role of Company K greatly. To meet these growing missions, they had to step up recruiting efforts at the 4th Div Replacement Company. Those efforts had always been fruitful in the past and were again, and the unit strength increased accordingly. The new emphasis on the Ranger's use was profound. The 4th Inf Div now had a Company of Rangers with long range capabilities and also a strike force prepared to fight anywhere at any time.

The 4th Div Cmdr, MG Pepke, was always complimentary of the Ranger's activities and the results. He often had Ranger Teams go to Div HQS for impact awards and other awards for mission accomplishment. Often at the Div Cmdr's Conference he would remark that "if it were not for the Rangers, Div would not have a daily sit-rep to higher Hqs". It is important to note that Company



K's area of operation—II Corps Tactical Zone —was the largest of any Ranger or LRRP unit in RVN. It covered thousands of square miles, most of it mountainous and triple canopy jungle. The size of the area and new missions had Ranger teams moving. Company K would be quickly called to task. The Rangers were ordered to increase their activities in the Central Highlands to the west, where the enemy had been increasing their strength and

activities. The Ranger missions there provided the Div with timely and quality intelligence resulting in heavy enemy losses, and undoubtedly saving many American and South Vietnamese lives.

The increased emphasis on Ranger activities drew some criticism from the rest of the Division, most coming from the Infantry units. Many things that the Rangers were allowed, such as "Cowboy hats", no steel helmets, camouflage fatigues, and the wearing of the Company K Ranger scroll as a unit patch rather than the 4th Division patch, rankled with the line troops. The not wearing of the steel helmet often was of concern for line unit Commanding Officers. These, and others, were solved by the Div CG—his solution "leave it be"—and it was.

During the Nov-Dec 69 time frame, the Div CG ordered the three Inf Brigades to combine their LRRP personnel with Company K. Once the LRRPs arrived, Company strength jumped to 220. The



LRRPs had been operating at the Brigades and were trained, thus making Company K ready for the extra missions more rapidly. This combination created a capable and powerful Ranger force. The company would also gain a new company commander at this time—Cpt Kim Olmstead.

The new organization had three platoons with 12 teams each consisting of 4 to 6 men. Even then, the Company was faced with losses due to rotations, bum-out, and casualties. The loss of Team Leaders was a constant problem. This problem was countered by making team leaders of the most experienced, and those with the most missions. Often E4s were team leaders with E5s and E6s as team members until they got "time in the bush" and were deemed ready for the job. Recondo and Ranger school graduates were available to fill openings, but not as often as needed.

In Nov 69, MG Walker took command of the 4th Div and he decided to turn the Rangers loose on the NVA by employing

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retaliatory raids. Company K's Rangers were ready. Moral jumped Sky high. New camouflage uniforms and equipment, not available to the rest of the division, aided the Ranger's moral as well. With the advent of increased missions for the Rangers, Div assets like helicopter pilots and crews and artillery units, the CG experienced a renewal of efforts which had a profound affect on all. Thus the future picture for American Military Operations was formed in RVN by these small teams of highly skilled and heroic men, who by their actions and deeds changed the very nature of the war. Is it not true, as we see today, with more emphasis on Special Operations Forces and the effort to take the war to the terrorists.

All the events outlined were most probably the reason that a company size raid would be conducted by Company K, in Feb 1970. Somewhere, unknown to most, an event was taking place that would once again change history and Company K (Airborne) 75th Ranger Regiment would lead the way.

However, other events were facing the Company, the LRRPS of the three Infantry Brigades were now preparing to take their places. The Company was also preparing to pack up, bag and baggage, and every piece of equipment for movement to their new camp at Camp Radcliff near An Khe. The Pleiku base was being closed out in the near future. But now, along with all this, the company received orders to prepare for a company size raid. Information provided by a POW, that a compound was suspected of holding American POWs and that an American collaborator was aiding the enemy. Several fly-overs were made by Div, of the suspected area. Because of those fly-overs, Div imposed a two week hold on the mission to allow a "cooling off" of the area. However, it was felt that some harm was already done and the mission might have been compromised.

During the month of January 1970, all teams were pulled from in-progress missions and the entire company was refitted and trained as fire teams, squads, and platoons. Company K was

training as a Ranger Company for operational deployment. Many classes were conducted on basic and advanced infantry unit tactics including individual fire and movement, fire and maneuver between fire teams, squads, and platoons. Preparing for an assault, setting down a base of fire, sweeping and securing the objective were also covered. Men endured hour after hour of classes, hour after hour of practice, continuously, to "get it right". Men getting to know and working with men other than team members, men getting to know who would be on their right and left, finally honed the skills of the Rangers. Range firing would be done over and over again for understanding and getting the proper sight picture, the proper "grip" of their individual weapons and "squeezing" off rounds instead of "full rock and roll". Everyday there was training going on in addition to packing. Physical training also had its place along with everything else. The days were tiring, hot, and long—but necessary. But they were Rangers!!!

The name of the Operation was —Wayne Stab II. and coincided with operations being conducted within the area of operation by other Div assets. The operational plan was being developed by the Operations Officer (Lt Alderson) and Cpt Olmstead. Per instructions, when the plan was ready—Div was called. The Div .CG and G3 stood at the large sandtable that depicted the objective area. They listened, nodded, and at the end posed few questions. They both gave a "thumbs up" without any changes. The operational plan was ready. Questions about logistical support was covered but given a hold until Div "touched base" with lift units to see if they could provide the required number of aircraft. Assurances were made that the airlift would be made available. Div stood ready to assist in any way possible.



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Company K was trucked to An Khe and subsequently set up “housekeeping” and awaited the order to “launch”. An Khe was selected as the “launch” site because of proximity to the operational area. The “strip” there was able to “fit” the air support mission, and additionally, the terrain nearby provided landscape similar to the objective site. Approximately 19 “lift-birds” plus gun ships would be required. That long awaited day was upon the Rangers. Men camouflaged their faces, gear, and gathered their equipment under the watchful eyes of Platoon Leaders and Platoon Sergeants. They were readying to take that step into history. Checks and more checks were made of men, weapons, ammo, and the “right” amount of equipment needed for the “RAID”. THE RANGERS WERE READY!!!! Still there was that lingering feeling caused by the two week “hold” and the over-flights, and the ultimate question; “Did the POW provide the necessary information and was it true???”

The concept of the Operation was simple and straight forward. The Rangers, now totaling 198, were to initially insert one platoon of Rangers just South of the north/south ridgeline, on which the POW compound was located. After the insertion was accomplished, this platoon of Rangers would move quickly up the ridgeline. The two remaining platoons were to be inserted just slightly to the west and in the valley, move quickly toward the ridge line and set up and be prepared to move on order. That order would cause them to either re-enforce or counterattack.

Additionally, they had to cover avenues of egress that might serve as escape routes for the enemy. The “lift birds” were arriving and shortly came the gun ships. The Rangers were ready—all that remained was the “go” and final co-ordinations between the Rangers and the lift crews. “SADDLE UP” had the Rangers on the move. The tension and anticipation was strong but that eased as the blades began to turn and spirits stirred, yells sounded, and the mission was in the air and history had a new chapter. SUA SPONTE

After the insertion, the first platoon formed and moved quickly toward the objective area up ahead. First they encountered a “blueline” and an individual dressed in black pajamas. He was quickly taken under control and interrogated by the accompanying interrogator. He said that he had just come down to the stream for water. He said that he was a cook at the compound and that everyone had left last night or the night before. All that was left were those expected to “keep up” the compound. There were a lot of foot prints on the trail which were indicators that he might be truthful. To the right of the trail were punji stakes, set about ankle high. A simple but effective measure to cause any invader to use the trail—a trail that could be well covered from up the hill near the compound. Nervously believing the detainee’s confession, it was decided to chance the trail and move quickly but with caution. Shortly a brief halt was called and a recon team was sent forward to take a quick look. The team reported that no people, or sounds could be seen or heard from the compound. The terrain had tall trees, 30-40 feet high, void of any lower limbs. The area around the compound, out to about 75 yards, was cleared of any brush. The compound was in plain view. Overhead a Ranger helicopter hovered, clearly visible from the ground and the compound. It had not drawn any fire.” Was everyone Gone???”

The trail the Rangers were on paralleled the long axis of the compound and would serve as the jumping off line for the assault. There was that “itching” feeling among the Rangers, wanting and waiting for something to happen. One squad was sent out to the left and positioned themselves where they could place a base of fire at the compound. But they would only fire on order. Two machine gun crews were positioned to cover the approaches from up and down the trail into the area to prevent a surprise attack. The Rangers were ready to “jump off”. A final reminder “They were there to free not kill!!!!”

Suddenly there was movement from the far end of the compound and a shot was fired, hitting no one. Any additional firing was halted—again the Rangers were there free the POWs not kill them in the process. As was observed, the four individuals had few clothes and no weapons and were there to “maintain the compound”. Pursuit was not reasonable since the trail on either side had punji stakes and could very well lead followers into an ambush. Also, prior information from the detainee at the river indicated “villagers” were up there to make some money. The entire movement of the Rangers up to the compound had

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been a surprise to the few “stay behinds”. The mission continued with security being placed out and clearing of the area of booby traps was accomplished before the huts could be searched. There were five small huts and one large one. In front of the large hut was a good size hole, deep enough that perhaps the POWs could have been restrained in there. There was no wire or fence of any kind around the area. Every structure was given a careful going over and the searches yielded absolutely nothing. No “spider holes” nor any kind of holes other than the large one was found. It had been swept clean. Destruction of the compound was ordered and accomplished. Company Hqs was informed and withdrawal was ordered. The Rangers withdrew, assembled and moved to link up with the remainder of the Company in the valley.

Although there had been quiet and reserve before, there seemed to be a different quiet now. Shoulders seem to slump a little and heads were not quite as high, there was a let down. The Rangers remained alert but their individual actions yelled out—THEY HAD MISSED THE PRIZE!! Another let down still faced the Rangers. The very quickness of the mission and the gathering of the Rangers for extraction was not anticipated. Extraction could not be supported because Div had no air assets available. The Rangers would have to remain until the next day or longer. The company was ordered to set up defensive positions and to “dig in”. This brought a realization—these rangers were now “grunts”. Of course, there’s nothing wrong with being a “grunt” except they were Rangers.

So there were some grumbles—but no matter, the Rangers began their defensive position preparation. At this point, the training prior to the insertion, now provided the Rangers the knowledge on what they had to do. One, they had to get over the disappointment at the POW compound and get on with the task at hand. However, the disappointment ran even higher for the others that stayed in the valley—they only waited. Their roles could have been great if they had been called upon, however, this night all would prepare defensive positions, send out LPs and set up OPs and maintain 50% alert. Thoughts were, “Hell”, Rangers don’t dig foxholes but this night they would and no matter what, they would be prepared to live and perhaps die another day.

What the Rangers did not know was that Div was trying to “find” something for them to do IF the “lift birds” were not available for the next day. However, the lack of identifiable objectives within the area and concern that the entire company had been compromised, caused all operations to be aborted, and the extraction was on, a few men at a time. The return gave everyone a opportunity to reflect, relax and view the jungle below. Off in the distance was a beautiful waterfall, gently cascading down the mountain side, wandering one direction and then another, and shining brightly in the warm sun, as it plunged into the stream below. It offered life to all who used it and a new life as well. But to its right or left, the jungle canopy served as a sanctuary for an elusive enemy with a goal to take life—any life. What a contrast

and what a contradiction to life!!!

Once back at Base Camp, the Rangers took up their routine 4 and 6 man recon patrols or one of the other missions that were directed by Div. All of these missions were always performed with honor and excellence. This brought great credit upon this unique organization and equally unique breed of young soldier. It has to be remembered that more than 90% of these young men were draftees who volunteered to be part of this and like Ranger units though out RVN. Respect for the Rangers now ran high, from the Commanding General down to the lowest man within the Division. As the First Sergeant of Company K, from May 69 until May of 70, I have always been proud to have had the great opportunity to serve with this fine group of young men. I was proud to have moved with the platoon of young Rangers that went into the compound and I have no doubt that the mission would have been accomplished. I was the oldest man in the company (10 years or more) than most of them and viewed a lot of things differently than those younger, but they were “all my men”, to include the officers. But every single day they amazed me with their bravery, tenacity, and willingness to do and to “stick it out” no matter what it took, no matter the odds. I can remember many events that stand out about many but that’s another story and well worth telling about these young men.

The one that is always foremost in my mind is about a young, freckled and fair complexioned, red headed, team leader that stood in front of me crying one morning, crying to go to the field with his team. “They need me”, he said, “and I need to be with them”. He had been grounded because he had had 47 boils over his body. But this day all were about healed and the “medics” gave him the “OK”. How was I or anyone else going to deny this galant young man his desire?? He was all of nineteen, if that. What was it that made young men like these?? Stories like this, 219 of them, in fact, in Company K (Airborne), 75th Ranger Regiment, RVN. Stories of young men, barely out of school who were given “adequate tools of the trade” that would carry teams of three, five and sometimes eight into hostile lands to face the unknown. Young men who, needed to, wanted to, and had to, day after day, seven days a week, carrying out tasks almost beyond human comprehension and endurance. Ready to stay for” as long as it took”, to get their mission accomplished.

A group of unsung heroes stood with these men as they prepared for their missions; watched them pack, food, clothing, water, and ammunition, and inserted them into their assigned areas of operation. Then they extracted these same teams, as necessary, often under extreme weather and combat conditions, putting themselves and the air crews in harms way, but taking care of their men. Not just one time but many times, ready seven days a week, night or day, often times doing the “impossible”. Officers like Reubin Siverling, Kim Olmstead, Hank Alderson, Tom Martin, Bill Postelnic and Joel Douglas. NCOs like Bob Mott, Harry Sweeny, Tom Farnsworth, and J. Gates. NCOs like Bob Walsak (Supply Sgt) and M. Lyons (Commo Sgt) kept everyone

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supplied and communications equipment in operational order, must not be forgotten. What a collection of great young men—great American soldiers. Rangers all !!!

It took everyone, working as a bigger team, to make Company K what it was and is today—the very best That cohesiveness and

lasting friendships still exist.. . But there's another group of young Rangers that are no longer with us, who gave their lives doing what they had to do. They are remembered with sadness and heavy hearts but their names are etched in stone—least we forget and their fellow Rangers will never forget them, these young men now rest in the hands of their maker—for eternity.

## America the Beautiful Then & Now

I'm sure there are a lot of us Vietnam Era Veterans that have memories of stories that our Fathers told us when we were growing up about how our Nation pulled together as one for the WW-II War effort. Things that we could never imagine, such as meatless Fridays, scrap metal drives, and having to stuff old rags into worn out bicycle tires instead of putting a new inner tube in it so you could ride to school. Then of course there were the tails of rationing gasoline, butter, lard, and copper. Let's not forget how women were looked down upon by their peers for using TOO MUCH CLOTH when making themselves a new dress, because they didn't have enough money to buy a new one from a dress shop!

One of the most interesting stories I remember was the one my Father told me of how when he was in transit going across our nation on a Troop Train that was powered by an old steam locomotive. As the name implies the train had nothing but military troops aboard. What impressed me so much was when and wherever the train had to stop to take on water and fuel during its long journey across America there would always be a large group of local women from the various churches and civic groups from around the area waiting at the train station. As the train took on its re supply of water and fuel the women had prepared sandwiches, fruit, punch, fresh milk, plus home baked cookies, pies, & cakes to feed the troops aboard the train. This example of unsolicited support and patriotism was displayed all the way across the country during the war, with little or no fanfare.

Some thirty years later I found myself daydreaming about such stories of years gone by from my father and uncles who had served during WW-II as I myself was in transit going from Ft. Bragg, N.C. to Ft. Lewis, Wa. Driving a POV orders with 9 days travel time and 30 days leave. I had been driving all day across the breadbasket and heartland of our nation ending up at dusk in a little town in the state of Kansas called Oakley. The only landmarks of mention were the tall grain silos and the railroad spur that cut thru town on one end. The main street had the usual combination of hardware store and farm equipment sales & service outlet, a gas station, general store, Post Office, city hall / Sheriff's office etc. which was less than a quarter mile in length. At one end of town was a flashing motel sign with a coffee shop with a restaurant next to it.

I pulled into the motel and rented a room for the night. After

getting a nice night's rest, I had planned on driving on to Provo, Utah to the Brigham Young University Campus to visit a couple of friends I had who were attending there at the time. It was Saturday and I planned on attending church services with my friends the next day and wanted to wear my dress uniform. My shirt and trousers for my dress uniform needed to be pressed, so I went up to the motel office and asked to borrow an iron for the necessary pressing job. The lady in the motel office was rather curious as to why a young man would need an iron, as this was something that was usually done by women in this part of the country. I explained that I was in transit in the military with orders for Vietnam and wanted to wear my uniform for church the next day. I got the iron with no more questions and completed the detail as planned. I returned the iron to the front motel office paid my bill, and went next door to the Café for some breakfast before forging on to Provo Utah.

The Café was not much different than any other one would pass thru while driving cross country. It had a long counter with 10 or so stools and 4 or 5 booths that were next to the windows facing Main Street. I was about half way thru my morning meal when a woman who I can best describe as Aunt Bee from the Andy Griffith Show walked up to my table. She smiled and asked me if the food was up to my expectations, which I could only answer with a big smile and a muffled YES (due to a full mouth).

Then to my surprise this very pleasantly perfumed and powered lady slid into the booth next to me and put her arm around me in a very motherly way. She looked me straight in the eyes and stated that she was the owner of both the motel next door and the café. She then told me that there were some local young men from the surrounding area that were also in the military, and that she hoped they were being looked after by the lord and being given all the support that is due to those who are serving their country! At this point she explained to me that my money was no good in her establishments, and returned to me the money that I had paid for my motel room, and told me that my breakfast was free. The real topper was when she informed me that the cook in the café kitchen was preparing me a brown bag meal for the road that I was to take with me when I left.

As those of us who served during the Vietnam Era know all too well, this type of treatment by other citizens of our great nation never ever happened to us back then. We were more accustomed to being spit upon or having pennies rolled in our direction as we would walk past people in Airports, followed by the usual

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muffled name calling such as baby killers or murders. We could stand on the road side for hours and never get a chance of a ride, except for the usual stop and run up with the car driving off while everybody inside would roar with laughter shoving a middle finger in our direction out the window!

I can tell you I left that town with tears in my eyes and a full heart. It was one of the most memorable events of my life. One that I don't often share with others and for some might seem unbelievable. In today's Politically Correct Spirit of "SUPPORT or TROOPS", I thought I would pass this little bit of AMERICANA on to some of my other Patriot Brothers & Sisters

who have or are serving with pride our GREAT NATION!

God Bless All who are or have served our Country with Honor,  
& God Bless America!

As Always, Ever Vigilant. . . Lest We Forget!

Paul (Doc-Rosey) Rosenberg "L" Co., 75<sup>th</sup> Inf.,  
(LRP/LRRP/RANGER) 101<sup>st</sup> Abn. Div. I-Corps., RVN. 3<sup>rd</sup>.  
ANGLICO (Air-Naval Gun Liaison Company) (:) FMF, United  
States Marine Corps.

## PSYOPS

**BY: Tom Sweetnam**

"Beware! You are entering one of the most dangerous places in Vietnam -a public highway."—sign outside Camp Eagle at the Highway 1 junction.

At 10 o'clock yesterday morning, about 150 yards from where I reside on South Beach, two young surfers, a 21 year-old female and 20 year-old male, both of whom I knew by sight but not by name, backed their car out of the surfer's parking area adjacent to US 101, right into the path of an oncoming semi, and were killed instantly. It took rescue workers more than three hours to cut their way into the wreckage so the bodies, or more aptly, the remains, could be evacuated. In a nanosecond, their Toyota was transformed into a flattened mash of steel, glass, and organic wreckage that now stood no more than 30" at its highest point. Like others here in this tiny community, I stood on the beach and watched, silently and solemnly, flabbergasted at the finality and violence of the scene unfolding in front of us, while at the same time old subconscious memories of a similar drama crept into my conscious mind.

It'd been on my second trip to Vietnam, when I became NCOIC for the 101st Airborne Division's PSYOPS office. It was a great job, because it came with an S5 pass and my own jeep, which meant I could go anywhere I wanted in Vietnam without having to answer to MPs or snot nose majors who fancied themselves generals. An S5 pass was the same credential journalists and CIA spooks carried in Vietnam, damn hard to get for anyone in the military. The entire PSYOPS section of the 101st Airborne Division consisted of me and Gale Trent, a 24 year-old captain, he a bright young lawyer from St. Louis who spoke fluent Vietnamese. On occasion, we hired the services of four Vietnamese interpreters, but essentially, it was a two-man office. The only down side and dangerous aspect of the job was the 24 hours we were required to fly every day out over the A Shau Valley and Ho Chi Mihn Trail, making leaflet drops and propaganda broadcasts (which we wrote).

We took ground fire a few times but were never hit.

The army had absolutely no faith in PSYOPS at that point in history, regarding I suppose, as macho military and other uniformed men did and do, anything remotely attached to the word "psychological", as the exclusive realm of crazy people. Thus aside from running the Chu Hoi propaganda program for I Corps, as well as being charged with the initial interrogation of any communist turncoats, General Hennessey also tossed in our direction every shit administrative task charged to the division insofar as dealing with dead Vietnamese civilians. For instance, we were responsible for repatriating the remains of civilian Tet victims murdered by the communists, who in 1971 were still being found in dunes on the coast and in slit trenches along the Perfume River. We were also responsible for delivering compensation, official letters of condolence, and/or letters of apology to the families of Vietnamese civilians who'd been accidentally killed as a result of US military actions, and lastly, worst of all, we were charged with the same task for Vietnamese civilians killed on Highway 1 by US military vehicles. The highway would keep us far busier than the war.

One day division called and told us to cancel flying that afternoon, instructing us instead to get down ASAP to a point on Highway 1 about 20 miles north of Danang. There'd been "a horrible accident" involving an American truck and several Vietnamese civilians they said. Gale and I had to secure the identities of anyone who'd been killed, if possible, for the administrative tasks of issuing official condolences and compensation. The scene that greeted us was surreal. The accident involved a US Army M60 tank carrier that'd just dropped off its cargo of two M60 tanks in Quang Tri and was heading back to its harbor base in Danang. Even emptied of its 120 ton cargo, this V16 diesel-equipped tractor/trailer still weighed nearly as much as a locomotive, and was so heavy in fact, that it was prohibited from traveling anywhere except in war zones and US military bases, and could only traverse public

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highways in the U.S. during times of national emergency. I didn't see the other vehicle involved in the accident for the first few minutes after we'd arrived, because things were getting out of hand. About 80 people milled around, half of them ARVNs who'd stopped, one of them firing his M16 in the air and screaming in anger at the scope of what had just transpired, while threatening to kill the American driver of the M60 tank carrier. Gale, myself, and the other Americans present got into shoving matches with Vietnamese soldiers, so tempers were escalating quickly. Fortunately, two armored police vehicles equipped with .50 caliber machine guns arrived from Da Nang with 12 MPs, who took the situation in hand. Only then did I notice the other vehicle.

It'd been a stretched Citroen of the type we saw beaucoup of in Vietnam, black in color of course, and like all the others it was employed as a taxi cab.....with 15 passengers onboard. Imagine if a car was a big cardboard box, and you could unfold that cardboard box and lay it flat like any other cardboard box. That was the Citroen. The taxi driver had tried to pass on a hill in the oncoming lane and hit the M60 tank-carrier head-on, his vehicle instantly crushed to an 8" thickness. That's why we couldn't see it on first arriving. From any distance it looked like a black slab of highway or a piece of equipment that'd fallen off a truck.

Gale and I had to stay all day while an American crew came up from Da Nang with torches and pneumatic claws to exhume the remains, all of the corpses devoid of three-dimensional form now, devoid of mass and fluid, looking like two-dimensional black pajama rag dolls with grotesque cartoon appendages vaguely resembling flattened human heads. After six hours, those 15 who'd died in the time it takes to blink, were lined up neatly on the shoulder of Highway 1, just so much biological waste material fused to tattered black rags that we were supposed, somehow, to attach human identities to. It took about a month to locate most of the families. Three of the dead, all young men, we never did ID. They were probably insurgents or VC, or so the police chief in Hue would surmise about a month following the tragedy.

It was in PSYOPS that I learned how cheap life has always been in Vietnam, so cheap in fact that it didn't matter who was culpable for the death of a Vietnamese civilian, whether it was a communist bullet or an American truck, whether an accident or not, because the monetary compensation we paid the families of the Tet murdered we exhumed, or the collateral damaged we shelled, or idiot taxi driver's next of kin, was always the same: the equivalent of \$60 U.S. paid out in piasters. A dead water buffalo on the other hand, commanded \$120 compensation, that of two human beings. These values -assigning a water buffalo's worth twice that of a human being- were established by the Vietnamese, not by Americans. Gale and

I delivered letters of condolence and \$60 compensation settlements to several dozen households in the Hue area, but as if a hidden hand were guiding the cultural nuance and trajectory of our 155 mm howitzer shells, we only ever had to perform our front door eulogy orchestrations for a single water buffalo. We were never greeted with hostility, only indifference. Equipped with our S5 passes, Gale and I often drove into Hue to eat lunch at the Chinese restaurants. Their owners, expatriate Chinese businessmen, used to relate a cultural maxim about the fatalistic nature of Vietnam. It held that the Vietnamese will never grieve more than 24 hours because that's as far ahead as anyone could project their own lives. This alluding to a 2000-year old culture that's been at war about 1940 of them.

Watching fire department rescue people grind and rip their way into that mangled Toyota yesterday brought home the same Vietnamese cultural nuance, reminding me of the ephemeral nature of our existence here, and the reality of just how quickly life can end on the weight of a single stupid decision. I wondered about the public official charged with the front door task of informing surviving family members and offering condolences. At that point, it wouldn't matter to a mother or father if this incognito grim reaper disguised in a highway patrolman's uniform carried with him a compensation offering of \$60 billion dollars. It wouldn't assuage their crushing grief one iota.

In a famous Atlantic Monthly essay titled A Grief Like No Other, psychologists related that no psychic trauma equals that of the unexpected, violent death of a young loved one, especially a child. As much as the rest of the world condemns the litigious and material nature of our American Judeo-Christian ethic, our culture nevertheless dictates we live with such debilitating sadness every waking hour until we take it to our graves. Such is our capacity for love, and thus for grief, and thus the value we place on the individual human life. That's a crushing cultural cross to bare, and has very much to do with why most of the rest of the world hates us, because we refuse to subjugate the value we place on the individual human life to any fanatic cleric or his equally fanatic God, because we refuse to subjugate the value of the individual human life to any retrograde ideology or religious cult. A huge sadness is in store for the loved ones of those young surfers, yet that sadness is born of the sanctity we placed on these young lives while they still existed. Respect for individual human life is the central tenet of our culture, the cultural state of mind indispensable to an evolutionary advancement of civilization. It's really the locus of what we're fighting for in the world today, and ultimately, ironically, paradoxically, the very thing we are willing to die for as well.

Tom Sweetnam/2004      L Company Ranger, RVN 1970-71

## FEATURE ARTICLES (CONTINUED)

## DIARY OF A SNOW-SHOVELER

SUBMITTED BY Dan Nate, F Co.

Ah, snow. What would winter be without it. That's how I used to feel about it. And for those of you that have never lived in the north or eastern states, you have NO idea what you are missing, so I'm going to "fill you in", more or less.

DECEMBER 8<sup>th</sup>.....6.00 p.m. It started to snow. The first snow of the season and the wife and I took our cocktails and sat for hours by the window, watching the huge flakes drift down from heaven. It looked like a Grandma Moses print. So romantic, we felt like newlyweds again. I LOVE SNOW!!!

DECEMBER 9<sup>th</sup>.....We woke to a beautiful blanket of crystal white snow covering every inch of the landscape. What a fantastic sight! Can there be a more lovely place in the Whole World? Moving here was the best idea I've ever had. Shoveled for the first time in years and felt like a boy again! I did both our driveway and the sidewalks. This afternoon the snow-plow came along and covered up the sidewalks and closed the driveway, so I got to shovel again. What a perfect life!

DECEMBER 12<sup>th</sup>.....The sun has melted all of our lovely snow! Such disappointment. My neighbor tells me not to worry, we'll definitely have a White Christmas. No snow on Christmas would be awful! Bob says we'll have so much snow by the end of winter that I'll never want to see snow again. I don't think that's possible. Bob is such a nice man. I'm glad he's our neighbor.

DECEMBER 14<sup>th</sup>.....Snow, lovely snow! 8" last night. The temperature dropped to 20\*. The cold makes everything sparkle so. The wind took my breath away, but I warmed up by shoveling the driveway and sidewalks. This is the life! The snow-plow came back this afternoon and buried everything again. I didn't realize I would have to do quite this much shoveling, but I'll certainly get back in shape this way. I wish I wouldn't huff and puff so.

DECEMBER 15<sup>th</sup>.....20 inches forecasted. Sold my van and bought a 4X4 Blazer. Bought snow tires for the wife's car and 2 extra shovels. Stocked the freezer. The wife wants a wood stove in case the electricity goes out. I think that's silly. We aren't in Alaska, after all!

DECEMBER 16<sup>th</sup>.....Ice storm this morning. Fell on my ass on the ice in the driveway putting down salt. Hurt like hell. The wife laughed for an hour, which I think was way too cruel.

DECEMBER 17<sup>th</sup>.....Still way below freezing. Roads are too icy to go anywhere. Electricity was off for 5 hours. I had to pile the blankets on to stay warm. Nothing to do but stare at the wife and try not to irritate her. Guess I should have bought that wood stove, but won't admit it to her. God, I hate it when she's right. I can't believe I'm freezing to death in my own living room!

DECEMBER 20<sup>th</sup>.....Electricity's back on, but had another 14" of the damn stuff last night. More shoveling. Took all day. Freakin' snow-plow came by twice! Tried to find a neighborhood kid to shovel, but they say they're too busy playing hockey. I think they're lying. Called the only hardware store around to see

about buying a snow blower, and they're out. Might have another shipment in March. I think they're lying. Bob says I have to shovel or the City will have it done and bill me. I think he's lying.

DECEMBER 23<sup>rd</sup>.....Only 2" of snow today. And it warmed up to 0\*. The wife wanted me to decorate the front of the house this morning. What is she...nuts??? Why didn't she tell me that a month ago? She says she did but I think she's damn well lying.

DECEMBER 24<sup>th</sup>.....6". Snow packed so hard by snow-plow, I broke the shovel. Thought I was having a heart attack. If I ever catch that son-of-a-bitch who drives that snow-plow, I'll drag him through the snow by his balls! I know he hides around the corner and waits for me to finish shoveling and then he comes down the street at 100 miles per hour and throws snow all over where I've just been. Tonight the wife wanted me to sing Christmas carols with her and open our presents, but I was busy watching for the freakin' snow-plow!

DECEMBER 25<sup>th</sup>.....Merry Christmas. 20 more inches of the @#%^& slop tonight! Snowed in. The idea of shoveling makes my blood boil. God, I hate snow! Then the snow-plow driver came by asking for a donation and I hit him over the head with my shovel. The wife says I have a bad attitude. I think she's an idiot! If I have to watch "It's a Wonderful Life" one more time, I'm going to kill her.

DECEMBER 26<sup>th</sup>.....Still snowed in. Why the hell did I ever move here? It was all HER idea. She's really getting on my nerves.

DECEMBER 27<sup>th</sup>.....Temperature dropped to -30 degrees and the pipes froze.

DECEMBER 28<sup>th</sup>.....Warmed up to above -50 degrees. Still snowed in. THE BITCH IS DRIVING ME CRAZY!!!

DECEMBER 29<sup>th</sup>.....10 more inches. Bob says I have to shovel the roof or it could cave-in. That's the silliest thing I have ever heard. How dumb does he think I am?

DECEMBER 30<sup>th</sup>.....Roof caved-in. The snow-plow driver is suing me for a million dollars for the bump on his head. The wife went home to her Mother. 9" predicted.

DECEMBER 31<sup>st</sup>.....Set fire to what's left of the house. No more shoveling!

JANUARY 8<sup>th</sup>.....I feel so good! I just love those little white pills they keep giving me. Why am I tied to the bed?

NOTE.....

I received this from my son-in-law and daughter right after they were transferred to ALBANY, NY, from Virginia. Think they were trying to tell me something? After their first winter, I had to put on a new roof up there. Seems that theirs "caved-in". Figures. His neighbor is named "Dick". Have a MERRY CHRISTMAS, y'all.

**FEATURE ARTICLES (CONTINUED)**

**75<sup>TH</sup> RANGER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION, INC.**

**2005 REUNION  
6 THRU 10 JULY 2005  
REGISTRATION FORM**

**Yes, I will attend the reunion at Ft Benning, Ga, 6 – 10 July, 2005.**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ MEMBERSHIP # \_\_\_\_\_

UNIT AFFILIATION \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

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

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

I will be accompanied by \_\_\_\_\_ guests;

NAMES: \_\_\_\_\_

REGISTRATION FEE PER PERSON @ \$30.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

BANQUET TICKETS # \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$25.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL PAID ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to the 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment Association (75thRRA).

Mail to: 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment Association, Inc.  
P. O. Box 10970  
Baltimore, MD 21234

Make your reservations now. Call the Holiday Inn North, Columbus, GA. Local phone number for reservations is 706-324-0231. National Reservation number is 800-465-4329. Our banquet will be at the Iron Works. The Holiday Inn North, Columbus, GA offers complimentary shuttle service, lounge, restaurant, pool, free parking and other amenities.

**FEATURE ARTICLES (CONTINUED)**

## **2005 REUNION INFORMATION**

OUR HOTEL THIS YEAR IS THE HOLIDAY INN NORTH, LOCATED NEAR THE AIRPORT. They offer free shuttle service to & from the airport.

DATES: 6 THRU 10 JULY, 2005

BANQUET: BANQUET IS SCHEDULED FOR 9 JULY, 2005.

WE ARE NEGOTIATING WITH SOME VERY INTERESTING SPEAKERS FOR THIS REUNION.

ROOM RATES: \$69.00 PER NIGHT AT THE HOLIDAY INN. THESE RATES ARE GOOD A COUPLE OF DAYS PRIOR AND AFTER OUR REUNION DATES. Make reservations ASAP. We have a number of rooms blocked, when they are gone, they are gone. We will list overflow hotels in the next issue and on the web site.

The Reunion registration fee is \$30.00 per person and the Banquet cost is \$25.00 per meal, and is scheduled for Saturday Evening, 9 July, 2005. Registration fee and banquet cost must be paid with registration. (See registration form, previous page. Checks or Visa & Master Card information may be sent to:

75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment Association, Inc,  
John Chester, Secretary  
PO Box 10970  
Baltimore, MD 21234

If you have questions call 410-426-1391; e-mail [john.chester3@verizon.net](mailto:john.chester3@verizon.net)

I look forward to seeing you there. Bring the family, we will have “non-reunion” activities for those who wish to do the tourist thing in the Columbus/Ft Benning area.

**RLTW & Sua Sponte  
Emmett Hiltibrand  
President, 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger regiment Association, Inc.  
(706) 323-5426  
e-mail: [ranger2c@mchsi.com](mailto:ranger2c@mchsi.com)  
[www.75thrra.com](http://www.75thrra.com)**

**2005 75<sup>th</sup> RRA Reunion – Ft Benning – 6-10 July, 2005- BE THERE!!**

# UNIT REPORTS



**1ST BN, 75TH RANGER REGT**  
Unit Director - Roger Brown



## Ranger Class 11-04 Graduation 5 November 2004

Our new heroes. We are all proud of you. In attendance, along with our newly Ranger Qualified Rangers, were (Hqs. Company Commander, Bravo Company Commander, Deputy Commander of the Regiment and Ranger Brown.



1ST BN, 75TH RANGER REGT (CONTINUED)



When we formed the Battalion, in 1974, our Battalion Commander was LTC. K.C. Leur. After that first grueling year, we were referred to as K.C.'s Sunshine Gang. The last of the Sunshine Gang has finally departed the Army.

CSM Steve England recently retired as the CSM of the 18<sup>th</sup> Airborne Corp. Steve started out as an E-5 squad leader in Charlie Company.

CSM Mike Etheridge retired on November 5<sup>th</sup>. Mike was the CSM of the Southern Command. The Southern Command is commanded by a 4-star general, Headquartered in Miami, Florida. Mike started out in 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon, B Co. as a machine gunner.

I was privileged to serve with both of these great soldiers, and I can honestly state, they do not come any better than these two Command Sergeants Major.

**CSM Mike Etheridge**

Corky Whitson passed away recently. Corky's wish was to have his ashes spread over a drop zone.



1ST BN, 75TH RANGER REGT (CONTINUED)



**CSM (Ret.) Bill Acebes spreading Corky's ashes on a drop zone with the rest of the Battalion conducting a mass tactical.**

Ranger Stiner, one of the original members, passed away this past summer. May God Bless these two great Rangers' souls.

CSM (Ret.) Bobby Lane, formerly of the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion and CSM of the Ranger Training Brigade, was severely wounded in Iraq by an IED. He was wounded in the right shoulder, collar bone and face, but survived. Bobby is recovering from his wounds in the vicinity of Columbus, GA.



**2ND BN, 75TH RANGER REGT**  
Unit Director - Rich Hecht



## Rangers celebrate Battalion's 30th anniversary at Fort Lewis

By Spc. Sarah Wilkins

1st Corps Public Affairs Office

FORT LEWIS, Wash. (USASOC News Service, Nov. 1, 2004)

— Rangers traded war stories and barracks antics with current comrades and old friends at a daylong celebration Oct. 21 honoring 30 years of 2nd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment service at Fort Lewis.

"It brings back a lot of memories," said Mark Vance, a former sergeant who wore the black Ranger beret as a private back in 1974. "I could still get out there and kick some butt – I'll just have to pass it on to someone else."

Although the beret's color has changed from black to tan and the mission has changed from the Cold War to the Global War on Terrorism, Rangers still have the same high standards essential to success.

"The lineage we have is crucial to the standards we have," said Russ Vanarsdale, a former staff sergeant who served in Panama. "There's nothing these guys wouldn't do from the top to the very bottom to complete the mission."

Squads of Rangers climbed to the top of obstacles and high-crawled under wire to win the best squad competition – one of many continuous events held throughout the day to demonstrate the Rangers' capabilities.

After putting together weapons, climbing up a wet 30-foot rope, running about a mile carrying a 250-pound litter, racing through an obstacle course, sprinting a couple hundred yards to a range and shooting a variety of weapons using different stances, the six-man squads exhibited many techniques vital to effectively combating an enemy.

"You're breathing hard, you're tired, you're sweating – it makes it more difficult to shoot," said Sgt. Mick Moran, a former Ranger who served in Iraq and Afghanistan and now works in 1st Corps.

His brother, Spc. Kevin Moran, helped his squad from Company B win the competition.

Other family members don't often get to smell a weapon's gunpowder or feel its recoil, but 2nd Bn., 75th Ranger Regt. commander Lt. Col. David Haight wanted to give them a chance to personally understand what their Soldiers experience on a daily basis.

"They hear about this stuff, but they can't experience it," said Haight. "They support us all the time, but they usually don't get to see what we do."

So wives and children lined up to see and shoot automatic weapons and pistols while listening to the pinging of bullets striking metal targets.



2ND BN, 75TH RANGER REGT (CONTINUED)



***Rangers from Company B, 2nd Bn., 75th Ranger Regt. scramble to their next firing point during a best squad competition held in conjunction with the observance of the unit's 30th anniversary Oct. 21. The squad finished the course, which included weapons assembly, rope climb, stretcher carry, obstacle course and stress fire, in 14:27. (Photo by Jason Kaye, Fort Lewis Northwest Guardian)***



***From left: Sgt. Maj. Randall Inman looks on as Lt. Col. David Haight pins the Bronze Star for Valor on 1st Lt. Raphael Vasquez, left, and Pfc. Timothy McLaughlin, both of Company B. (Photo by Jason Kaye, Fort Lewis Northwest Guardian)***

For 12-year-old Hayden Lopez, seeing what weapon his dad used in combat to protect his life meant reassurance and understanding – he looked forward to seeing the M-4 carbine in action.

“At least they know we have the best equipment we can possibly get,” said Sgt. 1st Class Danny Lopez, who recently returned from Afghanistan.

Nearly 150 family members, friends and former Rangers who attended the ceremony could see the technological advancements made over the years through displays of communication equipment and sniper weapons systems set up around the parade field. Some of that technology aided Rangers during continued missions in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Beyond the equipment used to protect each other and accomplish the mission, Rangers used “intestinal fortitude” and other values embodied in the Ranger Creed to distinguish themselves in combat.

About 40 Soldiers stood in formation before their commanders and received medals, such as the Purple Heart, Bronze Star Medal and Army Commendation Medal.

“I felt pretty proud to stand there with them all because we sucked through everything together,” said Pfc. Timothy McLaughlin, who received the Bronze Star Medal with “V” Device. “A lot of us are friends – it’s pretty rewarding.”

Although one Ranger could not stand with them for recognition – the fellow Rangers and family members he left behind said they will never forget him. Pfc. Nathan Stahl died Sept. 21 during a combat patrol in Iraq.

“You never stop grieving for your Soldiers,” said Haight. “They’ll never forget Stahl.”

Exchanging memories of him and other Rangers, men from 2nd Bn., 75th Ranger Regt. sat down after the ceremony to eat food and drink beer with their buddies.

“To me, this feels very much like a high-school reunion – it feels great,” said Tom Hili, a former staff sergeant.

“You feel like you’re home again,” said Vanarsdale.





## 3RD BN, 75TH RANGER REGT

Unit Director - John R. Edmunds



# *3<sup>rd</sup> Ranger Battalion*

## CPL William M. Amundson, Memorial Edition

3d Ranger Battalion, Unit Director.

I would like to take this opportunity to honor CPL Amundson for his dedication and sacrifice for our country. We are truly blessed to live in a nation where men and women like CPL Amundson give their all for our freedom and security. We offer our prayers and condolences to the family and friends of CPL Amundson. May God Bless you and heal your pain, Matthew 11:28.

I thank Ms. Kimberly Laudano, 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment PAO, for the article below.

RLTW

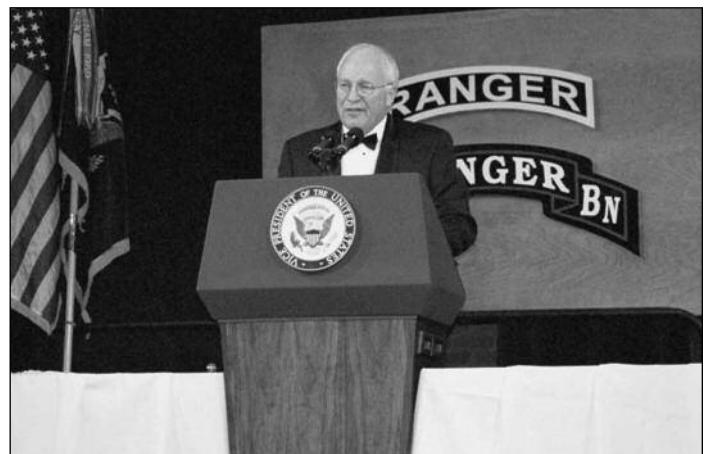
John R. Edmunds



*VP & Mrs. Cheney*



*Battalion Commander's remarks*



*Vice-President's remarks*



## **75<sup>TH</sup> RANGER REGIMENT**

### ***BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH***

U.S. ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE  
FORT BRAGG, NC 28310 / (910) 432-6005 / <http://www.soc.mil>

## **CPL. WILLIAM M. AMUNDSON**

### **Killed in action on Oct. 18, 2004**

### **Operation Enduring Freedom**

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***Recognizing that I volunteered as a Ranger, fully knowing the hazards of my chosen profession, I will always endeavor to uphold the prestige, honor, and high “esprit de corps” of my Ranger Regiment... - FIRST STANZA OF THE RANGER CREED***

Cpl. William M. Amundson, 21, was a mortarman assigned to 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment at Fort Benning, Ga. He was born June 4, 1983 in Texas.

He was killed Oct. 18, 2004, during a ground assault force infiltration in eastern Afghanistan when the Ground Mobility Vehicle he was riding in rolled over.

A native of The Woodlands, Texas, Cpl. Amundson enlisted in the Army in May 2001 and completed One Station Unit Training at Fort Benning as an indirect fire infantryman. After graduating from the Basic Airborne Course there, he was assigned to the Ranger Training Detachment, 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regt.

He graduated from the Ranger Indoctrination Program in November 2001 and was then assigned to 3<sup>rd</sup> Bn., 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regt. He served there as a 60 mm mortar gunner.



Cpl. Amundson's awards and decorations include the Army Commendation Medal, two Army Achievement Medals, Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Award, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Army Service Ribbon, Combat Infantryman Badge, Expert Infantryman Badge and the Parachutist Badge with combat jump device. He was also awarded the German Parachutist Badge.

Cpl. Amundson was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star Medal, Purple Heart and Meritorious Service Medal.

He is survived by his parents, Michele Sanderson of Montgomery, Texas, and William Amundson Sr. of Plano, Texas.

As a Ranger, Cpl. William Amundson distinguished himself as a member of the Army's premier light infantry unit, traveled to all corners of the world in support of the Global War on Terrorism and fought valiantly to “uphold the prestige, honor, and high ‘esprit de corps’” of the Ranger Regiment.

**- RANGERS LEAD THE WAY! -**



## Vice President Dick Cheney will be the Guest Speaker for the 3rd Ranger Battalion Annual Military Ball

### For Immediate Release

FORT BENNING, Ga. — Vice President Dick Cheney has accepted an invitation to be the guest speaker at the 3rd Ranger Battalion annual ball at the Columbus Convention Center tonight.

This will be a closed press event. The Ranger Ball is an annual event that brings all Rangers - officers, non-commissioned officers and junior enlisted - together to build camaraderie and esprit de corps. Military balls are time-honored events and are private so our Rangers and their guests can enjoy the occasion.

"We are honored that Vice President Cheney has accepted our invitation to be the guest speaker at the 3rd Ranger Battalion annual ball tonight," said Lt. Col. John Castles, Commander, 3rd Ranger Battalion. "Rangers are making significant contributions to the Global War on Terrorism every day. We are honored that the actions and sacrifices of our Rangers are going to be acknowledged by our senior leadership."

**The foregoing information and following photographs were provided by Ms. Kimberly Laudano, 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment, PAO. Vice President and Mrs. Cheney were greeted by approximately 1100 Rangers and guests. This was the first Ranger Ball for 3/75 since September 11, 2001 because of Op Tempo in support of the Global War on Terror.**

## *Charlie Rock 3<sup>rd</sup> Ranger Battalion*

### 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

3d Ranger Battalion, Unit Director.

I want to thank all members of Charlie Rock who planned and organized the reunion, created co-plankholders, and the Charlie Rock Foundation. It is a testament of what it means to be a Ranger when a group of guys who for the most part spent only short period of time in the Army, got out and 20 years later create a web site(ccoplankholders@yahoo.com), plan a reunion, and are creating the Charlie Rock Foundation, a non-profit organization to help Rangers and their families in C Co 3/75.

I am reminded of the great Ranger legacy. I feel so blessed by my decision to become a Ranger over 30 years ago. That decision set the conditions for success in my life and a lifelong association with true patriots. I fought hard in those early days not to reach success, "just ask CSM (R) Bill Acebes, CSM (R) Art Cobb, CSM (R) Don Purdy, and CSM (R) Joe Heckard". These are few of the great Rangers who have molded me. Roger That, I survived under these guys.

I specifically want to thank Joe Lavatai for his work with co-plankholders, organizing the reunion, Charlie Rock Foundation. David Bryce for his legal advice for the Charlie Rock Foundation and the After Action Report that follows.

RLTW

John R. Edmunds

## FIRST PLANKHOLDER REUNION AFTER ACTION REPORT

By: David Bryce

So I am back from the first reunion of the Plankholders, and what a long, strange trip it was. I had to drive 900 miles to get there, but I would do that drive 20 times over to get to repeat the weekend.

I arrived on Friday at the Courtyard Marriott. Crossing over the Chatahoochie was interesting, everything looked wildly different from the way I remembered things. Columbus was a lot hillier than I remembered, and about 4 times bigger and busier. And as I entered into Georgia, a flood of adrenaline, almost a freak-out. Like the man said in Apocalypse Now, "Columbus. Shit, I was still only in Columbus."

Talked to Joe L some on the phone, got coordinated. I was the first one at the hotel, so got

## 3RD BN, 75TH RANGER REGT (CONTINUED)

checked in. Joe, Steve and I were sharing a suite.

Shortly thereafter, Joe and Steve arrived.

Joe looks taller and is not the skinny guy he used to be. Same big grin and great welcoming personality. Steve is fit as a fiddle and only looks 5 years older than he was in '86, which was the last time I saw him. Wow, it was good to shake their hands.

Next to arrive was Wesley Earhart., who is currently leading a DOE Nuke plant protection team. He also looked fit as a fiddle and it was a huge joy to shake his paw. We sort of fragged most of this reunion, which was not a problem since the numbers were low. We could easily decide what to do next as we went along. This was the first frag O: Where are we going to go next? Why, Hooters of course. For some wings and shrimp for that evening, right?

I had to sit facing out the window, but that was OK. I wasn't in Columbus to leer at girls.

After a beer or 2, back we went to the hotel. The Marriott had graciously allowed us the use of a conference room for both nights, free. So it was off to the grocery store for supplies and then to Conference Room B. We set up the tables in a sort of square so we could sit around the perimeter and see each other as we Bsed.

Right at 1800, in walks 1SG (R) Dave Barton, looking about 10 minutes older than the last time I saw him. What a rush! And then, right behind him bursts in 1SG (R) Billy Ledbetter, surprise surprise! And then 1SG (R) Bill Dodge! Three aces! I didnt get to spend a lot of time with Bill Dodge in Battalion, which was my loss, as he is a superb man and great company as I found over the weekend; but Billy L and Dave B were both in 1<sup>st</sup> Plt with me, and Dave was my team/squad leader, so it was a huge rush to see them. Billy L also brought his bride Stephanie, who being an army brat herself was not shocked a bit by the ensuing festivities and language. Or if she was it didnt show.

We sat down with drinks and chow and commenced to filling each other in on our lives since the 80s, and then set in on the serious work of the evening, reminiscing. By 2000 hours my stomach hurt from laughing so hard and long. And we had all gotten completely at ease with each other and the situation. Then, in walks CSM (R) John Edmunds and his wife! John looks little changed and if anything is calmer than he was 20 years ago. He and Dave Barton are running a sort of spiritual development school for youths, using land nav and other patrolling stuff to get kids into the

outdoors, into leadership situations, and get them trained on how to be better Christians. Those 2 have a very strong faith, it is evident, and they are doing some good in the world too. They didnt preach or anything, and I did mightily enjoy talking to them about the subject. Both are fine Christian gentlemen. We also discussed some serious stuff, ie. forming a foundation whose purpose would be to provide financial aid for those underpaid family man PFCs and such currently in C Co. What a brain trust we had there! 3 E-8s and an E-9, Joe L is a successful businessman, Steve a sucessful salesman, Wesley an experienced leader. We had some great ideas, and in the future we'll be moving forward with them.

By 2230 or so, John and his bride had left, and I was really hurting from the laughter muscles being overworked. Then, who walks in but Ranger Jeff Lowery with his bride Andrea, his 21 year old daughter Melissa, his 5 year old son Jack, and his 2 year old daughter ( I am brain cramping on her name) in tow. Then things got REALLY funny. 20/20 hindsight says I needed a tape recorder. And to be in better abdominal shape. We called it a night at about 100 hrs, then Steve and Joe and I talked till 200 or so and crashed.

Ft Benning is a "closed post" meaning you have to present ID, and most access points are closed, but a drivers license will get you on. Steve and Joe L and I all piled into Wesley's Tahoe and off we went, back to Ft. Benning. Weird. First stop was the 5000 area, which is now the HQ for the Ranger Training Brigade (RTB). It even has a BRDM out front, captured in Grenada. In the old HQ building where the LTC's office was when we were there is something called the Ranger Hall of Fame. Lots of pictures of lots of Rangers. Very much worth a visit. The rest of it looks pretty unchanged.

From there we went back towards post a bit then cut over to Victory Pond ( the old way we used to use was blocked off.) As you approach the parking area for Victory Pond, you are coming off a hill. There is a sign naming that hill. It is Hurley Hill. I am sure Joe L and the others will have some pics of it to post. And video too. We had heard there was going to be a demonstration put on by some 1<sup>st</sup> batt rangers there at Victory Pond, so we hung around to see it. Unfortunately it had been a rumor, so we decided to go to Cusseta, the 4 Winds, for lunch. Wow what a burger! The place is bigger but still has its hooah theme intact.

Next we went all the way back to main post, and

## 3RD BN, 75TH RANGER REGT (CONTINUED)

went to an amazing new site there, the Ranger Memorial.

Rangers, words cannot describe that spot. But I will try. Imagine a long set of paving stones, most of which have names carved in them. Names of all the amazing hooahs you can imagine. And names like Jim Snedigar, and Blessing, and Bill Dodge. Bill actually got a great privilege: His stone is next to his father's stone, who was one of Merrill's Marauders. Their stones are the last ones on the entry walk before you get to the central area.

It was incredibly moving to walk around looking at all the names we knew there, living and dead. Talk about a Walk of Heroes! And then we found out that you can still buy a stone there, and have your name engraved! For like \$280 bucks you can become a part of history. Inconceivable. You can also buy a larger spot for several names. Just go to [www.rangermemorial.org](http://www.rangermemorial.org) for info, pictures, etc. Imagine your old fire team, in a V formation, pointing at the dagger, for eternity. Pretty damn cool.

Then things got really wild. We left post, and drove over to South Lumpkin Road, pulled into a strip mall, and all of us, in our reunion Tshirts, walked in the door of CSM (R) Smokin' Joe Heckard's furniture store! And there he was on his throne, the man himself! Another ageless one, Joe H. First thing Lowery said was to ask Joe H if his standing order was still in effect, that Lowery do pushups "whenever you see me, and I see you, and you see me seein you". Joe H did revoke the order, which was too bad as I was looking forward to seeing Jeff beat his face some. We reminisced a little, then planned a dinner rendezvous for 1800 and split up. We all needed naps, it had been a very tiring day, not from physical stuff but from the emotional stuff. And as it turned out we put it off till 1900 so we could get an extra hour. 1900 at Conference Room B, then up the street to a steakhouse. LONG wait to get seated, Saturday night and wanting a table for 15. But we finally got in, and got seated, some toasts were made, and we had a good meal. Joe H was being very polite and calm, as the ladies were present. Dave B brought his wife Angie, and I got to sit next to her and chat with her.

As we were leaving, all the hooahs gathered around Joe H in the parking lot and all the family members sort of wandered off. We stood there in the parking lot of this restaurant for about an hour, and the gloves sort of came off, and we got to talking for real, uncensored. What a privilege it was to be able to be a

part of that group of fine men! I truly felt unworthy.

Then Joe H had to leave, and the rest of us went back to Conference Room B. We called it a night there well after midnight. It was the last time I got to see Dave and Billy and Bill, which was hard. In just a day I had re-bonded with them something fierce.

The next AM it was off to Shoney's again, then Jeff and his family and I went off in search of Hooah Goodies at Ranger Joe's. ARCCOS has closed ( after US Cavalry bought it and then failed) but right next door the original people that had ARCCOS have opened a store called Commando's, which was excellent. We got lots of stuff, then I proceeded to get us real lost on Main Post looking for the Infantry Museum so that Jack could climb on a tank. We finally asked directions and stumbled into it. A whirlwind tour of the artillery and tanks outside, then back to the hotel. At about 1215 hrs I found myself saying farewell to Wesley, Steve, Joe, and Jeff, plus Jeff's amazing family, for the last time. As I crossed back over the Chattahoochie heading west again, it occurred to me that it was really strange that I had vowed to never return to Columbus 17 years ago, then it had been actually difficult to return this time, but now it was very hard to leave!

I think that almost everyone that served in 3<sup>rd</sup> Batt back then came out of it with some "issues", as the psychobabble people would say. Much too stressful a place and situation to NOT get beat up some emotionally. I know I did, I still have ranger dreams almost nightly, 17 years after ETS-ing. Coming back and meeting back up with your brother rangers will give you some deep closure on those issues, trust me. It'll be one of the great weekends of your life to attend a reunion; I know this weekend was perhaps the best I have ever had. I think we all feel better about ourselves and each other than we did before, and I believe some very good things will continue to flow from this after we get the Charlie Rock Foundation up and going.

If you attend the next reunion, you will walk away from it with more brothers than you had when you arrived. Now how can that be a bad thing? Like I said before, words cannot convey what really went on at the reunion. So, ranger, you need to get your ass in gear to attend next year, and find out for yourself what you are missing. For you hooahs who attended, thank you my brothers, and I WILL see you again. November in Arlington, at Lowery's for Texas BBQ. Be there.

And for the rest of you guys, I can't wait to see you again either.

## 3RD BN, 75TH RANGER REGT (CONTINUED)

# Alpha Company 3<sup>rd</sup> Ranger Battalion

## 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

3d Ranger Battalion, Unit Director.

I want to thank all members of Alpha Company who planned and organized the reunion. Of Their Own Accord, one week after the Charlie Rock reunion Alpha Company shows up, not to be outdone by another company. We know there is no competition between Ranger units, HOOAH.

I got a call from Jim Blotsky to coordinate a visit to the Ranger Training Brigade, 3d Ranger Battalions second home. Jim showed up with two Rangers and we had a quick tour of the HQ's. Jim invited me to Holiday Inn (A Co Forward Staging Base). My wife Lanette and I arrived at the Holiday Inn. My wife quietly touched me in the side (sharp elbow to the rib cage), "I am the only woman here." I said it's OK, we are with the Brother Hood. After a quick introduction, the war stories were flying. Do you remember the time we did ... Remember when 1SG (R) Laws said ... How about when CSM (R) Joe Mattison lost his ... Remember the time CSM Kelso did ...

As with any Ranger operation, a time schedule was posted. 3d Ranger Battalion provided a tour of the state of the art 3d Ranger Battalion compound. Other activities include Golf at Bull Creek, Memorial service at the Ranger Memorial, and of course a visit to the Four Winds.

I want to thank Jim Blotsky for inviting me to the reunion. I was blessed to share in A Co's reunion. Another group of true patriots, same MO as Charlie Rock. It is a testament of what it means to be a Ranger when a group of guys who for the most part spent only short period of time in the Army, got out and 20 years later come together. I can't speak for everyone, but for many us we celebrated one of the defining moments of our life, becoming a Ranger.

The photos provided by Jim Blotsky and Miles Camp.

RLTW

John R. Edmunds



**Charlie Rock originals pose for a picture at Hurley Hill. SGM Patrick Hurley was killed in action in Operation Desert Storm. SGM Hurley was the second Charlie Rock 1SG behind CSM (R) Smokin Joe Heckard.**

**L to R, Joe Lavatai, David Bryce, Wes Earhart, Bill Dodge, Steve Simonetti, Billy (DEMO) Ledbetter, and Jeff Lowery**



**Ranger 20015 Ranger Memorial**

**Charlie Rock tours Ft Benning GA Ranger Memorial**

**L to R, Jeff Lowery, Billy (DEMO) Ledbetter, David Bryce, Joe Lavatai, Dave Barton, Bill Dodge, Wes Earhart, and Steve Simonetti.**



**Ranger DSC01953 Ranger Memorial: #1**

**Alpha Company 3d Platoon originals pose for a picture at the Ranger Memorial. L to R, Miles Camp, Jim Blotsky, Ed Tinoco, Marc Little, Tim Weid, Robert Fielder (in uniform), Robert Grapp, Dan Carney, Rod Russell**



**Ranger DCP0416 3d Ranger Bn HQ's**

**L to R, Miles Camp, Patrick Moore, Michael Kirk, SFC (R) Robert Fielder, Jim Blotsky, Marc Little, Tim Weid, Ed Tinoco, Dan Carney, Robert Grapp**



**Ranger 01621a Ranger Memorial: #2**

**Alpha Company originals pose for a picture at the Ranger Memorial. SSG Ragan, 3d Ranger Bn Tour guide. MAJ (Chaplain) Lasley, Ranger Training Brigade Chaplain. L to R, 1<sup>st</sup> row, kneeling, Michael Kirk, Ed Tinoco, Jim Blotsky, Ranger, Ranger, Ranger, SSG Ragan, MAJ (Chaplain) Lasley, Rod Russell**

**L to R, 2d row, standing, Dan Carney, Tim Weid, Marc Little, SFC (R) Robert Fielder, Robert Grapp, Patrick Moore, Ranger.**

The copies of the orders for the first Ranger sleeve insignia was furnished by Mike Martin, our Unit Director of the Biet Dong Quan (BDQ). It is an interesting part of Ranger history and deserves a place in the annals of the units.

SPQRD 421.4  
2nd Ranger Bn

26 July 1943.

SUBJECT: Shoulder Sleeve Insignia.

TO: Commanding General, Army Service Forces, Washington, D. C.

1. Attention is invited to letter from the Headquarters Second Ranger Battalion dated 19 June 1943, which was transmitted to this office by Memorandum SPQRD 421.4 (19 Jun 43) your office 16 Jul 1943.

2. By the authority delegated to The Quartermaster General by 2nd Indorsement, AG 421.7 Insignia (9-18-42) OS-1, The Adjutant General's Office, October 8, 1942, the following shoulder sleeve insignia is approved for all Ranger Battalions:

On a lozenge 1 7/8 inches in height by 3 1/2 inches in length of blue within a yellow border 3/32 inch in width the word RANGERS in round block letters 3/8 inch in height.

For The Quartermaster General:

D. H. CONLIS,  
Colonel, Q. M. C.,  
Assistant.

*Heraldic File Copy*  
HERALDIC FILE



SHOULDER SLEEVE INSIGNIA FOR  
RANGER BATTALIONS

On a lozenge 1 7/8 inches in height by 3 1/2 inches in length of blue within a yellow border 3/32 inch in width the word RANGERS in round block letters 3/8 inch in height.

O. Q. M. G. JULY 20, 1943.

Approved  
*W. H. E. DUBOIS*  
W. H. E. DUBOIS, CHIEF HERALDIC SECTION



## A/75 - D/17 LRP - V CORPS LRRP

### Unit Director - Tom Brizendine



**By: Ronald Dahle**

*First things first, our heartfelt prayers go out to Unit Director Tom Brizendine who is currently waging a battle with heart problems.*

As you well know we haven't had a column for several issues after thoroughly burning Bob Murphy out. Having watched the abuse we fostered on Bob I was among the many who were more than willing to let it continue as long as possible. After a couple issues of Patrolling with no company representation several members of the company reminded me that at one point I mentioned I might be willing to replace Bob if it came to it. It's amazing the memory old men have when it gets right on down to the rubber meeting the road.

Well here's the deal, I will gladly offer whatever I can, however I would like a little help in the form of input from the different factions of the Company. As you all know, the company had three major iterations, Germany, Ft. Benning, and Ft. Hood. I am of the early genre, being the 38<sup>th</sup> member of the original company in Wildflecken, Germany, and am very comfortable with the first four years of the company's of existence, but I would appreciate and in fact need input from members of the Ft. Benning and Ft. Hood iterations of the Company.

I am open to suggestions as to the format of the column, as it is "our" column, not mine. I tentatively plan to break the column into three segments one for each location the Company served. This is where I will need your help, if I don't receive any input from your segment of the company the column will likely become heavily weighted with what I know, and as I stated that only covers the Wildflecken and Frankfurt side of the house, so help me guys, it will only take a couple minutes for you to "tell a tale" for the publication. Don't worry a lot about grammar and spelling, I will clean it up, and of course John Chester will likely clean up after me.

I can be reached at: Ronald K. Dahle  
7629 Highway H, Leasburg, MO 65535  
(573) 245-6250 (573) 259-7348 (Cell)  
Email: [ronalddahle@direcway.com](mailto:ronalddahle@direcway.com)

I prefer text in MS Word, or Word Perfect, with photos in Tiff, GIF, or JPEG format. Remember the higher resolution we start with the better the image we will wind up with. I can scan the images for you if you don't have the capability.

Hopefully following issues will be void of this admin crap and the column will be packed with articles, items and photos of interest to all of us.

### Reunion 2004

A good turnout of members from the Company was seen in Tacoma, WA for the 2004 reunion in August. The V Corps contingent had over fifteen members pass through during the week of the convention. We were represented by members from coast to coast.



*Lee Farley in Memphis*

*Lee Farley elected to ride his motorcycle from Georgia to Tacoma, WA, via every old LRRP enroute for a meal or whatever. Lee planned on linking up with Ron Dahle in Leasburg, MO and follow along with Ron. The trip was on schedule having spent*

*Friday night, the 23<sup>rd</sup> of July, with Larry Montague in Memphis, Tenn. Having sponged supper off Larry, and replaced the two tires on his motorcycle trailer Lee took off for Leasburg, MO. Fate stuck it's tongue out at Lee in Herculaneum, MO by slamming Lee and his motorcycle into the pavement at the end of an off ramp. The nature of Lee's injuries was nebulous at best as diagnosed by the local emergency room. Ron Dahle and friend Ed P. showed up about 0030 Sunday morning to retrieve Lee and get him to Leasburg. Later Sunday morning Ron took Lee to Ft. Leonard Wood MO for a checkup in their emergency room. It was determined that Lee had a broken collarbone, and a sprained ankle. Lee got an*



## A/75 - D/17 LRP - V CORPS LRRP (CONTINUED)

appointment with an orthopedic specialist the next AM. Well the specialist determined that Lee had a broken collarbone, a broken ankle, and a bruise on his lower leg, which caused a degree of discomfort. In spite of all this the doctor cleared Lee to travel across country to the reunion. The next morning, Tuesday the 27<sup>th</sup> Lee and Ron accompanied by Zeus and Molly (Ron's dogs, we brought along to help with the map-reading) loaded up in Ron's Silverado, pulling a 26' travel trailer headed out two days behind schedule, but determined to make it.

On the 29<sup>th</sup> the caravan stopped to visit Roy Link at his spread near Deer Lodge, Montana. Roy's health is failing him at the present time. He hopes to make the next reunion at Ft Benning. Back on the road, now bound for Ron Bishop's place. In Spokane, WA. After a delightful night with the Bishop's we headed out for Tacoma, WA and arrived on schedule. According to Lee the only problem on the trip was Ron Dahle trying to hit on every waitress along the entire length of "The Lewis & Clark" trail, and an occasional pain in his lower leg (which got him renamed Grumpy). The reunion was great, the return trip uneventful with the exception of Ron figuring out how kill all the lights on his truck at 70 MPH in the pouring rain in the dead of night and not knowing how to turn them back on. Interesting!! By the way, on the 9<sup>th</sup> of Nov Lee went in for a check up and they discovered he also broke his right Fibula just below the knee. (Hence the unexplained discomfort, sorry Grumpy) Had that been discovered initially the trip would have been off.

## Taps

Kitty Keating, wife of Al Keating, Commo Platoon leader 1963-4 ish, passed away 4 August 2004. Our prayers and thoughts are with him.

## Sick Call

With the exception of Roy Link having heart problems and Lee Farley's motorcycle injuries the last two quarters has been extremely easy on us old soldiers. Our major problems are sounding more like nursing home issues, than what one would expect from a bunch of ex paratroopers. Ron Dahle is scheduled for knee replacement surgery on 7 December. Ron is hoping to get back in the woods by mid February at the latest.

## Company Photo



V Corps LRRP, 1963



## B/75 - C/58 LRP - VII CORPS LRRP

Unit Director - Mark L. Thompson



## 2004 RRA Reunion Update

Well, as I said in my last report, immediately following the reunion...

"If I left anybody out, the fault is solely mine... I tried to keep up and take notes, but the Hospitality Room refreshments impaired my note-taking ability at times."

Obviously that demurral was accurate. Got an email from Tim Leadbeater right after Patrolling was published reminding me of our conversation on the first day of the reunion.... Sorry 'bout that, Tim. If I omitted anyone else, please send me an email dopeslap to the address at the bottom of the article, and I will rectify the oversight in the future.

If anyone who plans to attend next year's reunion at Benning would like to volunteer to be the quasi-official unit photographer, please contact me, as I could sure use the help. A good photographer I am not.

### 2005 Reunion



The information that I have right now is that next year's reunion is tentatively planned for mid-July at Fort Benning. Watch the website or this space for future updates.

### B Company Sweatshirts, Reissued

Do you remember the black sweatshirts we used to wear to PT? Both Mike Hines and Christopherson showed up in August with theirs on. Cheryl Visel of Airborne Supply now has the patterns for the B Company sweatshirts and T-shirts, and will be able to provide them to all who are interested. Cheryl says she would be able to have them reproduced for us in either silkscreened or embroidered versions on both sweats and tees.

Her website can be found at:  
<http://www.airbornesupply.net/>

She had a large selection of various sweats, shirts, hats, rings, jewelry, and other items available at the reunion, and it was all good quality. She carries a large selection of military items, and offers VII Corps LRRP, B Company, and 75<sup>th</sup> RRA items to all past members at her site. If you don't own a computer, truck on down to the local

**B/75 - C/58 LRP - VII CORPS LRRP (CONTINUED)**

library and hop on one of the publicly-accessible computers to look her up, as well as the association website. If you don't have access to either one, call me or send me a USPS snail mail and I'll hook you up.

**VII Corps Reunion**

According to my sources, VII Corps is planning to have their own reunion in Washington D.C. this spring, date to be forthcoming. Anyone interested in attending should contact the President of the VII Corps LRRP Association, Kirk Gibson, at the address listed at the end of the unit article. I'm certain that if any of the C/58 or B Company guys were in the area and wanted to drop in that they would receive an appropriate welcome (although we might have to pony up for the beverage fund, being the junior folks in the AO). More info to follow.

**Website and Roster update**

By the time you read this, you will also have noticed the updated website, along with the additional "deceased" revisions to the roster. RIP. If anyone has any other information concerning unit members who are now deceased, please contact the unit director.

We also got several other good leads for more members of the company at the reunion. If you have seen the website, you know that hundreds of Rangers were members of this unit at various times, and we still haven't compiled a complete roster. We have located or contacted well over one hundred members to date, and this effort is ongoing. If you have any information about the current whereabouts of other members, please pass it on to us, and we will attempt to contact them, get their consent to add them to the contact and distribution list, and perhaps get them to join the association.

Also, please contact me with your email address if I do not already have it

**Memorial Tributes - redux**

Ed White and Richard Stutsman had a good idea... since we recently lost CSM Joe Gooden, Bill Wilson, and Melvin Stewart, and none of us is getting any younger, we want to establish a written memorial to all the deceased Rangers amongst us while we are still able to. Unfortunately, we have also determined that many of our past company members are now talking to the Big Ranger in the Sky. We will continue to update the website roster with the names of those we have determined to be deceased. If you have any anecdotes, remembrances or tributes you would like to make about any of them, please forward them to me and we'll find a place and a way to accommodate that.

**Ranger Regiment Association Membership**

In the last issue we related that a good idea was brought up at the membership meeting. That idea was that the Association send SASE renewal envelopes to all the annual members when their membership is about to expire, in order to make it as easy as possible to remember to renew every year.

According to Emmett, that SASE renewal (for which most of you reading this received an envelope between this issue of Patrolling and the last) was very successful, and did a great deal to increase membership. Emmett and other Life Members plan to use it as an easy reminder to contribute to the Christmas Fund, also. Just a thought.

As noted last time, Emmett related a good idea to all of us at the reunion. Every year for Christmas he asks his wife for \$100, and submits 4 annual memberships to the RRA on behalf of 4 other Rangers who are not yet members. If several of us do so, in a short time we could really increase our membership and let the other members of the units see the value of membership in the

Association, not the least of which is the arrival of this publication in your mailbox every quarter. I plan on doing that for my birthday and Christmas this year, and hope to help getting other members in contact with each other that way.

**VII Corps LRRP CD**

The LRRPs have put together a CD including unit histories, photos, copies of orders, etc. which is extremely well done. We would like to include the B Company material of the same nature, and are collecting it to include in the unit history CD. We are still looking for photos, copies of orders, unit history information, and any other things pertinent to the unit. We have already begun collecting quite a bit of this information, and would like to have all of you search through your footlockers and trunks for more that we can share. Anyone interested in a copy of the CD contact either Kirk Gibson (address at end) or Sam Rodriguez (through either Kirk or myself).

**Patrolling Magazine Information**

This publication of the Association is published quarterly, and one of the responsibilities of the unit director is to solicit, gather, and submit articles for Patrolling. Please briefly review this edition and any past editions and see what sorts of articles or contributions you all can make. By the way, all you guys who told me that articles were in the mill and soon to be forthcoming, it's time for me to hear from you.

Please consider sending me photos, articles, remembrances, and memorial tributes for publication. This magazine and association is yours, and the more input from all of you, the better it will represent all of you.

**CONTACTING US**

By the time you're reading this, Richard Stutsman and I should both have rectified our email difficulties and gotten back into posting unit updates, and the unit roster. Please call or email us with any questions relating to the Association, Patrolling magazine, or any other things you can think of. We'll do our best to help and answer all questions, and if we don't know the answer, we'll direct you to someone who does. Questions and information regarding VII Corps LRRPs are best directed to Kirk Gibson, except for submissions to the Patrolling magazine, which should come to me (don't worry, guys, I'll be pestering you, too...)

Until Next Time...

Thompson Out.

**B/75 & C/58 & VII Corps LRRP CONTACT INFO**

**Marc Thompson**

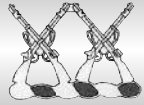
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**C/75 - E/20 LRP**  
Unit Director - Steve 'Doc' Gove



*No Submission*



**D/75**  
Unit Director - John Kingeter



*No Submission*



**E/75 - E/50 LRP - 9TH DIV LRRP**  
Unit Director - Robert Copeland



By Bob Copeland

Here I am once again and this time we are just over a month to go till Christmas and New Year 2005. I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year!! I recently returned from Manhattan, New York where I was able to enjoy a few Broadway Shows with my wife and daughter. The Lion King and the Producers were all that they said they would be and then some. If you happen to get to Times Square in Manhattan I would suggest you take in these two Broadway Showstoppers. We spent election week in New York and I am happy to say that all was quiet and New York's best NYPD did a great job of securing the AO. I am now looking forward to attending the Company Reunion in Orlando in May 2005. Don't forget to book your hotel room and send in your registration fee. The next event after the Company Reunion will be the 75th Ranger Regiment Assn. Reunion 2005 at Ft. Benning, Ga. The dates are not set yet but Emmett will let us know as soon as he receives them. I hope to see as many of the Company members and their families attend these events and of course have the biggest and best turnout ever.

With Christmas a little more than a month away, it is again time to dig deep as you are able, to support the Ranger Children's Christmas Fund. The Association intends to give each Battalion \$2,500 each this year for the Ranger Children to enjoy a good Christmas. Many of their fathers will be on deployment and will not be home to celebrate the festive season with them. Let's make this a Hooah Christmas for as many of our Ranger Warrior Brother's Children as we can, by donating what we can, to support them!! Send your donations and designate that they are for the Ranger Children's Christmas Fund to The 75TH RANGER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION INC., PO BOX 10970, BALTIMORE, MD 21234. We can't be there to fight beside them but we can support them by being there for their children and families. HOOAAH!!!!  
RANGER/LRP/LRRP LEAD THE WAY!!!!

I was given a gift for you all for Veteran's Day by Joan

Bellwood, on behalf of her son Erik Spink( the nephew of KIA Richard Bellwood and Grandson of Gold Star Mother Mrs.Catherine Colombi). Erik was requested to write a poem for school and did a superior job with a great deal of insight and sensitivity. The Poem is as follows:

**THE SOLDIER'S SACRIFICE**

By Erik R. Spink

A soldier lay restless on this sleepless night,  
his team leader comes in and says it is time to fight.

The soldier leaps up and grabs his gun,  
and in his other hand an ammo box that weighs a ton.

The soldier and his comrades cross over the enemy line,  
for one of them this night will be the last time.

They face the enemies with no fear,  
at home a mother tries to hold back a tear.

Suddenly the young soldier drops to the floor,  
soon a messenger would be knocking on the mother's door.

This soldier would make the ultimate sacrifice,  
but his comrades will make the enemy pay the price.

The soldier died so we can be free,  
but the fear he experienced no one should ever have to see.

So if you see a soldier today,  
thank him for the gift of freedom that lets us live this way.

I would like to thank Erik, on behalf of our RANGER/LRP/LRRP FAMILY for writing and sharing this excellent and meaningful poem and making a gift of this poem to



E/75 - E/50 LRP - 9TH DIV LRRP (CONTINUED)

us all for Veterans Day, by allowing me to publish it in this article for Patrolling and our Company Newsletter. Well done Erik!! I would also like to thank Joan Bellwood for passing Erik's poem along to me while I was in New York in a Veteran's Day Card which was addressed to me from Joan and Erik. Thankyou Joan and Erik for remembering me and your RANGER/LRP/LRRP FAMILY on Veteran's Day!! I would also like to thank Joan again for all her efforts in getting Halmark to produce Veteran's Day Cards in order to celebrate all Veterans on Veterans Day across the USA and abroad. HOOAAH!!!RANGER/LRP/LRRP FAMILY MEMBERS LEAD THE WAY!!!!

Our best wishes and prayers go out to all those who have been ill or in hospital. I would also like to pass on our deepest sympathy and condolences to Mrs. Spencer, the widow of Ronny Spencer who passed on in March of 2003. Jonesy has been in touch with Mrs. Spencer and Ronny's name has been added to

our memorial list.

In closing I would like to again wish all our unit members, their families, our extended RANGER/LRP/LRRP FAMILY and the Gold Star Mothers and Wives a VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND ALL THE BEST IN THE NEW YEAR 2005!!!!

To all our Ranger Warriors and the rest of the Special Operations Community and all those who serve in the Armed Forces and have gone in harms way we wish you God Speed, Good Hunting and a Safe return home to your families and friends. We wish you a VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR 2005!!!! HOOAAH!!! RANGER/LRP/LRRP LEAD THE WAY!!!!

Bob Copeland  
Unit Director



I sincerely hope all had a good Veterans Day and will have a very positively joyful holiday season. There are times that I make a call for help, someone will step up, and assist and this month that has happen again.

I met a few of very good men while I was working this Veterans Day. Some I knew, like Bill Mrkvicka and David Regenthal and we spend till the wee hours of the morning working on a project David started and that is to document our fallen comrades and hear some lighter personal moments while in the service; he even wants to carry it a step further by getting to know who we are now. Well I concur that this is a difficult project, however, very doable and will benefit many. I said I ran into a few very good men, well some others were John Chester, Jeff Sandell and some fellow Rangers just home from Iraqi Freedom. They were proud to have served and were thanking others for setting a standard for them to follow; I was very proud of theses Rangers they looked just like us with about 50 lbs less muscle or is that just good home cooking and less PT.

I know David and Bill are getting a newsletter out soon and I certainly look forward to having it arrive in our mail shortly. I would like to encourage all that may have some material to please submit something, no matter what the length of the material; it is important that we are all heard and not just a few. Our theme is getting all who may be thinking or not, to attend our re-unions, because they are so special. I also encourage those that have lapsed their membership to renew and if for some reason, you are not able to renew for financial reasons, please let me know and we can keep your membership active.

Our association President, Emmett has asked us to establish state coordinators for making contacts and a commitment to be available for any of our fallen comrades, we need to cover all the states and I do have an active list with only a couple of states that have good coverage.

I bid all a great New Year as I turn this month's piece over

to LRRP 1, Mark Ponzillo and a team photo submitted by Demos D. Johnson Jr.



### WHY REUNIONS???

I missed the last reunion in Seattle. My wife and I had planned from the get-go to attend. We had confirmed hotel reservations in the host hotel, airline tickets in hand and a few extra bucks saved for the trip. As the holder of the "F" Company original Guidon, I had already sent it [the Guidon] to the hotel. It is the one that was presented at the Colorado Springs [mini] reunion last October. You know, the one that was made in Vietnam and has "LRRP" in the center and ? Cavalry colors in the background. We were ready.

The evening before we were to fly to the west coast I

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received a call concerning a major medical emergency, in what's left of my family in upper state New York. My mother had suffered a stroke. We had to do some fancy ticket changing to get there as soon as possible. Most, if not all of the time we were traveling, attending to family matters and returning to Atlanta you guys, the reunion and the association was on my mind. Again, the question – why?

In early 1966, when the main body of the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division arrived [in country] and located at Cu Chi the requirement for intelligence about the enemy was paramount. I was in the process of transferring from the 10<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group, in Germany to the 5<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group located throughout Vietnam. I was pulled [reluctantly] from my orders and sent to the division without explanation. When I arrived in Cu Chi it was getting late, the sun was going down, I didn't know where I was, where or who I was suppose to report to. The only weapon I had was a very small 25 caliber automatic with one clip of ammo. All of a sudden a General officer appeared, welcomed me to the division and gave me a ride to the division headquarters area and said he would talk to me in a day or so. Two days later I was informed that I would be working for the division G2. Two days after that I was informed that the division needed a Reconnaissance qualified company commander for its Long Range Patrol Company. I was told the company was assigned to "D" Troop (Air) of the ? Cav. I didn't have the vaguest idea what kind of a unit that was. The next day I reported to the troop commander and told him I was his new Recon Company Commander. He looked at me like I was crazy, told me to get something to eat, made a couple of phone calls and found out what both of us did not know. There was no Recon Company – at all. He didn't know he was going to have it assigned to his unit; he didn't know who I was or what I was supposed to do. I told him I was also totally in the dark. He told me I wasn't the only one. I went back to the division headquarters and asked around "what the hell was going-on." I was told to wait. I did, and two days later I was called into the TOC directed to the G2 and briefed on the division's need for a Recon Company. I said there wasn't one in "D" Troop. I was then informed there wasn't one in the division and further told to go organize, develop, train, equip, and get one in operation ASAP. Mind you I was still walking around, in a combat zone, with only my trusty 25 caliber Colt automatic with one clip and seven rounds of ammo. So here I am without a [adequate] weapon, orders assigning to any unit and absolutely no understanding of the ins and outs of a "LEGG" Infantry Division. So I introduced myself to the supply sergeant of the division headquarters company, drew a M-16, a yellow legal pad of paper and something to write with. Folks, that's the true story of how we got started.

I told you that story because it's almost funny and a little pathetic. But from that simple beginning we, not one person but

"we" created one of the finest organizations in the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division and developed one of the greatest group of men I have ever had the privilege to know and for a very long time never knew. Why reunions? Listen up.

Several years ago my wife received a telephone call from someone who identified himself as a former member of the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Divisions' Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol Company (LRRP) (Provisional) and he wondering if I was the first company commander. When she told me I said it was probably a salesman looking to sell something to Vietnam Vets. I didn't return the call. About a week later I answered the phone (something I very seldom do) and was asked if I was "Captain" Ponzillo from the LRRP Company in 1966. I quarried the caller to make sure it wasn't a crank call. It wasn't. Since that day I

have had to privilege to revisit what we did both good and bad, and reunite with men who were ordinary solders who did extraordinary things, all of the time. The nature of our mission lent itself to special operations while supporting conventional units doing conventional things who had more than adequate administrative and logistical support. We didn't – at least initially.

Having said that I want y'all to know just how important our association is to me and I hope, to you. During the past several years I have enjoyed re-meeting some men who shared the hardship of creating a unit from scratch. And just as important was the meeting of the men who made the unit continue to be successful – very successful in the ensuing years of its existence. I have learned more about the people we were and more importantly the men we have become since getting together at Ranger Reunions. It is also wonderful to meet the families of such good men. Fore we are bound together by shared histories. That's why I wouldn't miss the next reunion for any reason

what so ever. I'll be there – I hope y'all can make it too.

I'm never sure when I write something if I have adequately conveyed my thoughts and feelings to whom I writing. Some times I'm not sure if I'm making the point I intended to make. During the Colorado Springs Reunion I can across someone else's words that express my feeling towards our reunions. I wish they [the words] were mine, they aren't – here goes:

**"These Good Men" By Michael Norman**

"I now know why men who have been to war yearn to reunite. Not to tell stories or look at old pictures. Not to laugh or weep. Comrades gather because they long to be with the men who once acted their best, men who suffered and sacrificed, who were stripped raw, right down to their humanity.

I did not pick these men. They were delivered by fate and the military. But I know them in a way I know no other men. I have never given anyone such trust. They were willing to guard something more precious than my life. They would have carried



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my reputation, the memory of me. It was part of the bargain we all made, the reason we were willing to die for one another.

I cannot say where we are headed. Ours are not perfect friendships; those are the province of legend and myth. A few of my comrades' drift far from me now, sending back only occasional word. I know that one day even these could fall silence. Some of the men will stay close, a couple, perhaps, always at hand.

As long as I have memory, I will think of them all, every day. I am sure that when I leave this world, my last thought will be of my family and my comrades ... such good men."

**If that won't get you to attend a reunion – I don't know what will.**

**NOTE:** You'll notice that I did not mention any one by name. There are just too many that are so important, to me and the association. Let's get the word out and see if we can set a record attendance at the next reunion.

In closing I'd like to say I heard someone else's words that I think fit. A retired World War II non-career Army Officer is quoted as saying when asked by one of his grand children "... Grand dad were you a hero in the war?" and he answered "... no, but I served with a bunch of them."

See ya next summer,

LRRP1



# LINEAGE, E51 and SPENCER KAROL

The unit represented by our E51 G75 LRRP/Ranger Association has had a distinguished history. The post-WWII history of the unit began when it was formed in December '66 and January '67 as the LRRP Detachment of the 196<sup>th</sup> Light Infantry

Brigade (the "196<sup>th</sup>LIB"), headquartered in Tay Ninh, Vietnam. Later in 1967, as the 196<sup>th</sup>LIB became part of Task Force Oregon, along with the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade, 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division (the latter later redesignated the 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade, 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division), the 196<sup>th</sup>LIB LRRP unit was reconstituted as E Co. (Long Range Patrol), 51<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment and eventually as G Co. (Ranger), 75<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, both of the Americal (23<sup>rd</sup> Infantry) Division. During the period during which the unit was active in Vietnam, the longest period of its dedicated service to the Nation was during its designation as E51. The unit has thus far produced two members of the US Army Ranger Hall of Fame from the Vietnam era – Robert Pruden (who was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor) and Vic Valeriano. The unit left

a remarkable legacy for those who followed. And so, it is with immense pride and a sense of familial continuity then that our membership can look to the work being done not only by the men and officers of the 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment, but also to the men and

officers of E Co. (LRCS), 51<sup>st</sup> Infantry (ABN) now serving in Iraq, and their many contributions to our Nation's global war against terrorism.

The inclusion of the new E51 LRS unit on the G Co. portion of the 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment Association website is intended to recognize the fact that E51 LRS is historically linked to our 196<sup>th</sup> LRRP, E51, G75 Ranger unit by proper military lineage – lineage reflecting the similarities of missions, SOPs, etc., and which has been recognized by the US Army. The men of the E51 LRS unit have embraced the veterans of our Vietnam-era unit in an extremely positive way that speaks to the importance of continuity and tradition

in the military. And the veterans of our E51 G75 Association clearly have a brotherly attachment to the men of the current E51 LRS. The men of the current E51 LRS continue to honor their predecessors by wearing bracelets bearing the names of our own





honored dead - see the story entitled “Embracing Memories” by Sgt. Kain Horn and Spc. Jeff Balduini, both formerly of E51 LRS under “Feature Article” on our E51 G75 website - [www.lrrpranger.org](http://www.lrrpranger.org) . The young warriors from E51 LRS named their annual competition and several of their base installations after Robert Pruden (MOH, Ranger HOF), a legendary veteran of our unit. Veterans of our



Association have visited with E51 LRS in Europe. It is not just that they bear the same unit designation as we did. It goes further than that. At our reunion in San Diego several years ago, the former CO of the new E51 LRS – Scott Nelson - spoke to our group, and made it clear that their current mission is the same basic mission as we undertook in Vietnam, and that the same spirit and commitment to the ideals exemplified by the Ranger community flow in a direct line from the men of the 196th LRRPs, E51, and G75 to the young men of E51 LRS.

In the current war on terrorism being waged by our Nation, E51 LRS is carrying a heavy load. E51 has been active in the Balkans – in Kosovo and Bosnia – where the unit played a major role in locating

Slobodan Milosevic. Since action commenced in Iraq (and even before that) E51 LRS, attached to the 165<sup>th</sup> Military Intelligence Battalion, was on the ground. Its first missions in Iraq are reported in some detail in “On Point” – see <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report-2004/onpoint/ch-4.htm>. And, since the run up to Baghdad, the unit has seen action on the borders of Iran, Syria and Saudi Arabia, and has run countless ambushes and local recons in support of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Armored Cavalry Regiment (the “3<sup>rd</sup>ACR”), the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division (the “3<sup>rd</sup>ID”), and the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division (the “4<sup>th</sup>ID”). To provide an idea of what the unit is doing, I’ve included below, an excerpt from an email that we received from Sgt. Travis Prohaska, formerly the Team Leader of E51’s team 1-6, in his own words, describing the team’s actions during the run up to Baghdad.

*“I am not sure exactly what you want to know about, but I will write a little bit about the first missions that went into enemy territory. I am not going to tell you about the other team missions because I was not there and everything thing I know about them is hearsay.*

*Before the war started, my team was one of 36 LRS teams. F Co. 51st from 18th Airborne LRS was attached to 165<sup>th</sup> (Military Intelligence Battalion) because 5th Corps was overall in charge, I believe. That is above my head in the politics. Out of our teams, there were three teams selected. SSG Barnwell’s, SSG Armstrong’s, and my team were selected to pull surveillance on the first three “NAIs” (Named Area of Interest) into enemy territory. All three teams’ areas were in the same area of Iraq. The NAIs were about 350 km into enemy territory. We planned for the mission for three days as practice because we were not sure when the war was going to start. Once we found out the war was going to start we went back into planning and planned for another 24 hours. We planned to stay out for five days, but it all depended on the rate that 3ID was moving. We had two CH-47 Chinook helicopters for the three teams. SSG Barnwell and Armstrong’s team were on one and my team was on*

the other. My team inserted about 7 kms from our tentative hide site. Once we were off the aircraft we pulled "SLLS" (stop, look, listen, smell) and then proceeded on azimuth to our tentative hide site. In route we ran into dogs. We were following a small ditch. The dogs followed us all most all the way to our hide site. Each man's rucksack weighed at least 125 pounds so the moving was slow, but we tried to pick up the pace because we were a little behind schedule, since the aircraft had to take off late due to mechanical problems. Once we made it to our hide site we started digging in. We were able to develop a good plan on where to set our hide site because our operations sergeant - SFC Freeborg - was able to give us line of site imagery which showed us where we could set our hide site and see the objective with no problems. The usual hide site is about two and a half feet deep. Because of the rocky soil we were only able to get about one and a half feet down in only a few places. The site was completed right about sunrise. As soon as we were in the site SPC Rieman looked at me and told me we had enemy. None of us could believe it because this was our first mission and it was something that you only dream about (to do your job in combat). All day we had a lot of enemy activity. We had problems relaying this information back to the unit HQ because the HF (high frequency) was not working and the SATCOM (satellite communication) channel was so busy that we were unable to get anything through. We did contact the Air Force and asked them to relay to our unit that we were having communication problems, but the mission was still a go. Throughout the day we had a few farmers come near our site. One farmer's sheep came right up to our site. We were worried that the sheep were going to step on the site and collapse it since it was only made of PVC piping with a bed sheet spread over the top. That night we had enemy soldiers come within 100m of the site many times and a few times the enemy came within 1 or 2 meters of the site. I know that 100 meters does not sound close to the men who served in Vietnam, but the desert is a much different environment. Throughout the night enemy soldiers on foot and in civilian vehicles circled all around our site. Late that night, and early morning we heard a few gunshots off in the distance. When the sun came up we saw

around 60 enemy loading into seven trucks preparing to head south to attack 3rd ID. We still did not have communication with our HQ so we sent this information up through the Air Force located at the Corps HQ. The information was dispersed and within a few minutes aircraft were bombing the area. The 3rd ID pushed forward and engaged in about 8 to 10 hour firefight one to two kilometers south of our position. Once 3rd ID had the situation under control and they moved through our area, E51's LNO that drove with 3rd ID from Kuwait led by CPT Kapla came up to our site and picked us up. After we were picked up, we drove a few miles south to an area to wait for aircraft to fly us back to Kuwait. While we were waiting I had the privilege to talk to a few of the men from 3rd ID. They told me that the information that we sent up saved lives. Because of that information 3ID changed their movement formation and put the tanks and Bradley's up front instead of the light skinned HMMWV.

*I trusted the men in my team 100 percent before the mission. The team had worked together for about one and half years before the war with the exception of one, who only worked with the team for about six months before the war.*

*Even though I am now in Florida with 6th Ranger Training Brigade and not with E51, I still try and keep in contact with my team. SSG Solomon is still with E51 and is now a team leader. SGT McGlone is with the 10th Mountain Division. He also served a few months in Afghanistan after his time in Iraq. SGT Rieman after being hospitalized for gunshot and shrapnel wounds is now in the 82nd. SPC Decker is now with 101st and is planning on coming through Ranger school soon. SPC McAllister is still with E51 and will get out of the army in a few months and go back to work with his father in Massachusetts.*

*Thanks!*

*Rangers Lead The Way,  
Travis Prohaska"*

But where there is great courage, valor, and gallantry, there is sometimes great sorrow and great loss. The

## G/75 - E/51 LRP - 196TH LRRP (CONTINUED)



deep and meaningful expression “freedom is not free” is in danger of becoming overused by well-meaning reporters. But for those families and friends of the dedicated Armed Forces who have sacrificed their lives serving our Nation in Afghanistan and Iraq, the meaning is, sadly, all too clear. One of those who lost his life was Spc. Spencer T. Karol, and his death is a loss, not only to his family, but also to his extended E51 family. Spencer Karol died on October 6, 2003. He was 20 years old and hailed from Woodruff, Arizona. He had attended nearby Holbrook High School. He leaves his parents and several brothers. He was planning to be married and leaves a fiancée. Spc. Karol was one of the young patriots and warriors in E51 LRS. He was a member of Team 2-1 led by Ssg. Dominik Kepa.

Spencer Karol was killed doing the job for which he was trained and the job he wanted to do. He developed a reputation for accepting the toughest missions in a platoon that routinely made enemy contact. On October 6, 2003, Spc. Karol’s team was asked to take on a clandestine insertion in the vicinity of Hit, Iraq, in a civilian vehicle – a white SUV. The members of the 5-man Team 2-1 on October 6 were: Ssg. Dominik Kepa (TL); Pfc. Michael Records; Spc. Diehn; Sgt. Nickolas Williams (ATL); and Spc. Spencer Karol. Though the team was tired from a lengthy return trip from near the Syrian border, the team agreed, as Ssg. Kepa put it, “you can never be too tired to take out more garbage.” The objective that night was to infiltrate an abandoned compound adjacent to a frequently used convoy route outside Hit, setting up an observation/listening post, and destroying any enemy elements attempting to place

“IEDs” (improvised explosive devices) on the convoy route before breaking contact and calling in Predator elements from the 3rdACR to finish the job, if necessary. The abandoned compound selected had been used by another team some time before. Sgt. Williams drove the vehicle, and Ssg. Kepa rode shotgun. Spc. Records and Spc. Diehn rode in the back seat, with Spc. Karol providing rear security in the back, carrying his M-249. Unknown to the team, the road leading to and from the compound was mined with IEDs, and one was detonated as the team’s vehicle passed over it. The vehicle hit the IED which capsized the vehicle. Spc. Karol was thrown from the vehicle and killed. Three other members of the team were also injured – Sgt. Williams had a large wound on his left arm (although he was subsequently able to carry Spc. Diehn); Spc. Diehn had his back broken in three places; and Spc. Records was severely wounded in the back and legs. The team’s communication equipment was destroyed in the blast, and the team was unable to contact its “QRF” (quick reaction force). Most of the team’s weapons had also been destroyed, even their small arms. Ssg. Kepa collected and secured the team, the wounded, and Spc. Karol’s body. He then proceeded to commandeer a civilian vehicle – a white pickup truck. Ssg. Kepa carried the body of Spc. Karol and Sgt. Williams carried Spc. Diehn to the truck. Spc. Records was able to move under his own power. They then loaded the truck, and began the over one-hour trip back to the base. Ssg. Kepa realized that the team, having left a friendly position in a white SUV, only to return in a different vehicle without working communication equipment, would not simply be able to drive up to the gates of the base without challenge or even potential fire from the base. He stopped well short of the gate and walked without weapons from the vehicle to the gate to identify his team. Later, when QRF elements from the 3<sup>rd</sup>ACR secured the site of the explosion, they found a stockpile of explosives intended to be used in other IEDs. They were able to ascertain that the IED that was used to destroy Team 2-1’s vehicle was likely to have been two stacked anti-tank mines.

Spencer Karol represented an important link over the bridge of 35 years or so of military history from our unit to theirs, as well as an ideal of service to the nation and volunteerism that the members of our unit

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cherish, as does the service of all the men and officers of E51. Through his commitment to his team; the fact that he took on his team's toughest tasks; and by wearing the E51 "colors", Spc. Karol honored the traditions of our unit in Vietnam. He was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star and the Purple Heart for his actions during the encounter. Spc. Karol's teammates who were also badly injured in the explosion that took Spc. Karol's life will recover from their wounds.

On December 10, 2003, another 3 men of E51 were caught in an ambush triggered by another IED. One lost his leg, another took shrapnel to his face, and the last took three shots to the chest. All will survive. The man who lost his leg told his CO – Capt. Patrick Grow - "I'm glad it was me, and not one of the married guys."

Just through last October, E51 had had 10 wounded in action.

What with writing articles for "Patrolling," as

well as our unit Association's own newsletter – "Sua Sponte" - it's at times difficult to come up with a subject to write about, or to find the time. This time it was easy. The men of E51 are doing the heavy lifting, and their story deserves to be told.

**GOD WATCH OVER OUR ARMED FORCES, THE MEN AND OFFICERS OF THE 75<sup>TH</sup> RANGER REGIMENT, THE MEN AND OFFICERS OF E51 LRS, AND ESPECIALLY, MAY GOD BLESS SPENCER T. KAROL.**

Thanks to all who helped me gather info for this piece – particularly Capt. Patrick Grow, Ssg. Dominik Kepa, and Ssg. Travis Prohaska for their help, and for providing me with their insights. Thanks to Ssg. Dominik Kepa for the photos.

**TOM NASH**



**H/75 - E/52 LRP - 1ST CAV LRRP**

**Unit Director - William Anton**



Greetings Fellow Rangers,

I can not believe how fast time flies. It seems like it was just last month that we were in Milwaukee for the reunion and here it is November already. There has been a lot going on lately. On September 17<sup>th</sup> I went to Kokomo, IN for the 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Viet Nam Veteran's Reunion put on by the Kokomo Viet Nam Veterans. It's a three day event which draws over 20,000 Viet Nam Veterans from all over the country and it's one big party! I was met there by fellow Rangers Forest DECKER, Rex McELROY, and Richard GASAWAY and his wife Barbara. We had a great time at night sitting around the camp fire telling lies. Richard invited me to hunt with him on opening weekend of bow season for deer. Richard has 80 acres in Southern Indiana that has some of the best deer and turkey hunting in the area. He gave me the directions but I didn't look at them. I only live about two hours from there. No problem, right? I can read a map. Oh yeah, I'm a ranger, wrong! His road was not even on the map! So I looked at his directions: 'Look for the cemetery on the left and turn right between the two farm houses.' Well I found the road, if that's what you want to call it! Glad I had a four wheel drive



truck because I had to go a mile down the lane and through a creek before I got to his place. We had a great weekend and saw a lot of deer. I was able to take a nice six point buck. Richard wanted to know why I didn't wait for a bigger buck. I told him

any deer taken with a bow is a trophy to me! We made plans to turkey hunt next spring. Now all I have to do is find a way to get him to the Ranger reunion in June.

I got a call from Stan FREEBORN saying he was going to have a surprise 50th birthday party for his wife Danita. So on October 9<sup>th</sup> Jeannie and I headed for Iowa. Also there was Rex McELROY and his wife JULIE. We ended up having a mini reunion that weekend. Danita was surprised about the party and we got to see Rex and Julie. Now all I need to do is try to get Rex to the next reunion.

Once again we're having our annual pheasant hunt in Iowa over Veterans Day weekend. At this time I do not know who's going to attend. But if it's anything like the last six year's the pheasant will win out and we'll have some good stories to tell about Bob GILL!

After the last newsletter I got a surprise call from Danny MILLER (67-68). I had not talked

to Danny in over 30years. For a few years after Nam Danny and I lived down the street from each other. Then both of us moved

H/75 - E/52 LRP - 1ST CAV LRRP (CONTINUED)

and we lost touch. Then he saw the pictures of the officers in the newsletter, and he had to give me a call to say how old I looked and that we didn't look like that in Nam! Danny now lives in Huntington, IN which is about an hour and a half away. We're trying to make plans to get together sometime yet this year.

By the way, I heard David KLIMEK retired and is traveling the East Coast playing golf and looking up some of his old team. Way to go David.

Now if I could get some of you guys to let me know what's going on, it would make writing a lot easier. Our roving ambassador, Benny GENTRY recently had surgery and will be off the road for

awhile. Everyone should be feeling sorry for his wife, Sandy!! Start making your plans to attend the reunion in Killeen, TX. The dates are June 22 – 26, 2005.

With Veterans Day and the Holiday's coming up we should take time to remember our men and women serving our country and remember with out their sacrifice, we would not be free. Please say a prayer for their safe return.

Until the next time,

Lawrence M. Curtis  
Rangers Lead The Way



I/75 - F/52 LRP - 1ST DIV LRRP  
Unit Director - David Hill



By Dave Hill

Unit Director: 1<sup>st</sup> Inf. Div. LRRP-F Co./52<sup>nd</sup> Inf. (LRP)-I Co./75<sup>th</sup> Inf. (Ranger)

As you read this, Veterans Day 2004 will have been long past. I hope you took the opportunity to attend a Veterans Day parade or other type observance and to proudly show your colors. I attended such an observance in Danville, California. In addition to the talks delivered (one by a Marine major recently returned from a combat tour in Iraq), and patriotic songs, a memorial dedication was made. In June 2004 I had joined Vietnam Veterans of the Diablo Valley. Ten years ago, this organization had embarked upon a mission to build an "All Wars Memorial", raising nearly a half-million dollars over the past ten years to accomplish it. On Veterans Day 2004, the memorial, now nearing completion, was officially dedicated in Danville's Oak Hill Park. Standing there in the rain with a couple of hundred other veterans and fellow citizens, we looked upon the new memorial with great pride and with the hope that its creation will ensure that even generations yet unborn will never forget the sacrifices made by America's men and women in all the wars since our nation's inception. It is up to us veterans, who along with those we lost, have borne the strife and scars of battle, to pass along to each new generation what we can about that experience. Only then can we be sure that the sacrifices made by our brave warriors, past and present, will never be forgotten.

As I have in the past, in this issue I want to provide some insight into our unit's history in Vietnam. Our LRRP/LRP/Ranger units constantly varied and refined our patrolling strategies and tactics. Team sizes ranged from 4-man recon and up to 12-man "heavy/hunter-killer" teams. All sorts of missions were envisioned and carried out by one or more teams. Various weapons and weapons systems—of both US and foreign manufacture—were tried and evaluated. Various fire and air support schemes were employed, seeking to optimize their

effectiveness for our teams. Experimentation was a constant in the unit, as stagnation and predictability could prove fatal for the teams. This time I would like to tell a story about an experiment conducted in 1968 in the Big Red One—that of trying to use a scout dog team to walk point for a team of the 1<sup>st</sup> ID's Long

Range Patrol unit, Co. F/ 52<sup>nd</sup> Inf. (LRP). I know the story well, as I lived it.

From March through May of 1967, following my training in AIT as an 11Charlie (mortar crewman), I was assigned along with others from my AIT class, to Ft. Benning, Georgia's Scout Dog Handler school. This school had trained hundreds of scout dog handlers since 1965 and deployed them to each of the US Army and Marine Corps divisions and independent brigades in Vietnam since the introduction of large infantry units into the war. Most of us had had pet dogs growing up; some (particularly big-city guys) had not. We were each assigned German Shepherd dogs, and as a handler-dog scout team, underwent 12-weeks of training preparatory to our

assignment to an infantry unit in Vietnam. That is where I was introduced to my black-and-tan, "Rex", serial number "OK09". Like everything and everybody in the Army, even the dogs had their own serial numbers. The course began on main post, near the Infantry OCS and Jump School, with 2-weeks of training our dogs (and us) in basic obedience and conditioning (yes, even the dogs had to have PT). This included teaching them to low-crawl, go through obstacle courses, and to respond to hand-signals. Instructors would also surprise the dogs with small explosions and fire blanks over our heads to get the dogs accustomed to the noises of battle (how far from reality that turned out to be was not then known to us).

The last 10-weeks phase of the training was spent entirely in the field, living in tents along the Chattahoochee River, which, along with its tributaries, ran through the huge Ft. Benning maneuver area.

Gone were the "choke chains", replaced now by scouting



“harnesses” for the dogs. When the scouting harness went on, our dog knew it was time to scout, time to work. German Shepherds, with their high intelligence, strength, durability and keen senses of smell, sight and sound, were ideal scout dogs. Their natural capabilities, curiosity, and protective instincts regarding their surroundings had only to be honed and encouraged by the training. Mainly it was we, the scout dog handlers, who needed to be “trained” to recognize when the dog would alert to the presence of humans in the surrounding woods (eventually jungle) and thin trip wires stretched across our path and attached to the firing mechanism of a booby trap. “Aggressor” troops were planted deep in the woods of our training patrol area and we and our dogs learned to spot them and take prescribed actions. Rex’s “alert” was easy to pick up, as his ears would shoot up and he would stop and stare at the source of the noise, or his nose would come up and in the direction from which he was picking up a human scent. He would then strain at his harness toward the intruder, his natural aggression piqued. Our job was then to “hit the dirt”, pointing in the direction of imminent contact to the soldiers walking “shotgun” behind us. This practice was repeated each day of those nearly three months in the piney woods and swamps of Ft. Benning. We patrolled day and night at Benning, honing our scouting skills, learning to live in the field and weather, and in a sense getting “pre-acclimated” for our assignments in Vietnam (or as much as any stateside training could accomplish that). We and the dogs became fused as a team, many of us taking that same dog with us to our unit in Vietnam [I was one of the lucky ones in that regard]. Others would have to leave behind the dog with which they had trained and again undergo that unique bonding with a dog assigned to them from their new unit after they had arrived in Vietnam. I have always regarded those twelve weeks at Benning as some of the best possible infantry training a young soldier could get prior to going into combat. However, as with any training, it could not possibly prepare us for “the real thing”. An entirely new set of battle-proven skills would eventually have to be learned the only way it ever could be—in actual combat.

Upon arrival at 90<sup>th</sup> Replacement Battalion in Long Binh, I



*Sgt. Dave Hill and Scout Dog Rex, Lai Khe, Vietnam, July 1968.*

and three buddies from Scout Dog School were assigned to 41<sup>st</sup> Infantry Platoon (Scout Dog), 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division. The unit was based then in Phouc Vinh, Phouc Long Province, about 50 kilometers northeast of Saigon. After two weeks of in-country orientation (and renewed bonding for those guys who were assigned new scout dogs upon arrival), we went on our first assignments walking point for various line infantry units of the 1<sup>st</sup> Bde. An experienced scout dog team was sent along to get us “cherries” through our initial baptism of combat. Rex and I at first went on small sweeps in support of Operation Billings, as well as other, independent “search and destroy” missions. Our first big operation was the full divisional operation, “Shenandoah II”, conducted northwest of Hwy 13, the so-called “Thunder Road”. During the course of the next six months, Rex and I walked point for each of the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade’s three line battalions (1/2 Inf., 1/26 Inf. and 1/28 Inf.), as well as those of the 2<sup>nd</sup> (based in Di An) and 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigades (based in Lai Khe). The mode of employment of the scout dog teams was to assign one or two each to a line company. Search and destroy sweeps were conducted in rice paddy areas, rubber plantations and (mostly) the thick double- and triple-canopy jungles of War Zones C and D. For the most part, the infantry companies would use a route formation comprised of a main column (holding the command group), with a flank security column on each side of it, coming “on-line” abreast or otherwise maneuvering only if contact was made or a clearing had to be crossed. Generally, Big Red One line infantry units used a “scouts-out” formation comprised of an 8-10 men unit 50-75 meters in advance of the main column. Rex and I would walk the point for that element, so Rex could have clear vision and scent to our front and sides. One man would be assigned to walk “slack”, just behind me, covering us and providing his own experienced human eyes and ears up front, as my focus would be entirely on Rex’s ears and nose. While we could generally move much quieter than the main body and flankers, it was still not quiet enough as far as I was concerned. In addition, the relatively noisy main body was itself not so far behind us that people would not hear us coming, yet in some situations it was too far behind to get quickly up to support us. As the term implies, “search and destroy” sweeps were intended to get the infantry into the heart of the Viet Cong (VC) or North Vietnamese Army (NVA) lairs. The mission was to find them, fix them in place and “pile on” with more infantry and supporting artillery and air strikes. Since their (enemy) base-camps had to be concealed from the prying eyes of American helicopter and fixed wing aircraft, they were necessarily always hidden in the thickest of jungle. That meant “jungle-busting”. Large formations of American troops, forced to move through thick cover, just cannot seem to do so quietly. Aside from the noise just from forcing their way through the vines or bamboo, point elements sometimes literally had to cut their way through with machetes. So while we could penetrate virtually any terrain, the VC and NVA must have always known we were coming their way. The initiative was therefore virtually always theirs and they could either temporarily vacate the premises, melting away ghost-like, or provide a vicious reception to the infantry. Since

## I/75 - F/52 LRP - 1ST DIV LRRP (CONTINUED)

most initial contact would likely come against or be initiated by our scout element, the “pucker” factor (that survival instinct heralded by the world’s tightest sphincter muscles) was high and a constant for us. But like most soldiers, in all wars, we got used to it and carried on with the mission. At any rate, Rex and I continued to scout for the line units and survived that first part of my tour and, ultimately, that is what counted.

After six months of walking point for the infantry, my life was about to take a tremendous turn. In late February 1968, about three weeks after the start of the nationwide Tet Offensive, my platoon leader called me into his hootch to discuss a “special assignment”. It seems that Division had determined that



*Some of Teams Wildcat 1 and 2: Kneeling, L-R, TL Ronnie Luse, John Mills; Standing L-R, Dave Hill, Bill Cohn, Roger Anderson; Phu Loi, Vietnam, May 10, 1968.*

pairing a scout dog team with a long range patrol team might serve to provide the LRRPs with greater security and increased reconnaissance capabilities. [Based on my later experiences, whoever generated this concept and directive: a) did not know how LRRPs truly operated; b) did not know the capabilities and limitations of a scout dog team; or, c) either of the above. But in February 1968, that was yet to be determined.]

My commanding officer told me that the order had come down from Division to send a scout dog team to F Co./52<sup>nd</sup> Inf. (LRP), the division’s long range patrol company. By that time of my tour, I was a squad leader and one of the 41<sup>st</sup>’s most experienced dog handlers, so he told me that he was giving me first crack at volunteering to go the LRRPs. He noted that going to the LRRPs was on a strictly voluntary basis, as that was the only way they (LRRPs) operated. He told me what little he (or most people) knew about the LRRPs, what they did and how they operated in small teams, performing reconnaissance and ambush missions. He himself wore a Ranger tab, so he was more familiar than most with at least the tactical aspects of their job. I knew little about them myself, but had seen a team on an operation south of the Iron Triangle, near a village called Bao Bang. They had gone out with us on a sweep one day, but had not returned with us to our night defensive position (NDP), instead dropping off to conduct their own “stay behind” ambush

mission. About 3 hours after sunset, we heard several loud explosions and a short but high-volume exchange of M-16 and AK fire from the general area they had dropped out of formation earlier that afternoon. About two hours later, I saw the team come running into our perimeter, out of breath, sweaty and still pumped on adrenaline. They had hit a small VC patrol which been heading the direction of our NDP, then cleared the area before enemy reinforcements could arrive. They were the only LRRPs I had seen to that point, but I had been duly impressed by this initial contact. I was to find that such ambushes common, and the hallmark of our teams. Reconnaissance was only one of their many roles. I would soon find that taking the fight to the enemy in some form was the norm for LRRP teams, rather than the exception.

I was still pretty “gung ho”, ready for a change, and tired of the endless sweeps and all too often coming up empty-handed, despite our best efforts. I knew there had to be a more efficient, productive way to fight a war. This elite unit seemed the way to go for me. I had no idea if Rex and I could achieve what Division had envisioned, but we would give it our best shot.

The next day, Rex and I, with a crate of dog food, were on a Huey and headed down to the Co. F/52<sup>nd</sup> Inf. (LRP) base in Lai Khe (1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, by that time having been moved to our new base camp in Quan Loi, about 80 kilometers north of Saigon). Co. F First Sergeant Morton took me in to meet with Captain Price, the F Co. commanding officer, and I was briefed on our assignment, which was a wholly new concept to him as well. To ensure that the concept got a fair trial, he assigned us to one of his most experienced Team Leaders (TL) and teams, call sign “Wildcat 2”, lead by Sgt. Ronnie Luse, and comprised of his Assistant Team Leader (ATL), Sgt. Robert “Paul” Elsner, Sp4 Bill Cohn, Sp4 Allen Coleman and Sp4 John Mills. At the time I arrived, the team was on R&R together (doing everything as an intact team), so I got settled into their hootch, cared for Rex, drew some ammo and went down to the range with my CAR-15 carbine for some always needed weapons practice, and waited. When the team returned, I briefed them and Captain Price on scout dogs, how the scout dog team worked on point, and generally our capabilities. Then it was their turn. Ronnie Luse and the rest of the team got me squared away and equipped, and I began my on-the-job (OJT) training. There was a lot to be learned in a short time. While I had walked point in the infantry for the previous six months and had been in action during that time, it was in a totally different kind of war from the one I was just entering as a LRRP. Resolute, relatively noisy slogging through rice paddies and jungle was soon to be replaced by silent, deadly stalking, and without the accompaniment of a platoon or more of men behind me. Luse and all of the rest of the team had come originally from line infantry units also, but since joining Division LRRPs (which later became F Company), they had attended and graduated from the excellent MACV, Special Forces-operated Recondo School in Nha Trang. They had conducted dozens of successful long-range patrol missions throughout III Corp (the military region north of Saigon and south of the Central Highlands), and it was upon their experience and leadership that I would depend to get me trained and up to

## I/75 - F/52 LRP - 1ST DIV LRRP (CONTINUED)



*Some of Teams Wildcat 1 and 2: L-R, Dave Hill, Scout Dog Rex, TL Jackie Leisure, John Mills, TL Ronnie Luse, Bill Cohn; Phu Loi, Vietnam, May 9, 1968.*

speed so that Rex and I would be an asset and not a hindrance or danger to their team's operations. The next two weeks were spent in training in Immediate Action (IA) drills, map-reading and land navigation, communications, how to direct air and artillery support, patrolling, use of a variety of weapons and a myriad of other skills. [Being an experienced infantryman point man and trained as a mortar crewman, I knew the basics of many of these, but my current skill set had to undergo a quantum upgrade in a hurry to survive as a LRRP.] We conducted most of the training either in the company area or just outside Lai Khe's perimeter. My previous training and combat experience seemed to have prepared me to take this next big step, and Luse, the team and I believed that I was catching on quickly. Training to be a LRRP and actually being one, however, were two entirely different things. Only the crucible of combat as a LRRP would prove whether I could make the cut. My life and those of Rex and the rest of the team would depend on my getting all the preparation and knowledge possible prior to my first mission. Finally, "crunch time". We got a warning order to conduct a short-range patrol, the team walking out from Lai Khe to a recon area south of the village of Ben Cat. We were to conduct a reconnaissance of the area, setting up an ambush that night, and returning the next day. Neither me, the team, nor the Army really knew how the dog (or his handler) would act in the field with the relatively small LRRP team. Respect in the LRRPs had to be earned, it could not just be issued.

1<sup>st</sup> Sergeant Morton, who often went out with the teams as a team member, had also decided to join us to get a first-hand account of how the first "dog-team" mission went that night. Though Luse, as was customary, would still be the Team Leader, having a tough, straight-shooting "First Shirt" along was a welcome addition and much appreciated by us all. I put Rex's working harness on him, whispered "Scout" in his ear, and we departed the Lai Khe perimeter in late afternoon, headed toward our recon area. We moved along at a discrete pace, with Rex and me on point, as rehearsed. The patrolling went smoothly enough, only coming across a commo wire (attached to nothing), but no

people, on the way to our Remain Overnight (RON) and ambush position for the night. Rex moved along in his accustomed position quietly, though, as usual, straining at his harness. Finally, we settled into position, alongside a well-used trail between Ben Cat village and the working rice-paddies to its south. Being concerned that Rex might inadvertently bark or make some other unwanted noise, I remained awake throughout the night, reassuringly petting his back, but ready to clamp my hand over his snout in a hasty muzzle, should the need arise. In the murky half-light just before dawn, I felt Rex come up off the ground to his feet, straining at the leash and beginning to make a small rumbling sound in his throat. I quickly clasped his mouth closed and whispered "No!" into his ear. I reached out with my foot to touch Luse and get his attention. Somebody or something was coming down the trail toward us from the direction of Ben Cat. The whole team was alert now and ready for action. In just a few moments we first heard, then saw, a water buffalo pulling a cart with an old man upon it, approaching our ambush. We waited until they were right beside us before jumping out onto the trail and surrounding them. Rex also lunged directly toward the old man, scaring both him and the buffalo—neither of whom had been aware of the team's presence. This was not the enemy, but instead an old villager prematurely headed out to his rice paddy to do the day's work. He should have known better, as the civilian populace knew that they traveled between the hours of sunset and sunrise at their peril. Having established that our captive was a non-combatant and released him, but with the team's presence now compromised, the team moved off about a hundred meters and Luse called the contact into the F Co. Tactical Operations Center (TOC). The team was directed to their pickup point along a nearby highway, where were to be picked up by the company deuce-and-a-half truck and returned to Lai Khe. We took some sporadic sniper fire before the truck showed up, but it was long-distant and inaccurate and the mission ended with the pickup later that morning.

As we were debriefed by Capt. Price and 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. Morton, and upon Ron Luse's after action assessment, it was decided that, while Rex got a bit excited during the contact, he had not compromised the team and had even alerted it to the approaching cart. They decided that my performance had also been up to snuff. So, upon Ron Luse's recommendation, the "experiment" would continue with the next team mission. Having Luse's support was the key and sole determinant of whether Rex and I would stay on the team, and it was a real boost for me that he and my other teammates wanted us to stay. We ran a few more "overnighters" near Lai Khe, and each went well enough, but no contact was made and the concept seemed to be working so far.

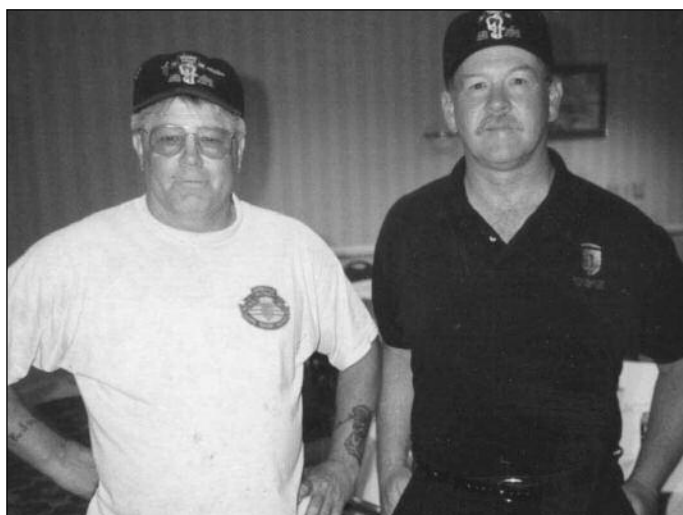
Our next series of missions were to be run out of the large 1<sup>st</sup> Division base-camp of Phu Loi. Phu Loi, located about 30 kilometers north of Saigon, was home to DivArty, the division's artillery command, as well as its armored and air cavalry unit, 1<sup>st</sup> Sqdn/4<sup>th</sup> Cavalry, known throughout the Big Red One as the "Quarterhorse". Our team was to run overnight ambushes in the rice paddies and wood lines that surrounded the base. The area around Phu Loi, with its vast rice paddies, had been the site of

## I/75 - F/52 LRP - 1ST DIV LRRP (CONTINUED)

heavy fighting, particularly during Tet 1968, and known to be a transit point for VC and NVA units moving southward into the Saigon area for attacks. Luce's team, Wildcat 2, had spotted an enemy regiment moving toward Phu Loi on the first night of Tet, Jan. 31, 1968, and rained heavy artillery and mortar strikes upon it, prematurely triggering its intended attack upon Phu Loi. So it was familiar territory to Luse and most of the rest of the team.

Because of its open terrain, most of our patrolling and ambushing would be at night. This was a "high risk" area, and the first real test of the dog team-LRRP team concept. It was to be a real eye-opener for all of us. No enemy contact was made the first two nights and all seemed to be going okay, at least for short-range patrolling with the dog. However, on the third try, things turned out differently. The team had been standing down for the night. But about 2000 hours that night, a Phu Loi security platoon ambush near the village of Tan Phu Kahn, about two kilometers outside of Phu Loi, had gone awry. The Americans had themselves walked into a small ambush and had taken some casualties. Quarterhorse had been sent out of Phu Loi with tanks and armored cavalry vehicles (ACAVs) to rescue the security unit. Since they were known to be so vulnerable themselves to rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) attacks at night, Team 2 was tasked with trying to screen the armor. By placing ourselves in the rice paddies northeast of the village, with our "starlight" (night vision) scope, the armored unit hoped we might intercept or warn of any VC/NVA rocket teams sneaking up on the tanks and ACAVs. It was deathly still out in our part of the rice paddies, not even any breeze was stirring the hot, humid night. Then it happened! One of the team, in changing position, had inadvertently stepped on Rex's tail. Hurt and startled, he let out a horrendous yelp and a couple of loud barks before I could grab and muzzle him. As quiet as that paddy had been just moments before, it seemed to us that Rex could have been heard for miles, and we knew there were enemy soldiers a lot closer to us than that from what had happened in Tan Phu Khanh earlier that night. There was no possible confusing his fierce barking for one of the mutts that seemed to roam all villages in Vietnam. For a LRRP team, letting its presence be known before it wanted was nearly the worst possible situation, and could prove fatal. I got Rex under control and we hunkered down, tensely listening for any movement around us, expecting shots or RPGs to be heading our way at any moment. Fortunately, nothing was heard around us. We quickly, carefully and quietly moved a hundred meters back toward Phu Loi. When we got word that the armored cavalry had completed its rescue and was headed back into Phu Loi, we headed back into the base-camp ourselves.

As soon as we got back to our temporary hootch, we had a team meeting and assessed what had happened. No malice was directed toward Rex or me. I think that we all realized that, after all, he was a dog (albeit a highly trained one), and his natural reaction was just that. However, we all realized and acknowledged that had the incident occurred with contact imminent, we might not have been able to walk away from it. A decision was made on the spot that we could not use Rex at night under any circumstances. That also precluded, of course, any long-range patrols. But that did not apply to me, and Ron asked me to stay on the team as a regular member. He had personally



*Dave Hill and Roger Anderson at Savannah 2000 Ranger Reunion.*

trained me and knew I could do the job. We would leave Rex behind in Phu Loi, but not me. I knew that in the LRRPs, I had found what I wanted to do for the rest of my tour, and I quickly accepted his proposition. No way was I voluntarily going back to my previous job in the infantry. I had by now figured out the "LRRP way" was the best way for me to fight this war. I would remain as permanent member of Team Wildcat 2 and Rex would take some well-earned R&R. We would talk with Captain Price when we returned to Lai Khe and hopefully get his buy-in (and collaboration). We conducted daylight reconnaissance and night ambushes around Phu Loi for the next week, before returning to our home base in Lai Khe.

Luse, the rest of the team, Captain Price, and I met as soon as we returned to Lai Khe. Captain Price listened to our account of "the barking incident" that had occurred outside of Phu Loi, our reasoning on the inability of a scout dog to always, 100% reliably remain quiet in the manner needed by a LRRP team, and Luse's (and me) wanting me to remain on the team as a regular member. Just as "speed is life" to a fighter pilot, so also "stealth is life" to a LRRP team. We all knew that we still had to use Rex whenever possible (generally around Lai Khe or major base camps, but never at night anywhere) to justify Rex and I remaining with the LRRPs. If my scout dog platoon commander found out that scout dog-LRRP team concept was not working out as a full-time proposition, he would ask to have me transferred back the 41<sup>st</sup> in Quan Loi. Captain Price agreed both with the plan for limited use of the scout dog team (due to the unforeseen noise factor), as well as my remaining as a full-time member of Wildcat 2. Thereafter, Rex only accompanied the team if we were staging out of a US or ARVN base (and we were being supported by a radio relay/forward operating base [FOB] team who could watch over Rex while we were conducting the mission). On several missions, we accompanied our host ARVN compound forces on daylight post-mission sweeps of our areas of contact, and those type actions were ideal for using Rex. Whenever we were engaged in extended, long range patrol missions, Rex remained behind in Lai Khe, where other LRRPs on stand-down fed him and otherwise took care of

I/75 - F/52 LRP - 1ST DIV LRRP (CONTINUED)

him. Always, between missions, we would use Rex around Lai Khe to keep his “job skills” honed, using him on point while also familiarizing new LRRPs with the tactics they would soon be employing on missions. The F Co. area in Lai Khe, while already a limited-access secure area, was even more so with Rex tied up in it. It was a great arrangement for all concerned, and one of those few times of which I know that a young buck sergeant got to pick and receive his assignment of choice—that of being a LRRP. My remaining time in-country passed quickly, on many more missions and with much adrenaline pumping. If one had to go to war, as far as I was concerned, this was the best way to do so.

This mode of operation continued for the five months remaining in my tour. I got to do what I loved, being a LRRP, and Rex lead a relatively peaceful life most of the time. Rex was even with us in the Regional Forces/Popular Forces (Ruf-Puf) compound that we were using for our FOB on the night of June 18, 1968, when Lt. Larry Taylor pulled us out of a rice paddy northwest of Saigon on the outside of his A1G Huey Cobra gunship. As usual, Rex had remained behind in the Ruf-Puf compound with our FOB team. A good thing, as I cannot imagine how we could have hefted that big guy onto the weapons pylon of that Cobra, which is what we rode on as Taylor and his co-pilot plucked us up and away to safety that night.

As the end of my tour approached (July 17, 1968), it was bittersweet. I was definitely glad to be going home, in one piece, but regretful of having to leave my team and Rex behind. For Rex, as with all of the other Army and Marine scout dogs would never get to “go home”. Because of the military’s concern over the many contagious tropical diseases which our dogs may have contracted (and could possibly spread in the USA) and their potentially aggressive nature (and possibility legal liability for

the military), all military scout dogs remained in Vietnam until they were either killed in action, died of disease or were euthenized when, ultimately, the US pulled their major units from the field and brought the troops home.

Since Rex could never come home with me, I was glad that he at least had some relatively peaceful and comfortable months before being taken back to the platoon, assigned to a new dog handler, and thrust back into combat with the line units. I will never know his ultimate fate, but I greatly miss him to this day. When I returned him to the scout dog platoon in Quan Loi, I advised the commanding officer of the scout dog team’s limited usefulness for LRRP operations and recommended that no replacement team be sent to F Company and why. He asked a few questions and apparently concurred as, so far as I know, no more dog teams were ever sent on such an assignment within the 1st Infantry Division during the remainder of its tenure in Vietnam. I don’t know how many other Army or Marine units in Vietnam attempted this experiment and, if so, what had been their own experience. I have never heard from anyone else ever involved in such attempts in other divisions or brigades. It just did not seem to be a good tactic, and definitely was not in our case.

For me, becoming a LRRP was a twist of fate, but a great one. The opportunity had come unexpectedly, but I will be forever grateful that it did. Having the privilege of being a LRRP, and on Team Wildcat 2, and getting to fight the war in what I will always believe was the most aggressive, effective possible manner, is simply beyond the comprehension of most who did not serve as LRRPs, or Rangers or in similar elite units with similar missions.



K/75 - E/58 LRP - 4TH DIV LRRP

Unit Director - Rodger Crunk



Greetings, to all the 4th Div. LRRPs and Rangers, winter has arrived here in the cold country of Colorado. I do not like it much but I won’t move to a warmer climate so I’ll just complain about it. I will make it short this issue. Top Keller has written a fine feature article about the Company POW mission in Feb. of 1970. Lots of things went into the mission that most of us did not know about. It gives me a better perspective of the mission. Thanks Top for a job well done.

A \$1,000 dollar donation has been made to the Christmas Fund on behalf of K/CO. Thanks to all who give to this effort. It’s a worthy cause indeed. Please remember all

our active duty troops this Holiday season. They can use our prayers and support.



I made a short trip to Texas to see old comrades. Stopped in Oklahoma City to visit with Jack Werner, always good to see Jack; then on to Houston to see Ray Allen And his Wife Janice. Ray and I made a short trip to Shreveport, LA to catch up with Andrew Fatten and Willy Williams of Minden, LA. We had a good visit, although too short. The original intent was to put Top Keller’s article in the unit pages, but the editor hi-jacked it as a feature, so here we are. I’ve added some photos from the reunion in Tacoma. That’s it for now, enjoy Tops article.

Rodger Crunk



*K Co. Dinner at the reunion.*



*K Co. Reunion meeting.*

*Dave Hill and Roger Anderson at Savannah 2000 Ranger Reunion.*



*Another view of the Company meeting.*



*Our own Dana McGrath acting Presidential.*



*Where the movers & shakers meet.*



**L/75 - F/58 LRP - 1/101ST LRRP**

**Unit Director - Randall White**



## The Poker Game and the Elephant.

When I was a child during the 50s, my family always had their Christmas get together at my great grandmother's house. With anticipation running at a fever pitch and my father and us children sitting in the car with the heater on and waiting for mother to finish with dressing, we waited for lift off to what was always expected to be a gathering of the seldom seen and unknown faces from around the related tribe. Being the matriarch of the family it only seemed right that she and my great grandfather should be honored with the privilege of hosting the annual gathering of aunts and uncle that we children didn't know. Families were big in those days, and my great grandparent's pride swelled in watching the generations of siblings they had sowed come together in a consolidated feast to honor our savior's birthday. And what a feast it was. Turkey and ham, potatoes and

cranberries and grandmother's home made rolls all spilled off the tables scattered through the dinning room and hall. The joy in their hearts was only eclipsed by the twinkle in their eye that told us "Santa" would soon be knocking on the glass window panes we were sure to run too when they announced his sighting. The first child to confirm the coming of "Santa" was usually the oldest of the cousins who had experience at doing this drill, and he was also the first to proclaim exactly which "Santa" had volunteered to wear the suite that one of the various uncles somehow seemed to resemble. His announcement of arrival was a Ho, Ho, Ho, and with a bag slung over his shoulder soon the wrapping paper was flying. But behind these joyous gatherings stood a collection of men devoted to a subculture that only made an appearance when the food was ready and their wives nagged

## L/75 - F/58 LRP - 1/101ST LRRP (CONTINUED)

them into setting for a photo or two. Behind a closed and locked door in a dark room were men that the others only whispered about. They were treated with a reverence and respect that I found hard to understand, but somehow felt committed to honor. In a dark and unused bedroom I occasionally caught a glimpse of their domain. When the door would open to their world to bring them food or another beer I could see them. In a cloud of cigarette smoke, about five or six of them sat under a single light bulb around a table, with their bottles of Papst and Miller sitting next to their elbow. With ashtrays full of butts and empty bottles standing on the floor by their metal folding chairs they held counsel. We children were not allowed to enter their world, and few of the uncles who were not a part of this strange brotherhood dared do more than visit for a few minutes. But on rare occasions one of us would slip past their sentry and assume a place in a dark corner and try to blend in with the walls. These men played a card game that I didn't know at the time, and they used money to brag about their cards. The only card game I knew at the time was a card game called war, but I could tell that this was far more serious. As I eavesdropped on their conversations between hands of cards, I listened as they talked of strange places and used strange terms to describe what they had seen. The Hump, and Berlin, B-17s and Japs and Nazi's were terms I had vaguely heard of but their true meaning escaped my young innocence. I knew that eventually one of them would notice me and soon I would be escorted out of the room by an aunt one of them was sure to beckon. But until that fateful moment I stood statue still in the shadows and listened, trying to absorb all that they talked about. These were the men the other relatives talked about in hushed tones, and I was witnessing their ritual of brotherhood. These were the veterans from the Pacific and Europe, and another who had recently returned from someplace called Korea. As I grew older my great grandparents both died and these large family gatherings became less frequent. I went off to my own war, married and stayed busy trying to do all the things a struggling young father is supposed to do. As the years went by, only on rare occasions did these uncles get a chance to hold their counsel and by then I thought I understood what their brotherhood was about. At gatherings I was no longer booted out of their lair and to my dismay; I learned that they knew more about using money to brag about their cards than I did. It was at drinking beer that I joined them on some common level. These men were in their middle age by then and seldom spoke of the strange places they had seen, nor did they respond much to my quiet questions. Whether it was because they cared to forget or because I was from another generation I do not know, but they usually answered with a gruff and terse answer leaving me with no doubt that the subject was closed. Nor did they inquire much about the strange places and things I had seen. I wanted to tell them that on some kind of a level and from another generation I

understood their brotherhood and that I had also seen the elephant. That understanding was never completely reached. I wish they had been more open to my need to know about their war, to learn their history and to fully understand exactly what this brotherhood was about that I would be expected to carry on after they were gone. I've come to realize that they probably didn't understand it back then, any better than I understand it today. The brotherhood is one of those intangible things that have to be experienced to be understood. I could explain it to a non veteran no better than my uncles could have explained their generation's veteran brotherhood to me. When I attend a reunion or talk to one of my brothers on the phone, this is made all the more clear to me. Behind our conversations and just below the surface lays an understanding that we both recognize. It's never discussed and not really understood by even us the initiated. But it's always there. I can feel it, but I can't explain it. Even though my uncles left most of my questions unanswered, I feel they imparted me with their wisdom. Though our generations were years apart, we had both seen the elephant and what they didn't tell me proves that the bond they felt doesn't need to be talked about. We both understood it was a part of us and we had all attended the same initiation as seen through the eyes of young men from wars of all generations. Most of those uncles are now gone and the large family gatherings I remember are a thing of the past. Modern families live thousands of miles apart and the large family holiday I remember has collapsed onto itself, leaving only a few of us to remember the dark room where those men gathered. Christmas has never been the same since the last time I was booted out of their domain, and the "Greatest Generation" is

almost gone. I'm still a lousy poker player and I still wish my uncles had told me more about their wars. It would have helped me better understand exactly who these men were that the others talked about in hushed tones. I wish I could thank them for knowing I was in the room with them, but ignoring me till their patience was tried and they called to an aunt to come fetch me. I wish I could hide in the shadows and hear the stories they only talked about among themselves, one more time. And I wish I could explain this brotherhood to those who could never comprehend it, even knowing that it can never be defined in words. Finally I've come to realize that we have become our uncles and our grandparents. For the current generation to understand their position in their future and our place in their history, we have to allow them into that dark room and let them hear our stories and tell them why we did what we did as young men. How else can they understand, and how will they know when they've seen the elephant and joined the brotherhood? The information for the next gathering of the brotherhood is below.

Randy White

e-mail: [ranwhite@jamadots.com](mailto:ranwhite@jamadots.com)



## L/75 - F/58 LRP - 1/101ST LRRP (CONTINUED)

<http://www.lcompanyranger.com/index.html>

Here's is the information for Operation Homecoming next year in Branson MO.,



*A Bob Guy slide of "Jungle" Jim Rodarte taken in April 1970. L Company's Acid Pad is occupied by a UH-1H with the 2/17 Cavalry area across the valley in the background.*

along with the information for the 101st LRRP/Ranger reunion that will be held during the event next year. READ CAREFULLY and save this article. This should be the largest gathering of Vietnam Veterans since the dedication of "The Wall". Make your reservations early. I urge any Vietnam era unit considering

holding a reunion next year, to look this over. The 101st Airborne Division alone has 4 motels reserved...there

are 100 motels reserved for units from Vietnam at this time. The 101st LRRP/Rangers and the 101st aviaion units listed below are at the Ramada....phone number for reservations in the letter below. If any Vietnam era unit wishes to hold a reunion in conjunction with the Branson shindig, all arrangements can be made through operation homecoming...CONTACT them. This includes motel booking, catering, activates, entertainment, travel to and from airports etc....they can do it all or point you in the right direction. If you think this is going to be a small potatoes event, check the entertainment list at the bottom. My reservation is made...see 'ya there....

Operation Homecoming web site:  
<http://www.operationhomecomingusa.com/>

As many of you know, the 101<sup>st</sup> LRRP/Ranger Association annual reunion will be held in Branson, Missouri June 13-19. It has been scheduled in conjunction with WELCOME HOME...America's Tribute To Vietnam Veterans, the first national homecoming for the men and women who served in America's longest war. I have blocked the Ramada Inn on Highway 76 in the heart of the famous Branson strip as our reunion hotel. I am in touch with Mike Grisey of the Kingsmen Association to co-locate with us at that venue. I am also trying to get the 2/17 Cav to party with us also. We have the entire 300 room hotel booked. Rates are \$59.95 plus tax per night. Great hospitality building in the middle of this park-like setting offers an excellent place to gather. Horseshoe pits, BBQ grills, restrooms, bar and kitchen facilities and a large deck amidst a wooded setting in close proximity to the lodgings and banquet room make this a choice reunion site. Figure on \$25 each for the banquet (choice of two meats, best caterer in Branson), but it

may be as low as \$17. Banquet is set for Friday night. You can buy tickets to the shows directly from our fulfillment company on our website when you book your rooms and guarantee the show tickets for the day and time you want. Call me before you book any show tickets so I can recommend or not recommend your choice. Most of the shows here are well worth the money, but there are 6 or 7 that you should stay away from. With over 100 theaters in town, there is some great entertainment to see. The Branson Belle, a 750 seat river boat on Lake Table Rock features a wonderful dinner show which is well worth the ticket price. The American Star is another lake boat that seats 100, offers a great dinner and blue grass band—super value.

The week long event includes a Pro/Am 1-day bass tournament which will match up a VN vet with a professional bass tournament angler. He will furnish boat and equipment. The purse will be approximately \$40,000 paying the first 100 boats, with three cash prizes for the biggest fish. All veteran participants will receive a nice rod and reel along with other gifts for participating. A deposit of \$50 is required to reserve you slot, but is totally refundable the day of the event.

One or more Pro/Am golf tournaments will be held during the festivities. A cash purse similar to the bass tournament will be offered. A refundable \$50 deposit is required to reserve a spot. There are seven pro courses within 10 miles of Branson.

The \$100 registration fee includes a transportation pass for the entire week which includes shuttles to the Bass Pro Shop and Wildlife Museum in Springfield, MO, a day trip worth the time to see. We will also be running shuttles to Silver Dollar City and Eureka Springs, AR. For those who fly into St. Louis and Kansas City and would rather avoid renting a car or paying the cost of a hop to Springfield, we will have motor coaches picking up attendees and transporting them to Branson Mon.-Thur. The cost for the 4-hour trip is \$40 per person and includes a brown bag lunch and refreshments. Once

you get to Branson, we will provide motor coach service on a 15-minute bump-and-go basis so that you can go anywhere you want in the Tri-Lakes area and avoid the traffic problems that are typical in Branson. Friday morning will feature a homecoming parade down Rte. 76, the famous "Branson Strip".



*A photo that needs no explanation and evening will feature could have been taken in any war zone of our usual banquet Vietnam. A Bob Suchke photo.*

which will be set up

on-sight at the Ramada Inn. Saturday morning will feature a massive memorial service at the Grand Palace Theater, hosting the Vietnam Dignity Wall. Jumbotrons will be set up at remote locations so that attendees can participate in the memorial

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Gib Halverson was the "Honor Graduate" of the Recondo School, class 03-71. Photo courtesy of Carl "Sunshine" Ostrom of L Company.

service without being present. Immediately after the memorial service, we will begin busing the 100,000-150,000 attendees to Saddlebrooke, the mountaintop site of the Grand Finale. This all-day event will feature constant on-stage entertainment by national headliners. We've already booked the Oak Ridge Boys, Mary Wilson and the Supremes, The Temptations, Credence Clearwater, Tony

Orlando, The Doobie Brothers, The Les Brown Band, the Dallas Cowboy cheerleaders, Ann Margaret and the Beach Boys. We are currently negotiating with several other national acts. The Finale will also feature several aircraft fly-overs. One of them will include every aircraft that flew in the Vietnam War. The event will close with a magnificent fireworks display. We are adding more and more events and entertainers as we go. There will be vendor villages, military displays and demonstrations, Huey rides, military firearms ranges, etc. It will be an event that none of you will ever forget.

Call 1-888-265-VETS to register. Call 1-800-641-4106 to book your rooms. Make sure you use the 101<sup>st</sup> LRRP/Ranger code when you book your room. Hospitality rooms have already been taken care of. Caterer is standing by to deal with each unit's reunion planner. Don't miss a day of this special week. June 13-19, 2005. Check out our web site at [www.operationhomecomingusa.com](http://www.operationhomecomingusa.com). DO NOT register on this site. Gary Linderer is personally handling the 101<sup>st</sup> LRRP/Ranger groups. Contact him at 636-299-2834 if you have any questions. See you at the poker table.



M/75 - 71ST LRP - 199TH LRRP

Unit Director - Steve Houghton



By Steve Houghton

First let me say to all you members, I apologize for missing the deadline for last issue's article. No acceptable excuse. I just let the date get by me.

I actually had some things to write about too, that's the bad part of it all!

All the other unit coordinators wrote about the reunion at Ft Lewis this past summer. I planned on writing about it too. So here goes!

It was my first opportunity to attend one of the 75<sup>th</sup> Reunion and I must say it was terrific. For those of you out there who have never attended, all I can say is you should plan to attend next summer at Ft Benning. You will not regret it. We had four members in attendance, my self, Ron Piper, Bob Sampson, and William Sloyer.

Although none of use who attended served the unit at the same time, we never the less had a great time. We all knew others from the unit that we remembered and still made a connection. Although we had a small representation from the 71<sup>st</sup>, we seemed to have someone there from the early days of the unit, Ron Piper being there from the early days, while Bob and I served in the middle part of the unit history and William being there when the unit stood down. Maybe well have a bigger

turn out next July. Any who can make it there next summer will not be disappointed.

As this article goes to print for the winter issue we find ourselves coming out of one of one very close presidential election. It was not only close but it seemed so mean spirited this time. Hopefully we, I mean the nation, can get back to some civility.



I hope this short article finds everyone healthy and happy. I apologize for the brevity. I have recently moved from the house I lived in 35 years and I can't find anything! I've found the experience to be disruptive to say the least. I don't have a direct connection to the internet and my email is being forwarded to a Yahoo account. Sometimes I don't get my mail for a few days. I missed this dead line because of it. I hope to be in a new place by spring.....I promise to do a better job of Unit Director when I catch up and find all my stuff.

I'm adding a personal account from our 71<sup>st</sup> LRP web site to fill out the unit article. It's the story submitted by Bob Smalinckas.....the guy in the picture...hope you don't mind Bob.

Until next time Steve

M/75 - 71ST LRP - 199TH LRRP (CONTINUED)

I was sent to Vietnam 17 July, 1967. I was assigned to a mortar platoon with C Company, 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry, 196th Light Infantry Brigade. After filling sand bags 8 hours a day, burning humane waste, guard duty, KP, walking point, and any other duty they could think of, I was transferred to the 199th L.I.B.

Ssg Olsen was looking for some combat experienced men to join the 71St LRP Company. After a brief talk with him I volunteered for the job. Even though I made the right choice, at that time, I had no idea what I was getting myself into. I would like to think I would have made the same choice if I had known more. Maybe yes, maybe no, who knows.

Recon teams were like a jigsaw puzzle, you were moved from team to team until you fit in. I like to believe there was no one team better than another, they were all strong and extremely effective. I found my home with team 1-3, with Tommy Files as my team leader. If I'm not mistaken, I went into 1-3 as assistant team leader.

I didn't know it at the time, but this was right before the Tet Offensive. It seemed to me that every time we went on a mission, we made contact with the enemy. It was so bad that the people at Brigade didn't believe us, and demanded a body count. They went so far as to recon the area the day after one of our fire fights. We gave them a body count! After reconing the area after one of our fire fights, they ascertained that our twelve man team took on

the point element of a regiment of North Vietnamese soldiers.

I remember the details of these two missions, but I'd rather not get into the stories. I'd rather give thanks to the people who got us back from those missions. Thanks to Lt. White for making sure we had support within 15 minutes of making contact. Thanks to Lt. Tillish for his efforts on the twelve man mission. I understand his chopper took over 50 hits from a 51 Cal machine gun that night. Thanks to my fellow teammates, and to those who gave us the support, that kept us alive.

Think of each team as a race car. The car is only as good as the pit crew. God bless each and everyone of you.

After Files, the team went to Dave Dalton, and then to me. When I took over I had one rule, "The night before and during the mission, you stayed straight". Doug Berry took 1-3 after me and he kept the same rule, it worked for us. I don't know what the team was like when Steve Houghton inherited it.

I like to compare the 71St LRPs to the movie, "The Dirty Dozen", only because we were not spit and polish Army. There were a few men in the unit that were regular Army, but mostly we were a group of soldiers with an "Attitude". You could not do what we did unless you had an "Attitude".

I'm sure not everyone saw the company as I did, but that's the way I remember it.

Robert Smalinckas



N/75 - 74TH LRP - 173RD LRRP

Unit Director - Reed Cundiff



Almost all of the articles I have received for use in *Patrolling* are from the first year of the unit's existence. Should really like to hear from folks who served in 74<sup>th</sup> Inf (LRP) and N Rangers. I can be contacted at (505) 523-5081 or [rcundiff@zianet.com](mailto:rcundiff@zianet.com).

Life goes well in southern New Mexico though the only major rain storm of the year is currently going on. 1.5" of rain in a day is basically 25% of the normal precipitation. Our daughter is going to NYU but is studying in London this semester and is going to Viet Nam for two weeks in January on a school sponsored program (NYU pays 100% of the trip).

AN OLD WARRIOR FOUND  
BY RANGER ROGER BROWN

(SFC RET.) Mike Howard has been missing since Christ left Chicago. When I located him lately, I told Mike, his feet stinks and he doesn't love Jesus, but we all miss him and look forward to seeing him soon. When I linked up with Howard in the summer of 66, he was a corporal with over 10 years in the Army. I was a SSG with less than 3 years in the Army and had just arrived to the LRRP from A 1/503. When

I first started talking to Mike I couldn't figure out if he had just come from the Stockade or the Golden Knights parachute Team. Wherever he came from, I soon found him to be a great Soldier.

He earned the respect from all of us. Mike is the only Soldier I know of that received 2 Bronze Stars w/v device and a Purple Heart, did an about face, marched into the Orderly Room and received an Article 15 for making a standing landing in a Parachute Jump that we had made a couple weeks prior to that (UD note *well, what can one expect of a career Golden Knight*).

(MY KIND OF SOLDIER)

Received an e-mail from John Brackin that *Stealth Patrol* by Bill Shanahan and John Brackin can now be ordered in Paperback

Have the following from SGM Jeff Horne, currently on active service in Bosnia

Hello All, Not much to report as the weather is rainy and cold. I was with a team of five British soldiers from their Parachute Regiment over the weekend. They are very professional soldiers and quite pleasant fellows, so the time passed quickly. I'm living pretty "high on the hog" as my

linguist's family gave me a huge bottle of homemade berry juice



## N/75 - 74TH LRP - 173RD LRRP (CONTINUED)

and a bag of fruit (of which there is no English word for), but they taste great and taste like a combination of crab apples and a pear...very unique. The local chow is very good; although I think I'm forbidden to eat it (hopefully no one will see fit to bust me for breaking the rules). All in all I am very appreciative that I'm able to visit my linguist's home and be so accepted. I've got to share one story that emphasizes why I love enlisted people so much. One of my Engineer Teams has been working in a little mountain village for about a month. The village has plenty of young kids (5-10 years of age), that hang around the soldiers daily. The kids learned everyone's name except a Colonel that comes around once in a while to bark at people (and who is my albatross and my constant tormentor). My soldiers taught the kids that the Colonel's name was Colonel (his last name) "Stupid". Consequently that is what the kids call him when he stops by the project. My engineers say he doesn't come by much anymore. Life here is pretty simple and easy to enjoy. I know it beats standing at vehicle check points and having RPGs thrown at you. Ain't life grand! Well, I'll close and write more in the future. I'm attaching a photo just for fun. I trust you all have a thoughtful and reflective Veteran's Day. Take care and God bless, Jeff

I received an e-mail from a major going through CSC asking for help on the paper he is writing on doctrinal changes from combat recon in LRP through hunt-and-kill in Rangers during RVN. He requested getting in contact with the CO's and XO's of the units and I sent him the unit director's e-mails (and how to find them under 75<sup>th</sup> RRA). He wrote back yesterday that he has gotten good support from the retired officers and was particularly pleased with the information given him by the 101<sup>st</sup> and 173<sup>rd</sup> Airborne officers. He was also planning to contact a number of the legends (e.g. (Tadina, Boatman and Brown from the 173<sup>rd</sup>) who spent numerous tours and could look at it from the long term viewpoint.

Received the following from Tad, doing whatever it is he is doing

*Hey Reed, thanks for the info about the major from CSC, am back in Baghdad, same old bull here will be here till Dec, or maybe longer. This place is getting like Nam, bad guy is getting better in his ops, need the Teams out. Later Tad*

Charlie Kankel sent the following from Don "Rat" Sexton

*"Some guys never quit...forward to anyone you have an address for and think they may be interested."*

Charlie

*"I'm sending to from the beautiful country of Iraq. I was with Tad last week and too a few PICs. If you know any of the other guys e-mail addresses the forward the pics. Take care,"*

Rat

The following is from Chris "Turtle" Christensen somewhere or other in-theater. "Turtle" was an original member of the 173<sup>rd</sup>

LRRP, returned to the 101<sup>st</sup> and became an instructor at Redondo School. He then joined the 101<sup>st</sup> Divisional LRPs formed at Ft. Campbell in the fall of 1967 and accompanied them to RVN. He was a cop in Kalispell, Montana for 30 years before retiring last year.

*Hi Reed. How are you? Here comes something you may want to use. By the way I'm not disgruntled at all. Yes I would have preferred to be a shooter. But I do get to on occasion. I wanted to come over so bad; I almost applied to be a truck driver. I thank God every single day for the opportunity I did get in security. OK on with the story. I am a Viet vet having served with both November; and Lima Companies in Viet-Nam. I am currently in Iraq, working for Cochise security. I am in charge of night shift security at one of our compounds. For a quick overview of what we do. At the top is a UN program described as a "humanitarian program to eradicate mines", somewhere in the middle the DOD becomes an umbrella organization. Then farther down is a company named Ronco, then last, but not least is Cochise Security Consultants. Ronco hires the demolition guys. Cochise provides security for Ronco. Security is divided into 2 groups. 1) Convoy 2) Static. Convoy does all field security. Mostly convoys, but also if the de-miners have to go out to a mine field to destroy mines in place. Static provides security to the compounds. The compounds house both the various admin, and field employees. Most Cochise personnel are Special Forces, and/or Rangers. I feel I was fortunate enough to be hired by Cochise. I will be somewhat vague on names, and numbers. I was motivated by God, country, and duty as well as ego, and adventure, all for extremely high pay. Throw in some cheap thrills, and travel. There are maybe a half dozen Viet Vets scattered through Cochise, and I'm sure other security companies have their share, but I know of no-one keeping track. There are a lot of Desert Storm guys. The down side: The flies are the worst. Next are the scorpions, then the language barrier. They asked me before I came over if at my age, if I could handle the 120 degree temps. This has not been a problem. Some upside: we all get cell phones with which to call home regularly. We have Internet access, Satellite TV, medium quality food, usually single rooms, and laundry. In the 2.5 tours of Viet-Nam, I never was able to make a single phone call, and the Internet had not been invented yet. Having these things today helps maintain touch with home, and greatly eases homesickness. We are issued M-4s, and M-9s. Personally I would prefer my Glock 10mm for a pistol, but oh well. The crews are Nationals, which is Iraqi, and Internationals, the rest of us. The Iraqis are mostly ex-army, and most fought in the Iraq-Iran war. Most of them probably fought the U.S. invasion, but don't mention it. They always talk about the Iraq/Iraq war. They are generally competent, and capable. The ratio to international to national is 1-20. Fully half of the internationals are interpreters, men from Middle East countries, not Iraqis. The internationals, not mid-east are: U.S. Brits, New Zealanders, Aussies, Etc. Really Anglo-Saxons. The convoys have a commander, and shooters a.k.a.: gunslingers, gunfighters etc. Though I am static guard I have been able to make several convoy runs as a shooter. We lost 1 KIA and 1 WIA recently to an*

N/75 - 74TH LRP - 173RD LRRP (CONTINUED)

*IED. IEDs are the scourge of the convoys. The one that got our vehicle was a buried 155 beehive round. Though besides IEDs they like to attack either from a vehicle, or plain old ambush. There is more to tell, but I am running down so this is it, or I will write more later if you want. Reed I hope this is what you want. Thanks Chris PS if you decide to use this, can I get extra copies?*

The following is from Dave "Varmint" Walker who has designed the new unit T-shirt

The supplier is Cheryl Visel with Airborne Supply in MI. Cheryl is now the official supplier for 75th Ranger Regiment Assn.. She's perfected the sublimation process for manufacturing t-shirts. What you see in the attachments is exactly what you'll get on the shirts...no faded colors or the like, and photo quality. As you can see, I've completely re-vamped all graphics, to include upper title and uniform fonts as well as my new and much better CIB. Also applied a light drop-shadow to all graphics, providing a near 3-D effect. full color 10" width front and back graphics. The shirts are printed on top-quality "Softlink" brand tees, and are of course available in all normal sizes. Cheryl recommends white due to its colorfastness, but gray is also available. Ordering instructions are as follows: Make check or money payable to Cheryl Visel and mail to Airborne Supply, c/o Cheryl Visel, 208 Portage Rd., Munith, and MI 49259. Cheryl can also accept credit card or



ATM orders through Paypal if you desire. Be sure to state number of shirts desired, sizes, and TEAM on shirt. Cheryl's landline is 517-596-2908, e-mail [airbornesupply@aol.com](mailto:airbornesupply@aol.com), website [www.airbornesupply.net](http://www.airbornesupply.net).

The shirt can be ordered with either the CIB or CMB. Varmint's design can also be ordered on a ceramic cup from Airborne Supply.

I have about 30 of the N-Ranger polo shirts that Roy Boatman and his wife had made up for the organization last year. The photo of Tad in Iraq shows him wearing one of these shirts in green. These come in blue, navy-blue, green and black in sizes M, L, XL and XXL. Enclosed is photo of Tad wearing one of these shirts. The cost is \$30 with shipping.



O/75 - 78TH LRP  
Unit Director - Michael Feller



Ok listen up. First things first Bailey, decided to stand down for a well deserved and long over due R&R and take care of family. Bailey, I know I speak for all in saying thanks for your work holding things in place. Our best wishes.

Secondly. Who the hell am I and what am I doing in Baileys place. Good question. Name: Feller Michael L. I served with "O" Co for it's entirety in



Vietnam. Been off the map for awhile decided it's time to pull my own weight so here I am.

Lastly. I'll need some slack here, got a lot to catch up on ,so any LRP's out there, please check in. I need any news, comments, bitches, complaints or just a commo check, member or non member no matter just make commo some how. Enuff said ? "OVER"



**P/75 - 79TH LRP**  
Unit Director - Bill Davis



## "Lest We Forget"

DOWD, THOMAS JOSEPH SSGT DECEMBER 21, 1969 DEC 11, 1948 PHILADELPHIA, PA 15W L77

BARBER, DAVID LEON SGT  
DECEMBER 21, 1969 JUL 31, 1948  
DEFIANCE, PA 15W L76

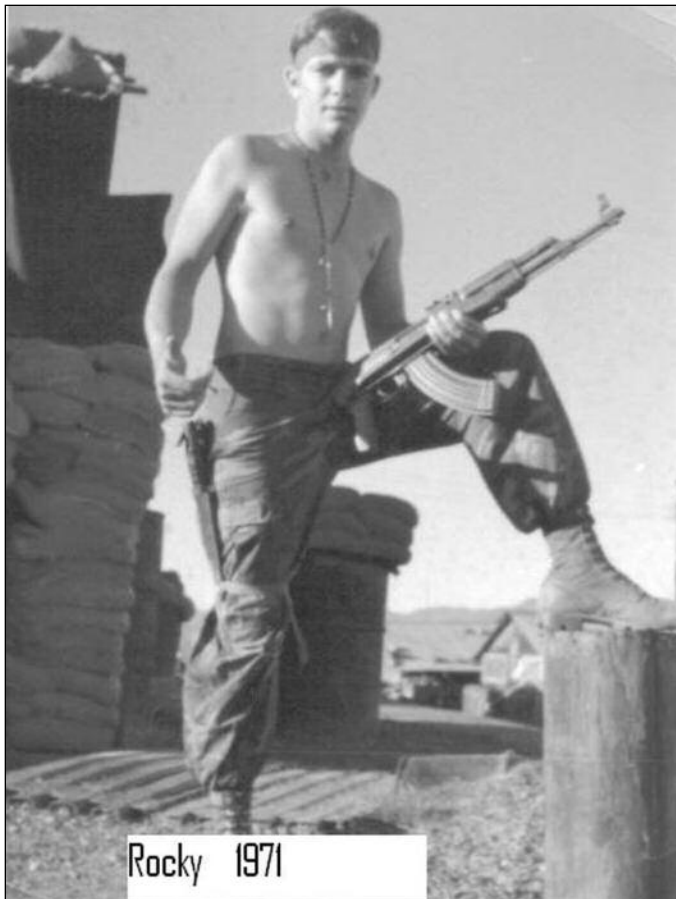
BURKE, ROY JEFFREY SP/4 DECEMBER 21, 1969 APR 22, 1950 CARNEGIE, PA 15W L75

SINCLAIR, GARY PHILIP PFC  
DECEMBER 21, 1969 NOV 05, 1947  
QUEENS VILLAGE, NY 15W L79

DEAN, JAMES HOWARD SP/4  
DECEMBER 21, 1969 MAR 22, 1948  
HUNTINGTON, WV 15W L77

BIEGERT, RONALD LEE SP/4 MARCH 15, 1970 AUG 27, 1948 MINNEAPOLIS, MN 13W L129

SMITH STEPHEN LEE PFC MARCH 1, 1971 JAN 02, 1951 OTTAWA, KS 4W L15



WILLIAMS, JR. JAMES THOMAS SP/4 MARCH 1, 1971 FEB 10, 1943 NEW YORK, NY 4W L15

KOSCHKE, MICHAEL EDWARD SGT  
MARCH 20, 1971 OCT 07, 1946  
DARROUZETT, TX 4W L61

SCHOOLEY, JAMES DANIEL SGT MARCH 20, 1971 SEP 22, 1948 DAPHNE, AL 4W L62

"Rest in Peace"

Winter was truly a brutal season for the Men of Papa Company.

Winter also brings us Christmas, which can be a truly wondrous time. I received a Christmas Story from Grace Mayer. I found it inspirational and needed to share it with all.

Grace and Kevin "Rocky" Mayer were high school sweethearts. They met in February of 1968 and it was 'love at first sight', as Grace described it. Rocky went to Vietnam. Grace knew little of what Rocky did in Vietnam. Pages were missing from his letters, and her primary source of information was from his brothers. He returned from Nam, and they were engaged in June of 1972 and were married three months later on August 5, 1972.

It was his return however that prompted Grace to write her Christmas Story. It was written in 1995, but is a timeless story of love and honor. As it was passed along to me, I want to pass it along to all of you.

"Christmas loomed depressingly ahead for me in the year 1971. Many nights that December the tears fell freely as I diligently wrote to the one person I wanted to be with for Christmas. But my hopes were dim because that person was thousands of miles away in Vietnam, not slated to come home until February of 1972. He had all ready been there nine months in an elite unit called the Airborne Rangers, which I knew put him in harm's way daily.

Subsequent fears for his well being had become a constant companion to me in those long months. Between my anxieties and loneliness, I dreaded Christmas that year.

Earlier in 1971, I had become an LPN and was hired by St. Mary's Hospital in Rochester, MN. I remember working as many double shifts as were that holiday season to alleviate my loneliness and depression. At the end of one such shift, in the middle of December I had just completed a patient check and

P/75 - 79TH LRP (CONTINUED)



Rocky and Grace

was about to chart my findings, when a feeling possessed me to look down the hallway. There, seeming to envelop the entire hall, stood a man dressed in full dress greens, complete with jump boots and a black beret smartly cocked low on his forehead.

I remember staring incredulously, my mind refusing to comprehend who this man was. It was not until a tremendous smile lit his gaunt face and he quietly said my name, did my mind finally accept the most important person of my life was standing only feet from me. He then held out his arms to me and the world around me ceased to

exist as I ran to him.

Without my knowledge, he had been wounded twice and been dangerously close to becoming missing in action during his tour in Vietnam. The Army had thankfully seen fit to give him an early out for his bravery! He, in turn, had decided to surprise me.

Twenty- four Christmases later, I can still remember that December day as though it happened yesterday! Truly, Christmas was a time for miracles.”

I want to thank Grace for sharing this. Christmas can also be a time for bittersweet memories. Grace lost her Ranger on October 10, 2002. Rocky passed from Agent Orange related cancer. We need to keep her, and all those other Ranger wives that have had similar losses, in our thoughts and prayers during this Holiday season

Rangers Lead the Way!!

God Bless Our Troops in Harm's Way!!

In Ranger Brotherhood,

Bill Davis



**D/151 LRP/RANGER**  
**Unit Director - Tom Blandford**



Votes were taken to decide where to have our 2005 reunion, votes were counted and determined that the Reunion for the D-151 association and friends will be July 2005 at Fort Benning GA. The purposes of the reunion will be to dedicate the Long Range Surveillance Training School at Fort Benning which will be named after our own Sgt. Bill Butler. We will also reconnect with our past, plan for our future, and honor our fallen comrades from battle and from life. We shall never forget a fallen comrade.

After the date of the reunion is announced, by the 75th RRA and Fort Benning, I will send out a schedule that will have the D-151 activities along with the 75th RRA and US Army Ranger activities. Some D-151 activities will be coordinated with theirs. We will have some things to do on our own and some things for the wives too. We will have a block of rooms reserved so keep in touch for details. You can also keep in touch by sending your email address to Zita Moore. Zita Moore SFC, INARNG Management Analyst 317-247-3177 zita.moore@us.army.mil

Souvenirs Commissary still has a bunch of neeto kawl D/151 stuph. If you would like to order any of the stuph, send a check or money order made to our quartermaster: Ted Dunn, 9591 N. CR 600 W. Middletown IN 47356-9351 or phone 765-354-4058. No credit cards. Use the US Postal System to send check or money order. Don't forget to include \$3.00 per order for shipping and handling.

Hat \$12.00	Bumper Sticker \$ 3.00
Scroll Patch \$ 8.00	Airborne Wings Ring \$25.00
Coin \$10.00	Golf Shirt \$35.00
T-Shirt \$15.00	

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D-151 Membership Dues: \$12.00/ year.

Donation to the association (optional)

Check payable to Co D 151 Association

Return to: Gary Bussell, 5000 W. Connie Dr., Muncie In 47304

**Photo Album Survey**

There has been a lot of interest in what you have been doing since Nam. We will assemble an album with pictures of you “then & now” along with your personal history. Feel free to include any interesting stories of then & now, any greetings to old friends, etc. We would like this information even if you are not attending the reunion. Pictures are not required to be included, but would make it more interesting. Please attach photos, one from Nam and one recent. Bio of military history: ( Team #, Platoons assigned to, job assignments, when/where attended: Basic, AIT, jump school, Ranger school, rank at end of tour, etc.) Bio of personal history: ( wife's name, occupation, # children & grand, hobbies, goals, etc.) Your narrative can be

D/151 LRP/RANGER (CONTINUED)

printed, typed or electronic file. Mail to: Gary Porter, 6121 S. Cowan Rd., Muncie IN 47302.  
Or, email to: 22990267@starband.net

Keep our “sons of Indiana Rangers” in the war in your prayers.

“Lord, hold our troops in your loving hands. Protect them as they protect us. Bless them and their families for the selfless acts they perform for us in our time of need. I ask this in the name of Jesus, our Lord and Savior. Amen.”

There were so many unit events this year it's hard to list them all. If you missed them, then try harder next year. You're missing out on great fun and comradeship. Report from Brian Alvey with the 151st LRS in Iraq: “Hey, what's up? We're doing ok on stuff right now... I'll get with the guys and get back to you if there is anything that we might want/need... Tell the guys we had a local make some 151st Long Range Surveillance “Scrolls” and we did them with the yellow-gold lettering like the D Co Ranger Airborne Original scroll... If any of them would want one, they

cost us 4 or 5 bucks a piece... We also have them in desert tan too...gotta run, Brian M. Alvey”

Somehow I got on the mailing list from a catalog company named “Brigade Quartermasters”. Along with really cool military type clothes and equipment, they have articles about active troops. They are at “ACTIONGEAR.COM” or 1-800-338-4327. The latest catalog included articles about some National Guard troops that were interesting. I recommend a couple articles by Tim Chavez, a columnist for The Tennessean. One article was “Men and Women in Iraq: Don't Count on Media to Tell Your Stories”. Either get on the catalog mailing list or check his paper's website.

New Unit Director-I need someone to step forward and take over the Unit Director position with the 75th RRA. Do you need a challenge? Do you think you can contribute something to the Ranger association? Call me.

Tom Blandford, Ranger Team 3-1.  
5882 Hollow Oak Trail  
Carmel IN 46033 317-846-6374



F/51 LRP  
Unit Director - Russell Dillon



This is a condensed article of F/51 LRP activities around Tet of 1968 in III Corps R.V.N  
Information is gleaned from The Battle for Saigon: Tet 1968, by Keith William Nolan.  
Additional Information was found in the F/51 LRP history yearbook compiled and edited  
By Jerold D. Berrow while in country, at the direction of Company Commander Lt. Col. William Maus.

F/51 LRP was II Field Forces primary field intelligence unit. At the time of Tet 1968 the Company was placed under the operational control of the 199th Light Infantry Brigade. As Tet (the Chinese New Year) approached, more and more intelligence was indicated that the Viet Cong and North Vietnam Regulars were planning something big. As a result of the increased enemy movement, orders came down to put teams out in the field for trail watch on various trails and roads leading to the 199th Brigade Headquarters and the rural village of Ho Nai. The battle in the cemetery in the village of Ho Nai would

become the topic of chapter seventeen entitled “Total Annihilation” in Nolan's book.

Roughly one week before Tet, F/51 LRP Teams made a couple of significant discoveries. One team had intercepted a Vietcong reconnaissance team near the rural village of Ho Nai, located along Highway One leading to the 199th base camp. The Viet Cong team that was intercepted was dressed in U.S. style camouflage uniforms and carrying M-16 rifles and American cigarettes. Three nights later another F/51 LRP team intercepted another Viet Cong reconnaissance team in the hill top cemetery at the North end of Ho Nai. The result of the contact was 1 Vietcong officer KIA, another Viet Cong managed to escape and evade the contact area. Items recovered from the Vietcong officer included a new compass, Russian pistol and new East German binoculars.

Owing to increased enemy activity in the Bien Hoa area leading up to Tet 1968, it was decided that F/51 LRP would



## F/51 LRP (CONTINUED)



put out five teams on various trails and roads leading to the 199<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade Headquarters and around the rural village of Ho Nai. As Tet grew closer, the 199<sup>th</sup> requested that a sixth team be put in the field for trail watch. With five teams already out, F/51 was fully committed with our available resources. F/51 LRP was also responsible for guarding part of the army compound berm at Bien Hoa. F/51 LRP Commander, Lieutenant Colonel Maus decided to keep the sixth team in closer to Long Binh than the other teams. Team 3/7 was chosen as the sixth team to be placed in the field just before Tet. The problem with Team 3/7 was the location of their insertion. The area chosen for Team 3/7 was mostly flat terrain with very little concealment. In addition to the open terrain there were woodcutters and farmers from Ho Nai working in the area. To compensate a larger number of false insertions were executed before the actual insertion and a number of false insertions were performed after the actual insertion to cover up the exact location of Team 3/7. The team setup in dense brush at the junction of a road the engineers were constructing and a well used dirt road. On January 31, 1968 at 0105 HRS (1:00 AM) Team 37 radioed in that approximately 80 heavily armed Vietcong were heading in the direction of Long Binh. Due to the large number of Vietcong reported, Colonel Maus and Captain Randell went out in the C & C (Command and Control) helicopter. While the C & C chopper was in Team 3/7's area, Colonel Maus and Captain Randell spotted 122 mm rockets being fired by the Vietcong and North Vietnamese to the North of Bien Hoa and Long Binh area. The launch sites were noted and Cobra gunships were dispatched to fire-up the area. The result of the Cobra gun and rocket attacks on the enemy was secondary explosions that put the rockets out of action. Because of the large number of enemy reported by Team 3/7, an armored reaction force was sent out to link up with Team 3/7 and get them out of the area. The reaction force ran into the main enemy attacking force and bogged it down so that the enemy did not get to their targets. As things heated up with Cobras

and Spooky firing up the enemy that were close to Team 3/7. Team 3/7 recorded many kills themselves. As stated in the book if the enemy came close to the team's area they were taken out. More and more of the enemy were retreating down the two roads that Team 3/7 was setup between. Maus decided that it was time to extract Team 3/7. The team blew their claymores and the helicopters came in under Cobra gunship protection and extracted Team 3/7 at

first light after a harrowing night of being trapped between a rock and a hard place. Amazingly, with the Vietcong and North Vietnamese trying to avoid the Cobra gunships miniguns and rockets the extraction came off without to much difficulty. Although this article covers Team 3/7, the other five teams out in the field had their hands full too. The other teams also reported enemy movement and fighting positions being dug for mortars and heavy machine gun fire occurring near the teams. The information the other five teams sent in to F/51's Tactical Operations Center then passed on to 199<sup>th</sup> Light Infantry Brigade and II Field Forces for follow up. Team leader Sp5 Richard Vincent was awarded the Silver Star for his calm leadership under fire. This mission became the stuff of legend around the Company area in early 1968. There were friendly WIA on the team but no one was lost.



After cleanup operations of enemy diehards, F/51 LRP Civic Action group went to work. These were guys who in their spare time would go into the rural villages and help in whatever way they could to make villagers lives better. The rural village of Bac Hai, is but one example. The village was almost destroyed and the guys from F/51 went in and helped in rebuilding the village. Word got back to the states about the work that F/51 was doing to rebuild the village and soon donations of clothing and toys began to arrive in the Company area. The donations were distributed to the needy people who were affected by the Tet attacks of the Vietcong and North Vietnamese.



## LRRP DETACHMENT-3RD ID

Unit Director - Michael McClintock

### 3<sup>rd</sup> ID LRRP Detachment Mike McClintock, Unit Director

Ranger Buck Sayers, whose son, SSG Kurt Sayers was wounded while serving with 3/75 in Iraq and subsequently sponsored for Life Membership in the 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment Association by A/75 (V Corps LRRP), e-mailed me about Ranger Kanaan Merriken. Buck suggested that the 3<sup>rd</sup> ID LRRP Detachment sponsor Kanaan for Life Membership in the Association. The 3<sup>rd</sup> ID LRRPs are proud to sponsor Kanaan Merriken for Life Membership and will soon be submitting an application on his behalf. Here is his story as told by his wife Kari Wood Merriken:

"Kanaan joined the army on Sept. 19, 1999. He went through the delayed entry program and joined with the understanding that he would go to Ranger Battalion. He reported for duty on October 20th, 1999. He went through all the paperwork and was issued his uniform, and then went to Basic Training until March 3, 2000. After graduation from Basic, he went to Airborne School from March 10 through March 28 of 2000. He had 5 1/2 weeks of holdover after Airborne School before he could begin RIP. He began RIP April 28, 2000 and graduated May 17th 2000. The day of his graduation from RIP, he began in processing for Ranger Battalion.

He was deployed to Fort Knox in October 2000 for Rotary Wing Training. Then, in February 2001, he went to Fort Pickett for Fixed Wing Training. He went to Morocco in March of 2001 with his platoon to be stunt men and extras for the movie *Black Hawk Down*. In April of 2001, he had another Rotary Wing Training in Fort Benning. He went through Scout Swimmer Training in August 2001. After September 11th happened, he was deployed to Afghanistan on October 8, 2001. Redeployment was December 7, 2001. He began Ranger School January 6, 2002 and graduated April 12, 2002. Another deployment to Afghanistan followed on June 21, 2002. Redeployment was September 28, 2002. In December 2002, he went through EMT-B school. When the war with Iraq began, he was deployed March 7, 2003, with redeployment on April 26, 2003.

He got married at a courthouse on April 28, 2003, and then had another deployment to Iraq on June 21, 2003. He was critically wounded in Iraq on June 26, 2003 when the Humvee that he and 9 other Rangers were traveling in was hit by an IED. He was operated on at a field hospital in Iraq by a team of skilled surgeons. He had a hemorrhage in his brain which had to be removed. Portions of his parietal, frontal, and temporal lobes were removed. His carotid artery on his left side was severed.

The external carotid artery had to be ligated, and a gortex graft was placed on his internal carotid artery. He had shrapnel wounds on his legs and arms, a broken ankle, severe hearing damage in his left ear, and partial blindness in his left eye caused by severe trauma. He was unconscious for 10 days. He was medically retired from the Army on June 27, 2003 by my consent. He spent several days at a hospital in Germany, then 3 weeks at Walter Reed in D.C., and finally 1 week at the James Haley VA Hospital in Tampa, Florida.

His recovery was remarkably rapid for the nature of his injuries. He began working for a military consulting firm in Columbus, GA, in October 2003. He worked there through June of 2004. We moved to Albuquerque in July 2004, and he has been involved with training the National Guard on MOUT since we have been there. He is currently taking classes at TVI."

For another version of Kanaan's story please see the attached article by Mick Walsh from the August 17, 2004 edition of the Columbus Ledger-Enquirer.



## A Ranger's Long Road To Recovery

*Ranger's life changes course after blast  
nearly kills him*

BY MICK WALSH

Staff Writer

Columbus, GA Ledger-Enquirer

17 August 2004

It's going to take Kanaan Merriken some time to accept the fact that he's now a *former* Ranger. Wasn't it just yesterday he was returning to Iraq for the second time in months? He was young, strong, fast, doing what he'd wanted to do since he was a teenager. He was a newlywed. After a brief courtship, he and Kari Wood had said their "I do's" at the courthouse in late April, and the two had begun homesteading in the same north Columbus house Kari had once shared with two roommates, surrounded by four dogs and a cat named Stitch.

He'd survived a combat tour in Afghanistan and another in Iraq. He'd said goodbye to three fellow Rangers, all from Alpha Company, in a moving memorial at Fort Benning on June 5. Three weeks after a hot afternoon at the Ranger area on post, Merriken — the name is of Scandinavian origin — found himself and his fellow Bravo Company Rangers back in Iraq, this time stationed near the Baghdad airport. But he didn't expect to be there long.

His dad, who lives in Merriken's hometown of

## LRRP DETACHMENT-3RD ID (CONTINUED)

Albuquerque, N.M., is deathly ill and a request had been made through the American Red Cross to allow Merriken to return to the States to visit his father. Permission did come, on the day that Merriken and several other Rangers were on a routine mission in their Humvee. The exact details of the explosion remain unclear in Merriken's memory.

"We hit a land mine, or something... I'm not really sure. I remember the Humvee kept going, maybe 300 meters or so, before it stopped. I knew I had a wound somewhere on my neck, but I was still able to walk around after getting out of the vehicle. Then, apparently, I passed out."

He was unconscious for the next 11 days. When he could finally comprehend what was going on around him, he learned that two of his fellow Rangers — Cpl. Andrew Chris and Sgt. Timothy Conneway — had died from their injuries suffered in the same June 26 explosion.

Kari Merriken was at work at TSYS when the phone call came. "It was a 545 exchange, which means Fort Benning," she said. "I figured it was the Red Cross letting me know that Kanaan's request had been approved. Or just maybe, it was Kanaan calling me from Iraq. Those calls came through Fort Benning."

But it was neither. The call was from the 3rd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, informing her that her husband had been wounded. "I asked them the nature of my husband's wounds. They told me. It didn't sound good." And it wasn't.

Merriken had been airlifted to a hospital in Germany, where surgeons worked to save his life. He was alive only because a surgeon in the field, where he'd first been evacuated, was able to repair a carotid artery that had been severed by shrapnel, spouting blood like an Iraqi oil well gusher.

Once Kari and Merriken's mother, Terri, arrived in Germany, they learned that a craniotomy had been performed and a large portion of the left frontal lobe of Merriken's brain had been removed.

"When we first saw him in the hospital, he was still unconscious and on a ventilator, covered in bandages," said Kari,

holding her husband's hand as they sat on a couch in their living room last week. "I didn't know if he'd live or die at that point. Or would he even know who I was once he regained consciousness."

On July 6, he opened his eyes for the first time and quickly recognized his wife and mother. But it was another five days before he was able to speak and another five days before he could string sentences together. "I told my mother afterward that after that experience I can deal with anything," she said.

Merriken's other injuries almost seem minor compared to the craniotomy and the tricky carotid artery surgery. In addition to several shrapnel wounds all over his body, he also suffered a retinal hemorrhage to his left eye and a loss of hearing in his left ear. The injuries were so severe that Merriken was medically retired by the Army, a decision Merriken doesn't fault.

"I know the road back for me will be a long one," he said. "But I'm prepared for it. I still have a problem searching for the right words, but it's something that therapy will help."

Right now, Merriken can't run, something he's done almost every day for years. "I was under 12 minutes for 2 miles," he said smiling. "I'd like to get back to that some day." Nancy Daugherty, the director of surgery at St. Francis Hospital and sister of Kari Merriken's mother, called Merriken an "awesome dude," adding that she had never heard of anyone surviving the injuries that the Ranger did. "He's such a positive young man; both he and Kari are positive people. They'll make it."

So where does Merriken, who enlisted at age 19 and has served all of his time at Fort Benning, go from here? "Well," he said, "I'm confident I'll make a full recovery. I'm 23 years old and have my whole life in front of me. I'd like to go to college, but probably not this semester. And maybe I'll get a civilian job with the Army."

Kari, who met Merriken a month before 9/11, said she's accepted her husband's fate. "I knew what to expect when I married a Ranger. You know that he'll probably go overseas and fight. But I feel I'm pretty lucky, too. My husband's still alive. Two Rangers with him that day in the Humvee are dead."



## ARVN RANGER ADV, (BDQ)

Unit Director - Mike Martin



Fellow Rangers and Co Vans:

Fall colors that engulf the soul, surround me as I start this article: shimmering autumn hues that leave an indelible impression on the mind; stands of oaks, maples and gums, as well as groves of sumac with their clusters of small red berries,

emerge from the base of mist-shrouded distant hills. This collage of nature's art is breathtaking in its beauty; with the mingled fragrances from harvest fields, burning leaves and the humming of bees, it is easy to envision, within this setting,

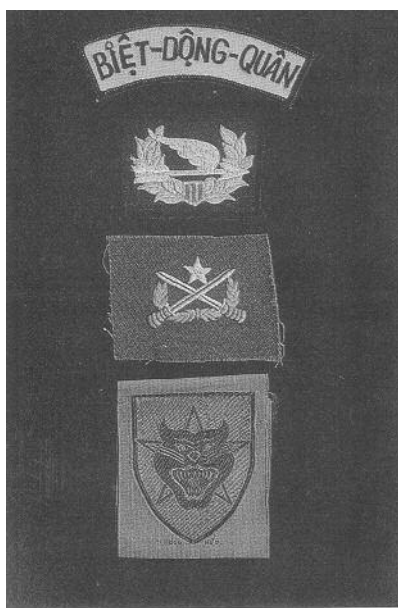


our moccasin clad forerunners—Rogers' Rangers—of 1755-56, with muskets and powder horns, as they tread along wooded trails, leaving the Ranger imprint that still endures....

Changing from a reflective mode, moving the needle on the compass 360 degrees, I'd be remiss if I failed to mention a personal trip to Texas in September, and one to Florida in October.

I was invited to attend and judge a Tae Kwon Do "Black Belt" testing in Houston, on 10 September, by the LE LOI USA Martial Arts Center and its

## ARVN RANGER ADV, (BDQ) (CONTINUED)



Cloth Vietnamese Ranger Patches

Master, Ta Quoc Thinh. With 19 years in Korea and over 41 years of involvement in the martial arts, I must say that, "I was very impressed with the indomitable spirit of the students," most being Vietnamese-Americans. Master Trung Pham (52nd BDQs) from California, was also a presiding judge.

Pham—with his family—and Thinh,



Colonel Nguyen thanh Chuan  
Designed all the BDQ (Ranger)  
Distinctive Unit Insignia in 1960.

made a hairbreadth escape from Vietnam after getting out of a communist re-education (prison) camp; with meager resources, family members unable to swim, decrepit vessels and having to bargain with foreign maritime ship owners, they succeeded in their attempt to escape the leitmotif of madness and destruction that characterized the communist regime. Their story is an astonishing record of what human ingenuity can accomplish.

My wife and I, thank all the members of the **LE LOI USA** Martial Arts Center and the Vietnamese community of Houston, especially Master Thinh and his lovely wife, for making our visit such a memorable occasion. I'm compeled to mention Hilda's deftness with chopsticks,(12 years in Korea) and her appreciation of traditional Vietnamese meals, which was a delight to our Vietnamese friends.

Reminiscent of Ernest Hemingway's "Islands in the Stream" and "The Old Man and the Sea," was our visit to Florida and our stay with Dana McGrath and his wife, Peggy; both, being a most gracious host and hostess...a trip we will not soon forget. Dana, insisted that I accompany him to the firing range; his expertise with several weapons and marksmanship was impressive—I think he was trying to tell me something, like, "Don't get out of line during your stay." Ha-Ha! Thanks Dana and Peggy, Hilda and I owe *you* a debt of gratitude. I won't be the harbinger for Dana's wildly rendition of our sea-gulf fishing venture....

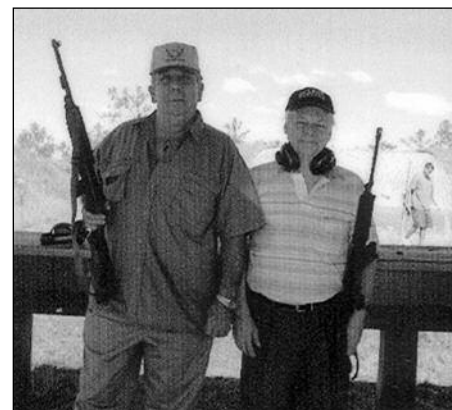
#### DISTINCTIVE-WIT INSIGNIA (BDQ)

The following information on the historical origin of the Vietnamese Rangers' distinctive insignia is provided by my friend, Colonel Nguyen Thanh Chuan, who designed all the Ranger insignia, the Ranger diploma, and the Vietnamese Parachute Badge (Jump Wings). Colonel Chuan's father (a Doctor) was killed by the Viet Minh. Chuan attended the French College, Lycee Chasseloup Laubat in Saigon; he graduated from the National Military Academy at Dalat, in 1952. He was with the French forces as a member of the vietnamese Airborne (Battalion Parachutiste Vietnamien) from 1952-1960. From 1963-1970, he served as Commander of Vietnamese Special Forces (Luc Luong Dac biet) in II, III, and IV Corps, and the Commander of the LLDB Training Center at Nha Trang. Colonel Chuan was with the Biet Dong Quan (Ranger)from 1971-75, serving as the Commander of the Rangers in III Corps and as the Ranger Commander of the defense of the An Loc Front/Binh

Long.  
“““

Dear Mike (BDQ),

The Biet Dong Quan, were created about the second trimester of 1960, the last of all branches of the Army. By the year of 1960, the Communist guerillas who had



Mike Martin (left) and Dana McGrath, on the firing line, Ft Meyers, FL, October 2004.

kept a low profile, were becoming more and more aggressive, conducting all kinds of subversive actions...terrorizing the villages and taking control of the countryside. Regular ARVN units involved in sweep and destroy operations were ineffective because they were slow, moving in too large a number; they were easily detected and did not stay long enough in the field—the Viet Cong just faded away and blended in with the population to reappear whole again at night!

The General Joint Staff, ARVN, decided to revive the old French tactics used successfully in the North Vietnam Delta against the "du Kich", ie., "Commandos". They were independent units of company size, under the command of well seasoned senior French NCOs. The Vietnamese were recruited from VC prisoners detained in government prisons. The units were lightly equipped with small arms; operating preferably at night using VC tactics, wearing VC uniforms and equipment. The **Commando "Waldenberg"** of Adjutant Waldenberg, for example, was well known for its numerous successes.

So the "Biet Dong Quan" were formed in the Commando image, keeping in mind all the qualities listed. The study, planning, TO&E revision, training

## ARVN RANGER ADV, (BDQ) (CONTINUED)



*Tae Kwon Do Masters: L to R, Ta Quoc Thinh, Trung Pham and Mike Martin, Houston, TX, 10 September, 2004*

program and recruiting took about two years (1959-1960).

At that time I was detached from the Vietnamese Airborne to the Ranger Central Command/GJS, as the temporary chief of staff.

Our recruits came from the existing infantry divisions: they had to be volunteers and experienced soldiers with several years of service. The newly formed Biet Dong Quan needed their own badges and insignias to distinguish them from other ARVN units and to commensurate their warrior qualities...I was tasked with their design....

**SHOULDER PATCH:** First, I drew a snarling head of a black panther on a yellow background: a black panther is an abnormal animal, all black in a litter of normal spotted cubs and it is always the most fiercest and the meanest of them all. Adult, it's a dangerous nocturnal predator, stalking noiselessly its prey in the dark and killing it promptly and merciless. These are the qualities one expects to find in a Biet Dong Quan, Ranger.

**BERET CREST:** A soaring winged arrow framed by a wreath, reflects the hope, the expectation to reach the



*Group Ranger Advisor photo taken in II Corps, 1970. Sent in by Slader Agee whose father is the first one from the left, second rank.*

objective, i.e., the mission given, with full success—the Wreath.

**THE BDQ BADGE:** Two crossed daggers with star and palms was awarded for qualifying in the Ranger course. Since the Biet Dong Quan is familiar in night fighting, the dagger is his weapon by preference; also stealth and silence. The star stands for leadership; the palms mean success and awards.

**BIET DONG QUAN:** “Biet” alone means “special”, “Dong” gives an idea of movement, “Quan” means “troops” or “unit”. Biet Dong Quan together is a composite word that may mean “Special strike unit” or “Mobile strike force”, due to the nature of the mission and the special training.

The insignias cited, were submitted in 1960, and were approved within a few months of that year.

Take care my old friend and present my best regards to Mrs Martin.

Sincerely, Thanh Chuan

**NOW HEAR THIS, NOW HEAR THIS:**

The Vietnamese Community in conjunction with In-Country Vietnam Veterans request the honor of your presence at the 30th Year Remembrance of the Vietnamese and American veterans, who so

bravely fought side by side to the end of the Vietnam War. Special events are: Dinner Reception at the Hyatt Regency Phoenix, Arizona, on Saturday 30th April 2005, at 6:00PM; a Special Ceremony at the Vietnam Memorial in Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza in downtown Phoenix, on Sunday 1 May 2005 at 9:00AM.

If your name is on our BDQ roster, you will receive an invitation in the future with full details. You can register at the Hyatt

Hotel after 1 February 2005. Although this is a mixed group of veterans and the Counterparts Association, this will be the reunion for the Vietnamese Rangers and their American Ranger Advisors...It will be a very large event; General Westmorland and John McCain may attend. The Indian Code Talkers will be present. You may contact me or Ranger Bui Lam (1-888-829-4145) for more information after receiving your invitation. Last chance to have this type of Reunion with our Biet



*Colonel Rodney J. Wijas, USMC, (RET). Rod is the BDQ nomination for the 2005 Ranger Hall of Fame. As a Staff Sergeant with the 43rd Vietnamese Rangers in 1966, he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, Silver Star, Bronze Star with V and the Purple Heart. In 1972 he became a Marine and retired as a full Colonel with 32 years service.*

Dong Quan brothers.

### QUOTES

Heaps of bones once moved by the proud breath of life. Scattered limbs, nameless debris, chaos of humanity, Sacred jumble of a vast reliquary, Dust of heroes, God will know you!

...War memorial at Louvremont

“It is not by speeches and resolutions that the questions of time are decided...but by iron and blood.”

...Otto von Bismarck

September 30, 1862

**SHOOT LOW,** I'll see you on the High Ground. Mu Nau Mike Martin, Unit Director



**FICTION?**

After having had a number of submissions in which the line of demarcation between what is true and what is not was somewhat blurred, and since I used to be a lawyer and was loath to risk my reputation or that of the magazine, and knowing that we live in a truly litigious society, I decided that we needed a Fiction section. Note the question mark. Beauty, (and Truth) is truly in the eye of the beholder. I leave it to each of you to read or not to read, to believe or not to. My only hope is that you will enjoy.

**Prologue**

Darkness spreads rapidly from the rugged peaks of the Central Highlands as pristine waterfalls crash into valleys hidden under giant triple canopy forest. Devoid of human settlement, the landscape appears pre-historic where the sight of a dinosaur would not seem at all out of place. Massive trees tower upwards to merge their limbs into dense canopy, shutting out the sun. Without sun the ground is barren of the vines and undergrowth that choke the lowland jungles. The day is a perpetual dusk and nights exude such blackness, as to allow one to witness the world of the blind. Heavy, foot thick vines lace between trees like slackened power lines. It was through these valleys that the North Vietnamese Army infiltrated men and supplies east from the Ho Chi Minh trail. Here, the canopy served to conceal them from the prying eyes of American aircraft, and there were few people to note their passing. Down from the mountains the clear, swift running streams merge into lazy lowland rivers like the muddy Nuoi Luong, flowing to the South China Sea. Along the way the rivers irrigate the fertile lowlands, abundant with crops and rice paddies. It is along this narrow strip of coastal plain that the villages and towns arise. And it is here, in the centers of population and commerce in Binh Dinh Province, that the targets of the Peoples Revolution were found.

The American 173<sup>rd</sup> Airborne Brigade was responsible for securing the northern half of this, the largest of South Vietnam's provinces. Efforts to locate the elusive enemy here required patrolling vast stretches of rugged terrain. This task fell mainly to the 173<sup>rd</sup>'s Long Range Patrol (LRP) unit, Company N - 75<sup>th</sup> Rangers (Airborne) whose small scout teams scoured these mountains as the, "eyes and ears of the commanding general."

**Chapter 1**

Red Crimmons sat in the black stillness doing his hour shift of guard. The five others of Bravo Team lay asleep in a circle, heads inward, around the PRC-77 radio placed in the middle. This way the radio handset could be passed around to each man as he was awakened for his guard shift.

Everything had to be done by touch in the total darkness of night under triple canopy. The tall, lanky, twenty-year old Californian stared

at the luminous dial of his wristwatch. He followed the leisurely sweep of the second hand because it was the only thing visible in the blackness. It was the only way over the long hour he could be sure that he was awake. Sometimes his mind would play tricks on him. He would wonder if he was really asleep, and just dreaming about looking at his watch. No moon, no stars, no sounds, it was a profound darkness. Guard was pulled with the ears and nose, not the eyes.

Only occasional animal noises disturbed the stillness. The plaintive call of a "f.k you" lizard came from off in the distance, seeming in answer to a "Re-Up" bird perched high in the canopy. REEEup – f.kYOOOO. The animal calls mimicked the human words unmistakably. Re-Up being Army slang for re-enlisting, this duet was an endless source of merriment for field soldiers in Vietnam. A silly grin cracked the young soldier's face as he pondered the odds of such a profound warning being a mere coincidence of nature. Or is it a message from god?

Red caught him-self nodding off and bit down on his lower lip. The pain lifted him back to consciousness. He returned to wakefulness with a melancholy sense of loss. He had been close enough to sleep to have glimpsed the beginning of a dream. There was a girl, and it promised to be a good one. He struggled to remember.

His reverie was interrupted by the crack of a limb, broken out there somewhere in the blackness. "An animal," he thought. Then his pulse quickened as other sounds came to his ears, "what the hell's that?" Something was moving out there. Noises grew louder, closer. A line of dim white lights came into view two-hundred meters south on the trail they had been scouting. They bobbed and wiggled like a string of wind blown Christmas lights. Flashlights, a column on the move!

Red nervously tapped "Wag" Wagoner lying to his left to wake him, who in turn woke the man to his left. When "Snook" Ellis, tapped his right shoulder, Red knew the alarm had gone full circle. Everyone was now awake and alerted, but no one spoke. The other men sat silently listening, waiting for an explanation for this alert to reveal itself. Bravo's Team Leader, Sergeant James "JJ" Johanson, would now direct their actions. Red felt a sense of relief, as the weight of responsibility for the team's safety was shifted from him to JJ.

The Rangers silently packed up their

rucksacks and prepared to move if they had to. This was done quickly as they slept fully dressed, boots on, rucks packed. Only those items they were using at the time were ever removed from the rucksack. Weapons and gear were kept at hand. They were ready to move, but they would not unless forced to. Movement was impossible in this solid blackness without using flashlights, which would give away their position to those now approaching.

Red began securing his ruck. He hated packing in the dark, eight-inch long poisonous centipedes often settled in for the night underneath the plastic ground cloth for warmth. He steeled himself against yelling out if he were stung, and folded the poncho and nylon poncho liner into his rucksack.

The men sat leaning back against their rucks, motionless but alert, weapons ready. The column appeared to have left the trail. It was moving in their direction! Individual noises began to emerge from the overall shuffling sound of a unit on the march. The clanking of metal hitting metal could be heard now. That meant heavy weapons, mortars and machineguns. The sing-song lilt of the Vietnamese language filtered through the background noise.

JJ crawled to the center of their circle, "looks like a whole f...g company, if they walk into us, here's the plan. Lay flat 'till the Claymore blows. Then everyone throw a smoke grenade and a CS (tear gas canister). No shooting, the muzzle flash will pinpoint us. No frags either, they can bounce off a tree right back at you. We'll move to the rally point, two hundred meters due north, then stop for a head count and take it from there. Try and hold on to the guy in front of you so mine is the only flashlight we have to use." The words were delivered calmly and precisely, though Red could detect the strain in his voice.

Red felt his web gear for the canisters. The CS tear gas was always attached to the right side of his right front ammo pouch, any other of the smooth metal canisters was a smoke grenade, the round ones were M67 fragmentation grenades. He removed the two canisters from his gear and placed them by his right hand. He then lay down on his stomach to avoid being hit by debris thrown by the Claymore blast.

The mine was placed dangerously close, twenty feet away. But it was against the far side of a tree to deflect the back blast. It was SOP to place a Claymore along a predetermined escape route. Seven hundred

steel ball bearings, blasted out in a sixty-degree arc, would give them a good head start. Propelled by a pound and a half of high explosive, it would clear their path of any enemy as well as light vegetation.

Red fought the urge to point his M16 at the approaching enemy, in case some unseen gook suddenly emerged out of the dark and tripped over him. They were greatly outnumbered and outgunned. The flash from his M16's muzzle would just bring a world of hurt on them from the NVA. Instead, Red arranged his K-Bar knife where he could get to it in an instant.

Their best hope was to remain hidden, or if need be, use the element of surprise to move out of the immediate area. If they were located and became pinned down by enemy fire, unable to move, they would most likely die there. He estimated fifty or more NVA, and there was now no doubt. They were indeed moving in their direction.

Red's heart beat wildly, he could feel each beat pounding on his eardrums. A lump formed in his throat making it hard to swallow. Sweat beaded his forehead in the dank stillness, burning as it ran down sun-reddened skin and into eyes. Mosquitoes buzzed incessantly around his head, searching for blood through what remained of the insect repellent applied earlier. Red forced himself to ignore them. Lying face down, the smell of soft rich earth was strong as his senses heightened by the rush of adrenaline.

Each man hoped and prayed in his own private way that the enemy column would turn away and pass them by undiscovered. There could be no help from gun ships or reinforcements until morning. They were on their own, scared, but there would be no panic among them. They had trained and planned for every contingency, each would do exactly those things they had practiced and trained for, automatically.

The oldest among them was Assistant Team Leader (ATL) SP4 Gary "Bush" Bushman at twenty-five. Young as they were however, their professionalism was rooted in the life and death seriousness of their circumstances. Every man would do his job, the team working together like a well-oiled machine. They knew what they were doing and where they were going. Two hundred meters north. Even if they became scattered, every man knew where to go and meet up again.

The unit SOP was their biggest strength, developed over years of LRP operations by their Ranger predecessors. If discovered, the enemy would be surprised by their unexpected presence. There would be a moment of confusion and panic until their leaders took charge and began giving directions, and this confusion would be magnified ten-fold by tear gas and smoke.

This would allow Bravo Team to escape their predicament if there were no surprises, if it

worked according to plan. There were always ifs, but the reality of their situation was too overwhelming to contemplate. You just did it, the way you were trained to, you didn't dare think about it. It was too close to madness.

The NVA Company slithered through the forest like a giant snake and its head was drawing nearer. "Shit" JJ cursed to himself as trembling fingers flipped the safety catch off the Claymore clacker firing device, "they're gonna run right into us." The first flashlight in the column was thirty meters from the Rangers. Yellow beams of light caused eerie shadows to dance about the trees. The sound of footsteps and rattling equipment now seemed deafening in the black stillness. Heart racing, Red nervously clutched the tear gas canister in a sweaty hand and inserted his shaking left index finger through the pull ring. Then, they stopped. One of the enemy soldiers began calling out loudly to the rest, obviously an order of some kind. They started to mil about, the bright pencil beams of flashlights began pointing and crisscrossing in all directions like some crazy light show. The Rangers froze as the light beams flashed across the tree above their position. There were sounds of heavy packs being dropped to the ground and talking. They were setting up camp!

Charlie owned the night in this land, moving and attacking at night and hiding during the day. The Americans, with their aircraft and firepower, owned the daylight. The NVA were setting up camp for the day less than fifty meters from them. But unless one of them wandered over their way to take a shit or something, they might just remain undiscovered.

As soon as there was light enough to move, they would steel away to a safer location and call for artillery. But for now, as they could do nothing else, the Rangers began to relax a little. As the tension began to ease, Red noted his jaw was sore from clenching his teeth

"Bravo three one, Bravo three one, this is Hotel Romeo two three, SitRep, break squelch three times if you can hear me over." Radio Telephone Operator (RTO) Butch Cruz, had just gotten the radio handset back from Red. He was clipping it to a web gear strap on his shoulder when the call came in. He jumped at the sound of the voice coming from the radio handset and nearly dropped it.

The radio was turned to its lowest setting and couldn't be heard more than a few feet. But he still cringed at the sound of a voice speaking in English, so foreign to this setting. He pressed the phone shaped handset tightly against his left ear, not allowing any sound at all to escape.

The N-75<sup>th</sup> Tactical Operations Center (TOC) back at their base, LZ English, was calling for the hourly Situation Report (SitRep). Butch thumbed the transmit button three times. Each

press of the button could be heard by the other station, as it produced radio static (squelch). The Rangers used these squelch codes at night, and when in close proximity to the enemy.

"Roger Bravo, do you have a negative SitRep to report over?" Butch pressed the button twice. There was a few seconds of silence as the operator at the TOC absorbed the unexpected reply. "OK Bravo, I received a negative answer, you have a positive SitRep, are you in contact at this time over?" Twice again for no.

"Roger", the voice was calm but concerned, "Do you have enemy in sight, over". This time Butch pressed once for yes. "Roger, you have enemy in sight, lets do a SALUTE report, break squelch once when I get to the answer. Size, is it five or less, ten or less, 20...". The operator went up by tens until he got a yes response. "Roger, Activity, are they moving, are they halted..."

In this way the rest of the report was completed for Size, Activity, Location, Unit, Time and Equipment (SALUTE). "OK, I have approximately sixty personnel, halted setting up camp, fifty meters south west your location, estimate an NVA company, time now, small arms and crew served weapons, is that a good copy over?" Butch confirmed the report with a single hit on the transmitter.

"Roger that Bravo, will advise higher of your situation, and will call the artillery guys at Fire Base Pony to stand by. SitReps will now be called every fifteen minutes until further notice. You guys take care out there, Romeo two three out."

The 20 year old TexMex, scooted close to the TL and in spanish accented southern drawl, whispered the details of his conversation with the TOC. JJ was satisfied with the report and whispered back "OK, it's 0500 now, I don't want to move in the dark if we don't have to. We've got another forty-five minutes or hour 'till its light enough, may as well relax, fifty percent security, pass the word around."

After getting the word from Butch, Red sat up and settled back against his ruck. He pillowed his

head against the metal frame and forced himself to relax. He listened to the bustle of the enemy camp and smelled the wood-smoke of small cooking fires. The odor of rotting fish drifted against his nose. "Nuoc Mam sauce," he mumbled to himself, "you can smell a dink base camp before you see it."

The pause gave Red time to ponder their situation and it dawned on him, "I'm laying here in a god-damned NVA base camp, Jesus f...n' Christ!" Then, in light of his predicament, he gave an earnest prayer of apology for using His name in vain. They may need his help to get out of this one. Despite the danger however, he nodded in and out of sleep, his guard shift was over.

# The Last String Ride

At an undisclosed military location during a recent reunion of 75<sup>th</sup> LRRP/Ranger Veterans from Vietnam there was an interloper. No, he was truly was one of ours, a Nam vet with almost three years in country, but he wasn't one of theirs. Let me explain. It all started at a bar-b-q party and after a few refreshments. A small group of active duty Long Range Patrol members and an old Vietnam era Ranger were talking techniques for extraction using strings. The early methods of using a Swiss seat or McGuire rig were explained to the younger lads who stood in awe of the audacity of what those who came before them called a string extraction. Much like what can be compared to a car nut talking about his favorite Hudson and a younger man explaining the virtues of his latest x-machine. As the evening wore on and one thing led to another and then another, the talk of new "toys" piqued the curiosity of the "Old Ranger." Test drives are always the best measure of the qualities and performance of the latest hot setup and the conversation turned to how this comparison could be "arranged." So after another beer or two and a shot or four of Jack, a "frag" order was hatched by the men of generation X on how best to carry out the test drive. After a few more conversations with "Jack" and his friend "Bud" the old Ranger consented to allow himself to be strapped into the "seat" of the latest model string extraction rig the following day, during a demonstration at an undisclosed military base. Never dreaming that "wishes sometimes do come true" and the old adage of "be careful of what you wish for" were recorded in history for a reason, the stage was set. Late that evening...err morning, a briefing was held by the glow of the moon and the shine of the motel lights. Once all the team members understood their place in the mission and the shine had lost the moon, the conspirators turned in for a good night's rest they all knew they would need the next day. Two hours later and after a sound morning's sleep, the "Old Ranger" awoke to a knock on his motel door. Opening the door revealed to him a figure he dimly remember from only a few hours earlier, who was now dressed in camouflaged fatigues and full battle gear. The realization of what the "Old Ranger" had committed himself to struck home as fiercely as the glaring light from the motel hallway. It was time for the test drive. Thoughts rushed through his foggy brain as he tried to grapple with the situation that he now realized he had placed his 50ish something body into. Much like a test pilot or a land speed record driver before a run, he realized that there was his honor to uphold and a Ranger's word was his word. He also realized that he was on the third floor of the motel and there was no way out except to face the challenge ahead or rappel to the parking lot below without a rope. After a quick splash of water on his face and a quick last look in the mirror while brushing his teeth he stepped off the skid to meet his fate. When the "Old Ranger" and his escorts reached the parking lot below, he was greeted by a few more team members pulling security in a late model Honda. Sporting 20 inch rims, rubber bands for tires and a sound system that could be heard in Mexico...which is where he wished he was....they set out to the undisclosed military installation. These other team members were many years younger and their bodies were tuned to a physical condition that allowed them to handle the "shine of the moon" and the

conversations of the evening before much better than the "Old Ranger." With thoughts racing through his foggy head of abandoning all honors but no plausible explanation forthcoming, he was sandwiched in-between what appeared to be a linebacker and a drill sergeant in the back seat of the Honda. There was no escape. As the sun was rising, the team headed off to the undisclosed military installation and the "Old Ranger's" destiny with fate was sealed. Gate security at the undisclosed military installation was no problem for a car load of young and rowdy Rangers, and the "Old Ranger" dare not speak out to the guards lest he be sacrificed on the altar of brotherhood. Once their insertion point was reached at the company area, the "old Ranger" was secretly ushered into the supply room and "issued" appropriate attire. By necessity, most modern Rangers are of an athletic build and stand tall among those of a lesser profession, but alas, our "Old Ranger" had never been a man of any size and the years had not been kind to his 50ish frame. It was with some difficulty that a conspiring supply sergeant who asked no questions found an over-sized and miss matched pair of fatigues and size 11 combat boots to fit the shrunken frame of the 130 pound "Old Ranger." After changing clothes and stuffing his civvies in a brown paper bag, the "Old Ranger" stood for inspection. "Beatle Bailey" would have been proud. With a steel pot coming down to his nose to hide his face and snowshoes on his size 9 feet, he was told he was ready for his mission. At this point the rappel out of the third floor motel window without a rope started looking pretty good. The "test drive" would take place before a grandstand of 5000 former members and veterans of the distinguished unit and it would be a "piece of cake." Those participating in the event were called to formation at the company area, but for security reasons our "Old Ranger" was hustled around the corner of a storage shed and told to keep quiet or face the wrath of the linebacker and his buddy. There was no escape. During the briefing given by the Lieutenant Colonel in command of their detachment, on the "undisclosed military base," it became apparent to the team members that suspicions were surfacing among those from higher and extreme caution would be needed to effect a successful "test drive." The commander never came right out and said it during the briefing, but those men in the "know" and in formation could tell their commander knew something was in the wind, he just couldn't put a finger on it...er him... "Fer Keerist sake, don't walk behind the shed" were their only thoughts. Having no firm proof of anything amiss, the briefing was concluded and a "Charley Mike" given, much to the relief of those concerned. After penetrating this inner ring of defenses, our "Old Ranger" exchanged places with a member of the unit in question, loaded onto the deuce and half truck with the others team members and was hid among the massive frames of the fellow conspirators. Their mission was simple. Unload at a point near the grandstand, don the ruck sacks and extraction rigs that would be waiting there, make their way to the front of the grandstands with their weapons, and wait for a "Blackhawk" helicopter to come to a hover above them and snap in. It would then be a matter of fleeing the bonds of gravity and soaring with angles until touching down again in front of the grandstands. Un-hook

and proceed to the waiting trucks. There was no turning back for our intrepid "Old Ranger." Feeling more at ease among team mates in the back of the deuce and a half, our man felt that all hurdles had been crossed and the end of the mission was in sight. It was at this point that one of the younger and more physically able men posed the question; "Sarge, what kinda' shape are 'ya in?" The thought had never crossed his or their minds. At age 55 and with a two pack habit and a twelve pack taste the answer was all too obvious. After all, the Army ALWAYS does double time for events like this. As panic started to set in on our "Old Ranger" the truck came to a screeching halt near the far end of the runway away from the grandstand. Peering out from under the canvas towards the objective our "Old Ranger" was crushed. The spectators appeared to be on the opposite side of the county, and a weapon, ruck sack and extraction rig were waiting be harnessed into, and he was wearing a steel pot and size 11 combat boots on size 9 feet. As they unloaded from the truck and "rucked up," the fellow team members huddled around him shielding him from the view of those who might compromise the mission and assisted our "Old Ranger" in adjusting his gear and pulling straps tight as best they could. Looking across the grassy plain and blacktop pavement of the airstrip, our hero's confidence wavered in the morning sun like the heat waves rising from the tarmac. The men from generation X had taken this into account and realized that some things are best left out of mission briefings. At a given signal the team formed up into a single line, a right face and they stepped out briskly. Soon the command to double time was given and the agony of the "Old Ranger" started. Placed between hulking specimens of Ranger manhood our hero quickly fell into step....for the first 100 yards. With growling Rangers behind him and those in front of him slowly slipping farther away, he was urged to quicken his pace. Those men in front of him soon caught on to the nearing dilemma behind them and slowed down their pace to regain unity of the squad's formation. Driving on with all the determination the "Old Ranger" could muster; he watched the feet in front of him and tried to keep pace. A million thoughts crossed his mind as the steel pot beat his nose, the ruck sack dug into his skinny shoulders and the snowshoes felt like water skies on his feet. Never again would he allow the shine of the moon and his buddies Jack and Bud to put him into such a situation. Never again would he strike a match to another cigarette. And when he returned home, he would join a health club and be serious about it. Such are the thoughts, fantasies and final prayers of desperate men in danger. Gasping for air and unable to answer the pleas of those who pushed him from behind, our "Old Ranger" struggled on. As the blur that once was the grandstands started to come into focus and he could make out individual people, he steeled himself to complete the mission. One can only wonder what the spectators thought of the courage this 130 pound staggering nymph of a Ranger presented. As a perfect squad of America's finest military came charging in from stage left, one stood out among them all...or should I say stood smallest among them all? On they came with the "Old Ranger" safely placed between burly bodies until they reached the intended extraction point, and not a minute too

soon. Coming to a halt just as the helicopter came to a hover above them; our "Old Ranger" had made his objective. With weak knees and in need of an oxygen bottle, our hero's mind was in a daze. He never felt the downwash from the "Blackhawk" or noticed the rope being dropped from above, and could surely not assist in hooking himself into the lifeline that would carry him to escape. The team members had again placed him in the middle of their group and after a quick snap of a ring, he was now number four in the string. This is what it had all been about. The time for the test drive had arrived. Now locked into the fate that he had sought the evening before, there positively was no escape. One by one the members left the bonds of mother earth and put their faith into a two inch nylon rope. As his feet left the ground and the grandstands faded back into a dark blur of humanity, he could finally say that it was worth it. Floating through the air tethered only by the thin lifeline he savored the moment...and took deep breaths. What he thought would be a short ride turned into something a little longer. He got

the whole treatment because the pilots had been briefed on the mission too. Sweeping wide around the "undisclosed military installation" he took it all in from a thousand feet up. Not just one quick pass around the post, but a second circle as well. And he got to drive. With modern string extraction rigs, one man is the designated driver and steers the string by using his arms to maneuver. Sonny had his time at the helm and cherished the moment, before it ended with a kick from above to his steel pot telling him, "O.K. 'yer done." All too soon the flight was over and reality came crashing back to earth. After landing in front of the same grandstands and un-hooking, the team was obliged to exit stage right in the same manner they had arrived...double time. By now the "Old Ranger" had caught his breath and rested his weary legs and knew what challenge lay ahead. The run wasn't as far and the thrill of what he had just done deflected all thought of the torture his body was going through, and he made it to the escape truck without incident. All this happened while the bulk of our reunion members were attending

another function. The "Old Ranger" had no witnesses to his heroic feat, yet I know it happened. At the end of the function most of us were attending, there stood a feeble and haggard looking man in fatigues by a tree in the shadows. As the function broke up and people milled about, the figure approached us looking like a man who was lost in the desert. He reminded me of men I had seen in WWII movies who had survived all the enemy had thrown at them, only to come back from the dead. Still wearing the ill fitting fatigues and size 11 combat boots it was the "Old Ranger". With cammy smeared on his face, no doubt a part of his disguise, and a Marlboro hanging from his lips he told us his tale. From the expression on his face we knew that it had to be the truth. Besides, "had we seen a brown paper bag and Carl?" He had his clothes and tennis shoes and his feet were killing him. And oh yeah, where's the beer?

"Steppinwolf"

Many of you met Ms. Joan Bellwood and her son, Erik, while at the 2002 reunion. Many know her as the Woman who took on Hallmark, over the Veteran's Day Cards, which she resurrected through Hallmark. She is a remarkable asset to the 75<sup>th</sup> RRA. Well now we have another such "asset"....Joan's son, Erik has written a poem for Veterans and active-duty Soldiers alike. That makes three (3) members of this family that have contributed to the aid or plight of the Soldier's dilemma, including Ms. Bellwood's brother, Rich, who gave the Ultimate sacrifice during the Vietnam War, serving with the 75<sup>th</sup> Rangers. God Bless Them All. Here is Erik's Poem, entitled "The Soldiers Sacrifice"

## THE SOLDIERS SACRIFICE

*By Eric R. Spink*

*A soldier lay restless on this sleepless night,  
his team leader comes in and says, it is time to fight.*

*The soldier leaps up and grabbed his gun,  
And in his other hand an ammo box that weighs a ton.*

*The soldier and his comrades cross over the enemy line,  
For one of them this night will be the last time.*

*They face the enemies with no fear,  
At home a Mother tries to hold back a tear.*

*Suddenly, the young soldier drops to the floor,  
Soon a messenger would be knocking on the Mother's door.*

*This soldier would make the ultimate sacrifice,  
But his comrades will make the enemy pay the price.*

*The Soldier died so that we can be free,  
But the fear he experienced no one should ever have to see.*

*So if you see a soldier today,  
Thank him for the gift of freedom that lets us live this way.*

*Submitted by Dan Nate, F co., with the author's and  
his Mother's permission, 2004, Veteran's Day.....*

## CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

By: Bob Smyers

# CHRISTMAS

We celebrate December 25 as the day our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ was born, and we call it Christmas day. The word Christmas simply meant people gathering at Mass to celebrate Christ's birth, thus the word Christmas. The whole Western Christian Church from early on celebrated this day to commemorate His birth. Some time later the Eastern Church accepted this day also to celebrate Christ's birth. No one knows the exact day Jesus was born. Some say April 20, others May 20, and still others January 6. It matters little, the important things is, Christ came.

I am sure many will agree that Christmas in our time has become a time of commercialism. The retail industry invades our minds and thinking long before the day arrives. Initiating a subliminal message in such a subtle way, we rarely even recognize it. Usually they begin by placing a few Christmas items in a high traffic area, but make no hoopla about it. They know the sooner the Christmas shopping switch is activated in our mind, the more people will begin to think about Christmas and start buying. They are not doing it to remind us of the reason for the season, and speaking for my self, my first thought probably is not of the reason for the day but rather, upon gift buying. Perhaps I am not alone?

Are we allowing retailers and advertising firms to succeed in getting us to think of material things, rather than the true meaning of the day? If you are anything like I am, you are tired of hearing about Christmas long before it gets here and look forward to it being over. Does this mean I do not love our Savior, no, but I as you, am human. Think maybe we are allowing the real joy of Christmas to be taken from us?

May we be encouraged not to allow commercialism to cloud our mind concerning this festive time, a time we enjoy with family, friends, and neighbors. I humbly suggest the head of the house or an appointed one tell the Christmas story while gathered to exchange gifts. Reminding all that Jesus gave the greatest gift of all, his life that we may have redemption from sin and life eternal with God. It however must be received by faith and to our choosing.

Many reading this are looking forward to Christmas and as we do, let us not forget, it is The Most Glorious Day for all humanity. The Birth of our Lord and Savior that gave His all, to free all, from sin.

Thanks for allowing me to share.

Hoping all will have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Be safe! Remember our troops and their families. May God bless you each and everyone. In Christ,

**Bob Smyers**

**Chaplain of the 75th Ranger Regimental Association**

### ***Robert John Silva killed in action on November 27, 1969.***

#### ***Remembrance:***

*Today as I sit and look out over Tampa Bay, I think how beautiful and serene it appears. I am reminded how blessed I am to be alive and living free in this great nation. I am also reminded of the many men and women that have died to preserve our freedom. These same brave warriors also died that other freedom loving people may live as they choose within the limits of moral standards. This tribute is in honor and remembrance of Robert John Silva. Robert was truly one of America's sons; one that was willing to stand up for our freedom and the freedom of for others. He distinguished himself by the unit he chose to serve with in South Vietnam; a unit that was comprise of all volunteers. This was a highly specialized and a very "ELITE" group of men that would performed some of the most dangerous mission deep inside enemy territory. They worked with a total of four men in a team with a short life expectance due to the concept of the missions. The unit I speak of is the 75th ranger regiment, one with a proud history. Called the sons of the famed Merrill's Marauders. He was a hero that fought courageously until the fatal moment when the Angels came to carry him into a realm of total peace, where love, peace, and joy are the order of the day. Death may have taken his physical body, but he and his fellow warriors are in heaven where war and death are no more. We do not understand why he had to leave us so soon but for whatever reason, God choose to call him home. He is not forgotten until we and all that live free stop remembering. Brother, take your rest and know we still love and miss you.*

**Bob Smyers**

# MERRILL'S MARAUDERS



**Yank The Army  
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By Sgt. Dave  
Richardson - Yank  
Staff Correspondent.**

*\*The story and pictures on these pages are the first YANK has received from Sgt. Dave Richardson since he was swallowed up in the Burma jungles for more than three months. Richardson's long hitch with the Marauder force, commanded by Brig. Gen. Frank D Merrill, took him farther behind Japanese lines in Northern Burma than any other correspondent covering the theater. A veteran of the New Guinea fighting, Richardson marched 500 miles with the Marauders and took part in all but one of their actions. The accompanying account of the first battle between a U.S. Infantry platoon and a Jap force on the continent of Asia will be followed by other stories and pictures as they are received.*

## Behind Japanese Lines In Northern Burma

The crackle of a couple of Nambu light machine guns and the whipsnap of Ariska rifles stopped the single-file column of Merrill's Marauders and sent the men scrambling for cover on both sides of the narrow jungle trail.

They had trudged nearly 250 miles in the last four weeks. After marching up 116 miles of the Ledo Road, they had swung wide around the Jap positions that were holding up the Chinese drive in the Hukawng Valley of Northern Burma. They had followed narrow native paths and elephant trails through dense undergrowth and high elephant grass and across dozens of rivers and streams.

This was to be the first of their missions as a volunteer raiding outfit behind Jap lines—attacking the enemy rear supply base of Walawbum to force a Jap withdrawal 30 miles northward so the Chinese could push through. The Marauders led by Brig. Gen. Frank D Merrill, who had walked out of Burma with Stilwell two years before, were this afternoon only three miles from their goal.

The CO of the unit that had bumped into Jap resistance sent for 1st Lt. Logan E Weston of Youngstown, Ohio. A slim, quiet pokerfaced young officer, Weston edged his way through the bush to the CO's side.

"Weston," said the CO, "take your intelligence and reconnaissance platoon across the river and move south to a position near the river bank that will cover us from the Walawbum area when we drive through this village of Langag Ga. on the east bank."

Lt. Weston, like most of the others in this Marauder unit, had fought Japs before. Quitting Transylvania Bible School in Freeport, Pa., midway through his study for the ministry, he had joined the Army. He went to the South Pacific as a squad leader in the 37th Division, he was graduated from OCS in the Fiji's, and then he fought in New Georgia as a platoon leader in the 37th. That's where he picked up a nickname.

"Fightin' Preacher," his men called him. As one of his

original platoon explained it, "Lt. Weston continued his bible study in spare moments, but when we got into a scrap with the Japs he was one of the fightingest platoon leaders in the outfit."

In New Georgia the Fightin' Preacher had always made one point clear to his men: he did not like to kill. After each action he got his men aside and said, half-apologetically: "I'm sorry I had to kill those Japs, fellas, but today it was a case of either my getting them or their getting me."

Lt. Weston's tough, swaggering platoon was a marked contrast to its gentle, mild-mannered leader. Among his men were such veterans as Cpl. Werner Katz of New York, N.Y., who fought with the International Brigade in the Spanish Civil War and with the Americal Division on Guadalcanal. Katz, a burly first scout, became the first American Infantryman to kill a Jap on the continent of Asia when the platoon had a fleeting brush with a Jap patrol the week before.

Then there was Pfc. Norman J. (Chief) Janis, a full-blooded Sioux Indian and former rodeo rider from Deadwood, S. Dak., who thought it was a bad day during the Buna battle in New Guinea if he had to use more than one bullet to kill a Jap. And Sgt. William L Grimes of Lonaconing, Md., who won the Silver Star for knocking off 25 Japs at Guadalcanal. And a couple of dozen others who had battled Japs in the jungles and swamps of the South and Southwest Pacific. They had all volunteered for this "dangerous and hazardous" jungle-fighting mission.

The Fightin' Preacher's men got to their feet and slung on their 60-pound horseshoe-type packs. They moved through the dark jungle undergrowth down to the muddy little river and crossed it Indian file wading 40 feet to the other side through crotch-deep water. Then, rifles cradled in their arms, they climbed the bank.

They rustled their way through the brush alongside the riverbank all afternoon, cautiously covering a few hundred yards. One or twice the scouts spotted Jap sentries and traded a few bullets with them, but the Japs got away. Just before dusk the platoon halted and dug in a perimeter of fox holes to spend the night. They could hear the main body of Marauders pushing through the Jap resistance across the river, using lots of tommy guns and BAR's.

The men ate no supper; they had run out of K-rations two days before. (While the Marauders were behind the Jap lines, they were supplied entirely by airdrop and there were never any drops when the men were sneaking close to their objective, because this might reveal their position and strength.) There was nothing for the men to do but decide on the hours of perimeter guard and then curl up in blanket and poncho and go to sleep.

By dawn the next morning the Fightin' Preacher's platoon was on the move again. The scouts had located a bend in the river from which the platoon could command a wide field of fire to the south. From here they could cover the main Marauder unit as it pushed down the trail along the opposite bank.

The river bend was only 150 yards away from the night perimeter, and the platoon reached it in half an hour in the early-morning fog. They started to dig in at 0700 hours. Half an hour later Pvt. Pete Leitner, a scout from Okeechobee, Fla., was out in front of the perimeter collecting green branches to camouflage his fox hole when a Nambu light machine gun opened up.

## MERRILL'S MARAUDERS (CONTINUED)

Leitner was hit in the middle and crumpled to the ground, severely wounded. Before anyone could get his sights on the Jap machine gunner, he ran away through the brush. Sgt. Paul Mathis of Grey Eagle, Minn., platoon guide and Lt. Weston went out and dragged Leitner back to the perimeter. The rest of the men in the platoon got down in their holes and braced themselves for a Jap attack.

They didn't have long to wait. Through the brush they spotted tan-uniformed Japs walking toward them at a crouch, some with twigs camouflaging their helmets. The platoon opened up. The Japs hit the ground and fanned out, crawling closer and shooting furiously. The Japs chattered among themselves; some seemed to be giving commands.

Then came the hollow snap of knee mortars being discharged behind the Japs. Seconds later the mortar shells exploded in the trees over the Fightin' Preacher's men. After that the mortars were fired in salvos.

"Five Japs on the right flank!" somebody yelled. Sgt. John Gately of Woburn, Mass., spotted the first one and killed him. Pfc. Harold Hudson of Bristol, Conn., glimpsed the other four and mowed them all down, starting his tommy gun at the rear of the quartet and working forward.

The main Jap attack was coming in the center of the platoon's defense. A squad of Japs moved in closer, crawling and shooting. Grimmes, the Silver Star winner from Guadalcanal, now added to his record of 25 Japs by pumping bullets into each one that lifted his head. T-5 Raymond F Harris of Pekin, Ill., sprayed the squad with his BAR as some of the Japs managed to creep within 30 feet of his position. One Jap shot at Harris just as he ducked his head to put a magazine in his BAR. The bullet dented his helmet.

Inside the perimeter, Lt. Weston and his platoon sergeant, T/Sgt. Alfred M Greer of Malden, Mass., got a message from Pfc. Benny Silverman of New York, N.Y., walkie-talkie radioman, that the main body of the Marauders had chased the remaining Japs from the opposite bank of the river and had taken up position there.

"Fine," the Fightin' Preacher told Greer. "Let's get them to help us with their mortars." Acting as mortar observer, Greer got Silverman to radio back a rough estimate of positions based on his map. Soon the crack of a mortar discharge answered from across the river. An 81-mm mortar shell burst with a hollow explosion behind the Japs. Greer gave Silverman new elevation and azimuth figures. Another mortar shell lobbed over. It burst a little closer to the Japs but over to one side.

"Anybody got a compass with mils on it instead of degrees?" asked Greer. Near him Cpl. Joe Gomez, aid man from Gallup, N. Mex., had just finished working on Sgt. Lionel Parquette of Calumet, Mich., who was mortally wounded in the head. Gomez opened a pouch at his belt and handed his compass over to Greer. "We medics got everything," he grinned.

Greer told the mortars to lay in a smoke shell and he took an azimuth reading on it. Then he gave Silverman a new set of figures to radio the mortar crew.

Across the river, the mortar chief—1st Lt. William F Woomer of State Collage, Pa., called "Woomer the Boomer" in New Guinea—shouted the figure to the mortar crew. Sgt. Edwin Kopec of Lowell, Mass.; Pvt. James McGowan of West Newton, Mass., and Pvt. Wise Alderman of Floyd, Va., set the figures on the scales and lobbed over another one. Theirs was

the only mortar in position to fire across the river. Another mortar crew was changing its position to clear some trees with its trajectory.

Soon with Greer's observation, the mortars were right on their target. Greer then varied the figures every few rounds to cover the Japs from the flank.

"Nice going boys," he yelled after a series of six burst. "We just saw a couple of Japs blown out of their holes 40 yards from our point man." As fast as the mortarmen could rip open shell cases, they poured fire across the river.

The Japs kept coming. They edged into position on three sides of the perimeter and were even trying to get between the river and the Fightin' Preacher's platoon. Their machine-gun and rifle fire increased in intensity and volume. Lt. Weston estimated about a company Japs was opposing him.

Then Silverman at the walkie-talkie got an order for the platoon to withdraw to the other side of the river. Its mission had been accomplished. There was no use staying to fight the Japs with such a small force when the main body of Marauders was moving south to make a direct attack on Walawbum.

Greer, Silverman and a couple of others made litters out of bamboo poles and buttoned-up fatigue jackets to carry the few wounded who could not walk. Then, under cover of Lt. Woomer's mortar fire, the platoon withdrew to the river and prepared to cross. The Japs followed, figuring on catching them in the riverbed.

Across the river four BAR's opened up to cover the crossing. The bullets whined over the platoon's heads. Lt. Weston told Silverman to radio back that the Japs were on the flanks waiting to knock off some men crossing the river. Then two of the platoons peeled off their white undershirts and put one in a tree on each flank of the platoon to serve as firing guides for the BAR's. Just before crossing, Lt. Weston ordered the mortars to throw smoke shells to the rear and flanks of the withdrawing platoon to screen the move.

One by one the men of the platoon splashed back across the river as BAR's stuttered away and mortar burst echoed down the riverbed. After Chief Janis, the Indian crack shot, had crossed, he turned to watch Pfc. John E. Clark of Windsor, Vt., and Katz, the International Brigade veteran, carry the wounded Leitner across on a litter. Out of the corner of his eye, Janis spotted a movement in the bushes on the bank. A Jap with a light machine-gun had parted the bushes and was taking aim at the litter-bearers and their burden. Janis raised his M1 and fired two shots. The Jap squealed and slumped over his gun.

"I just wanted to make sure I got him," said Janis, explaining the extra shot. His score for the day was seven Japs.

Meanwhile the BAR men covering the withdrawal were busy. Japs seemed to pop up all over the riverbank. Pvt. Bob Cole of Englewood, Calif., got six of them, and T-5 Clyde Shields of Egg Harbor, Wis., saw two roll down the bank in his sights.

At 0930 hours the last man withdrew. The sweating mortarmen were ripping open their 113th shell case when the cease-fire order came. Lt. Weston trudged wearily into the unit CP, head bent as he worked the bolt on his carbine.

One of his men watched him with obvious admiration. "You know" he said "the Fightin' Preacher got at least two Japs before we withdrew. I thought he was going to apologize again. Instead, all he said was that he could have got another Jap if his bolt hadn't jammed.



## The 2<sup>nd</sup> Ranger Battalion

Activated 1 April 1943    Inactivated 23 October 1945

The 2nd Ranger Battalion was activated on April 1, 1943 at Camp Forrest, Tullahoma, Tennessee. Shortly thereafter, then Major James E. Rudder, took command. Notices were sent to many military camps for volunteers from all branches of the Army for the formation of the new Ranger Battalion, the first to be trained in the United States. Qualifications for acceptance required strong physical capabilities and high intelligence. The selected best of the many volunteers became the 2nd Ranger Battalion and were to be trained and made ready for the invasion on D-day of the European Continent. The training was first provided by experienced combat-proven officers and NCOs who were assigned from the 1st Ranger Battalion commanded by Col. William O. Darby. The Rangers had to have the highest physical stamina and superior mental ability to perform as an outstanding fighting team in order to accomplish any given mission. They were skillfully trained and were proficient in all types of weapons, hand-to-hand combat, infantry tactics and many other skills necessary to be successful in war. In September 1943, the battalion moved to Fort Pierce, Florida. They received intensive amphibious training at the U.S. Navy Scouts and Raiders School. Later they moved to Camp Richey, the Army Intelligence School in using German weapons and German language.

Early in December 1943, the Rangers arrived in Grenach, Scotland. They were soon to learn about the vigorous training and fighting techniques of the Scottish and British Commandos. Christmas was spent in Bude, Cornwall on the western coast of England. Bude furnished the steep cliffs for training.

The battalion consisted of approximately 500 men. There were six line companies, "A" Company through "F" Company and a Battalion Headquarters Company. The line companies had two platoons. Each platoon had two rifle sections, a B.A.R. machine gun and a mortar section. There were 65 men plus 3 officers in each company. In January 1944, they were taught by the Commandos the use of small watercraft for night landings and associated combat and reconnaissance techniques. In the spring of 1944, the battalion was moved to an army assault training center at Braunton, England. In May 1944, the battalion participated in a full-scale pre-invasion exercise on the English coast called *Fabius-7*. The same month the provisional Ranger group (force) was placed under the command of Lt. Col. James E. Rudder and consisted of the 2nd and 5th Ranger Battalions who were destined to carry out the mission at Pointe du Hoc and Omaha (Dog Green) Beach on the west coast of Normandy, France. H-Hour was 6:30 a.m. on the morning of June 6, 1944 (D-day). Companies D, E, and F due to navigation error, landed at 7:10 a.m. on Pointe du Hoc, but nevertheless, successfully completed its mission of scaling the 100-foot cliffs by the use of grappling hooks and ropes and destroying five 155 coastal guns by 8:30 a.m. The guns were found in their alternate positions about a mile from where they were supposed to be as previously indicated by Army Intelligence.

Company C landed at H-Hour on Omaha Beach. Their mission was to clear the enemy from the top of Pointe du La Percee to prevent the enemy from placing enfilading fire on Omaha Beach where the 1st and 29th Infantry Divisions were to also land. At 6:30 a.m. on June 6, Company C arrived on English landing crafts amidst intense fire. Almost half their men were killed crossing the beach under horrific heavy fire. Using their fighting knives and bayonets, three men scaled the 100 foot cliffs and dropped the toggle ropes to their remaining Rangers below to enable them to more easily climb the cliffs and successfully put out of action this very important and deadly German defensive position.

Companies A, B, part of Headquarters and the rest of the Rangers provisional group landed at H-plus 30 minutes. After blowing up a section of the sea wall on Omaha Beach, the Rangers led the way off the beach and fought their way westward to join their comrades at Pointe du Hoc. The Rangers were supported by the sadly depleted 116th Infantry Regiment of the 29th Division. After joining forces, they pushed westward toward the villages of Pierre du Mont and along the coast toward the town of Grandcamp-Maisy. July 1944, the battalion was assigned to clearing out hidden enemy positions and pockets of enemy resistance along the coastline of the Cherbourg Peninsula. Replacements were soon received (to replace their many casualties) and were trained for and by the under-strength Ranger battalion. August 1944 the battalion received special hedgerow training with the 759th Tank Battalion. August 1944 the entire battalion was assigned to 8th Corps and again the 29th Infantry Division. It was the start of the assault on the City of Brest and the capture of many other enemy positions and, in particular, the Lochrist (Graf Spee) Battery at the tip of the Le Coquet Peninsula. This was a monumental victory for the

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Ranger Battalion (CONTINUED)

Rangers of the 2nd Battalion. "A" Company captured over 850 German prisoners and rendered inoperable the strongest and largest fortress in the area.

In September 1944 the Rangers were attached to the 8th Infantry Division to assist in clearing out the German resistance on the Crozon Peninsula. After accomplishing other objectives and rescuing 400 American prisoners, the battalion left for Landerneau, France. Later, they moved to Arlon, Belgium by "40 and 8's" via the railroad, arriving there on October 3rd. Shortly thereafter, they moved to Esch Luxembourg and were attached to the 1st Army. They later went to Vossenach, Germany and held the defensive line there and went on innumerable combat and reconnaissance patrols. On November 19th they were moved back to bivouac area in the Huertgen Forest, the whole battalion was alerted on the night of December 6th and moved out during that cold and wintry night to the Brandenburg area in Germany. The Rangers had been called to assault the icy, slippery Hill 400 which was approximately 403 meters (1,322 feet) high and steep, laden with many pill boxes and had the highest OP in the Roer Valley for miles around. The Rangers were told to hold their hill for 24 hours or until duly relieved. A patrol from "D" and "F" Companies at 3:00 a.m. was sent to reconnoiter the best plan of attack on the hill as dawn came up. "A", "B", "C", and "E" Companies got into position to secure the town of Bergstein, Germany where Hill 400 was located. December 7th Companies D and F launched an assault on Hill 400 at 7:30 a.m. It was a bloody battle with heavy casualties, but very successful. The Germans repeatedly counter attacked. The various attacks were horrendous with so many heavy artillery barrages and the many resulting tree bursts preceding each counter attack. The hill was held until relieved on or about December 9, 1944.

Maj. George S. William took over the command of the battalion on December 7th. Lt. Col. Rudder took over command of the 109th Regiment of the 28th Infantry Division the same day. The survivors of Hill 400 returned to the bivouac area in the Heurtgen Forest. The "rest" time did not last long as the remnants of the battalion were alerted to move up to defensive positions in Simmerath and were attached to the 78th Infantry Division who were to defend the left flank of the "Battle of the Bulge" as the German offensive became known, which commenced December 16, 1944. Christmas and the New Year came and passed without relief or replacements. Fortunately, the "Battle of the Bulge" was quickly being contained and driven back by the Allies. By mid January, Ranger replacements arrived and training began again by veteran Rangers amidst snow and below-freezing temperatures. Early in February, the battalion was put on alert and kept ready to cross the Roer River. They were then attached to the 102nd Cavalry forming two task forces. In this drive, the Rangers captured two dozen towns and approximately 500 prisoners. In mid March, time was used for reorganization and equipment cleaning and preparing for the next combat assignment. Near the end of March 1945, the battalion crossed the Rhine and was pressed back into more combat. Reconnaissance and combat patrols were operating continuously. Some Rangers took part in freeing many allied prisoners. On April 1, 1945 the Rangers celebrated their 2nd Anniversary (April 43-45).

Firefights and skirmishes were few and far between at this point in time and the men engaged in the mop-up of German resistance operations. More attention was now paid to snipers and saboteurs hiding behind the enemy lines, including the killing and capturing of many German soldiers. The first week of May 1945, the battalion was suddenly moved to Czechoslovakia, where further skirmishes were encountered and neutralized. Headquarters Company, who served the battalion gallantly and effectively, started its reorganization, replacing and repairing equipment, overhauling vehicles, providing needed medical care through battalion medics and bringing service records up to date.

Let the record of the 2nd Ranger Battalion stand as a memorial to those many Rangers who made the supreme sacrifice. Some veterans remained in the service to train other men for conflicts in Korea and Vietnam and subsequent confrontations. Other Ranger veterans in civilian life organized and formed the Ranger Battalions Association of WWII, which consists of Ranger veterans of the six Ranger Battalions of WWII. The RBA has kept the friendship and brotherhood of Rangers alive and well over these past 55 years and proven that "Ranger friendships are forever."

*RANGERS LEAD THE WAY—ALL THE WAY*

*-Contributed by Henry A. Zyrkowski*

*"D" Company, 2nd Ranger Battalion*

The Ranger diamond worn on the uniform of the WWII 2nd and 5th Ranger Battalions.

Joyeux Noel

Feliz Navidad

Merry Christmas

The first Christmas at home after WWII was one of the best for me as I was home on leave with family and friends and they all seemed glad to have me there.

The worst was the previous Christmas (1944) in the German village of Simmerath just across border with Belgium. It was a precarious and scary part of the world to be in at that time. Christmas Eve, one of my first Ranger buddies, William Sluss, was killed in action while manning a foxhole in front of our squad's CP. Although I only knew this man for seven days, the memory of his friendly smile comes back to me every Christmas to remind me of how lucky I was to have this stalwart Ranger as a friend for even that short period of time and his memory all the ensuing years. A memory which reminds me of the good fortune and life I've had since he gave his life for me, you, and his country. - Dave Randolph – 2<sup>nd</sup> Ranger Battalion

From the Ranger Battalions Association website and reunion books by permission of Tom Herring, Association Secretary



# RANGERS IN KOREA

BY: RANGER BOB BLACK

The Korean War was the first of our wars against the Communist foe. It was the first time Rangers were Airborne in a history that dates back to the early 1600's. It was the war in which the Ranger Course was established at Benning and the Korean War Airborne Rangers were the first to complete the course earn and receive the Ranger Tab.

You men who fought as Rangers in Vietnam had an experience much more similar to the Rangers of the 1600's and 1700's than we who fought in Korea. Yours seems to me to have been much more like Indian fighting and I say that with admiration. Ours was more akin to the way Rangers

fought in World War II, as spearheaders, recon and combat patrols through established lines, raids and in deep penetrations. In March of 1944 the 2nd Ranger Battalion was married to the 102nd Cavalry Squadron and they worked 40-50 miles ahead of the advancing American Army. In May of 1951 my company the 8th Airborne Rangers along with a company of British light infantry was married to the 6th Tank Battalion of the 24th Infantry Division. Like the WWII Rangers, we also worked in front of the lines. Our mission was to punch a hole through the Chinese lines, get deep into the rear and shoot things up. As the Chinese routinely had 3 or more lines of resistance there were problems along the way. They did not have tanks, but they had men in trees and ditches that would rush out with a satchel charge to attempt to blow the tread off a tank. I remember one dull witted Chinese who leaped on the front end of a tank, put the muzzle end of the coaxial 30 cal machine gun up against his stomach and tried to pull the gun from the tank. The gunner caressed the trigger and cut him in half. Our job was to keep the Chinese from taking out the tanks and to drive Chinese from the high ground. We also had half tracks with Quad 50 Cal machine guns that were terrifying weapons. Never sell the Chinese short. They are superb fighters, accustomed to hardship and they and their government believe in victory.

We kicked off on one of these probes on a day in May. The tanks and quad 50's would hammer a hill and we Rangers and the Brits would then go up the hill by fire and movement and make the assault. I slid into position in a gully behind a tree, lifted my BAR and cautiously looked around the tree. A Chinese sniper put a round into the tree beside my left check showering my face with splinters and scaring the bejesus out of me.

I rolled back and the squad leader signaled us to the right. We moved clear of that line of fire and assaulted our section of the hill with us on the right flank. Our line of sight radio failed us and we lost contact with the platoon and company as we closed the top of the hill. We did not know that the task force commander had decided to pull the Infantry back and hose the hill with the quad 50's. Twelve quad 50's opened on that hill with us on it and terror was rampant. The entire squad was trying to be the bottom man in a depression. The air was shattered with the sound and trees around us were being ripped apart. One of our Rangers crawled free and signaled a cease fire. The rest of the company came up and we took the hill. We moved on across a mined open space with the Rangers walking behind the treads of the tanks. The Chinese were hammering us with 120 MM mortars that heaved the earth skyward as they exploded. The tankers had armor protecting them, we had fatigue jackets. My buddy was walking behind one track and I was walking behind the other. There was no one to fight, all we could do is walk behind the slow moving tanks. Big eyed we looked at each other with a feeling of fatality. Strangely at the same moment our lips formed the phrase F...k It! And we moved on. At the opposite end of the field the tanker stopped and opened his hatch. We were standing talking to him about our next move when a Chinese machine gun sprayed the hull. The Tanker went under his hatch in the blink of an eye. We did Olympic dives for cover.

We moved on. We had been at it now for hours and our single canteens were empty. We crossed a small stream with a beach and a number of us put down our weapons and lay down to lap the water. I glanced up and saw spurts around my head. We were caught on the open beach. A Quad 50 was near by, the gunner confused and spinning around looking for the enemy machine gun. We got behind the quad 50 but the driver tried to speed up to get out of there. A Ranger thrust his M1 rifle through the port and held it against the drivers head and he slowed down.

We got out of that and went into an assault and shot the hell out of a town routing the Chinese. One old Korean Pappasan chose that moment to walk across the street. We did not have any fire zones in Chinese territory. I think every tank and quad 50 in the task force opened on him. It looked like the old man was walking on tracers. He walked so slow he looked like the Carrol Burnett comic who played the decrepit old man. Not a round hit him

**RANGERS IN KOREA (CONTINUED)**

We pushed through the town into open fields and the Chinese again caught us in the open with the 120 MM mortars. We had no cover and had to crawl under the tanks which fortunately stopped. They never answered the phones on the back of the hull and we had no communication with them. We were very much aware that if they moved and turned we would be squashed. The Chinese lifted fire and the tanks went straight ahead. We pressed on fighting for each hill. As the Tankers began preparatory fire on a hill, four Rangers took shelter in a depression. We were sitting in a circle with our boots pointed toward each other, puffing and wheezing from exhaustion. There was no more than a foot of open space between us. Suddenly there was a shrieking sound, a hell of a explosion and a jagged shard of metal about the size of a dinner plate buried itself in the little open space between us. We looked at each other for what seemed an eternity then scattered. After still another fight I was leaning up against a bank shaking when a friend of mine came by and looked at me. "You need a cigarette" he said. I had never smoked in my life but I said "Gimme one." Cigarettes are bad for long term health but at that moment in time it was the best thing that could have happened to me.

I hope as many men as possible from the 75th RRA will come to the Great Ranger Round-up. It is all associations and the information is below.

## **THE GREAT RANGER ROUND-UP**

**WHEN:** THURS 20—FRI 21—SAT 22 OCTOBER 2005

**WHERE:** THE BEAUTIFUL ST. LOUIS MARRIOTT WEST HOTEL: 660 MARYVILLE CENTRE DRIVE, ST. LOUIS, MO 63142

**WHO:** ALL RANGERS, FAMILY MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF THE RANGERS

**COST:** RICA WILL PAY PART OF YOUR ROOM BILL FOR THE NIGHTS OF 20-21-22 THE COST FOR ANY ROOM IN THE HOTEL FOR THOSE NIGHTS IS **\$59.00** INCLUDING TAX. FOR THREE NIGHTS ON EITHER SIDE OF THE BASIC DATES THE COST IS \$70.00 PER NIGHT

**RESERVATIONS:** ALL WHO MAKE RESERVATIONS NOW AND COME TO THE REUNION WILL BE ELIGIBLE FOR A \$300 CASH DRAWING

**AS OF 2 NOVEMBER MAKE RESERVATIONS BY CALLING TOLL FREE AT 1-800-352-1175**

**IF YOUR PLANS CHANGE YOU CAN CANCEL WITHOUT PENALTY UNTIL 15 SEPT 2005 WE NEED TO LOCK IN THIS HOTEL. MAKE RESERVATIONS NOW. WE ALREADY HAVE 61 ROOMS RESERVED, WE NEED 100 ROOMS RESERVED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.**

## **Membership Information**

A MEMBERSHIP YEAR in the association runs from 1 July this year to 30 June next year and the mailing label on your "Patrolling" will always reflect your dues status. For example if above your name on the label it says "0628 2004" it means your membership number is 0628 and your dues were paid through **30 June of 2004**. Annual dues are \$25 and you may pay them at any time during the membership year or if you want to pay ahead you can pay for multiple years. Check your address label now and see when your membership year ends. **WE WILL BE MAILING STATEMENTS THIS YEAR. EVEN IF YOU ARE A LIFE MEMBER, YOU WILL GET A STATEMENT.** Life Membership is \$250 and can be paid by check in up to five monthly installments or by credit card. Mail your dues to: **75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regt. Assoc., P. O. Box 10970, Baltimore, MD 21234**. If you have a question on your membership status you may contact me at that address, or email: [john.chester3@verizon.net](mailto:john.chester3@verizon.net) or call (410) 426-1391. The following have joined, rejoined, or became Life Members in the association since the last issue of "Patrolling".

# Membership Information Cont.

## LIFE MEMBERS

Charles Agee	BDQ	Thomas Barry	4 <sup>th</sup> ID
Donald Beck	25 <sup>th</sup> ID	William Boyd	25 <sup>th</sup> ID
Jimmy Broyles	1 <sup>st</sup> CAV	Eugene Carline	25 <sup>th</sup> ID
Daniel Cox	RGT	Daniel Croker	101 <sup>st</sup> ABN
Paul Enos	RGT	William Evans	25 <sup>th</sup> ID
Richard Foster	VII CORPS	Peter Fromm	RGT
Larry Hanford	9 <sup>th</sup> ID	Charles Hunt	199 <sup>th</sup> INF
Michael Jaussaud	IN NAT GD	Demos Johnson	25 <sup>th</sup> ID
Albert Kaminsky, Jr.	RGT	Geoffrey Koper	1 <sup>st</sup> CAV
Bui Quang Lam	BDQ	Tom Martin	4 <sup>th</sup> ID
Edward Mateer	4 <sup>th</sup> ID	Jeffrey McCarrell	RGT
Carl Millender, Jr.	173 <sup>rd</sup> ABN	Ronald Moeller	4 <sup>th</sup> ID
Jerry Moradian	9 <sup>th</sup> ID	Albert Moreira	4 <sup>th</sup> ID
Kenneth Mosche	25 <sup>th</sup> ID	Steven Nash	5 <sup>th</sup> MECH
Richard Negrete	RGT	Kiet Nguyen (H)	SEALS
Clifford Norris	4 <sup>th</sup> ID	Jeffery Paige	101 <sup>st</sup> ABN
John Parker	1 <sup>st</sup> FFV	John Pipia	V CORPS
Larry Putman	25 <sup>th</sup> ID	Sam Spears	RGT
Hans Tees	BDQ	Thomas Thompso, Jr.	RGT
Murray Tucker	173 <sup>rd</sup> ABN	James Wanovich	RGT
Ayleet Wease	5 <sup>th</sup> MECH	Harold Weyhenmeyer	23 <sup>rd</sup> ID
Daniel Wiggins	1 <sup>st</sup> ID	Bert Wiggins	V CORPS

## REGULAR MEMBERS

Robert Arnold	173 <sup>rd</sup> ABN	Grant Barge	RGT
Marvin Carey	IND NAT GD	Steve Cochran	RGT
Delbert Davis	25 <sup>th</sup> ID	Roger Davis	VII CORPS
John Estes	RGT	William Foulk	RGT
Mike Howard	173 <sup>rd</sup> ABN	John Lubas	RGT
Vincent McMahon	RGT	Jeremiah Mele	4 <sup>th</sup> ID
Phillip Parsons	173 <sup>rd</sup> ABN	Donald Robinson	101 <sup>st</sup> ABN
David Santini	RGT	Martin Tomlin	101 <sup>st</sup> ABN
David Waters	IND NAT GD	Roderick Weiss	ASSC MEM
Andrew Fatten	4 <sup>th</sup> ID	Brandon Lighter	RGT



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We also have some left over reunion Tee shirts in all sizes, and some black hats with the 75<sup>th</sup> Scroll.

Tee shirts are \$15.00 and hats are \$10.00, or \$5.00 with a Tee shirt or coin. Shipping is \$8.50. Call for more info.

## **SPECIAL OPERATIONS MEMORIAL UPDATE –** **OCTOBER 2004**

We continue to lose special operations personnel as *Operations ENDURING FREEDOM* and *IRAQI FREEDOM* continue.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 5<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group (Airborne) lost **Captain Michael Y. Tarlavsky**, who was killed in action on 12 August, and **Staff Sergeant Aaron N. Holleyman** on 31 August, both in Iraq.

Two members of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 3<sup>rd</sup> Special Forces Group (Airborne) were killed when their patrol vehicle was ambushed on 20 September in Afghanistan. They were **Staff Sergeants Robert S. Goodwin** and **Troy B. Olaes**.

On 21 September. **Ranger Private First Class Nathan E. Stahl**, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ranger Battalion died when an improvised explosive device in Iraq struck his vehicle.

**Lieutenant Colonel Mark Phelan** and **Major Charles R. Soltes, Jr.**, 416<sup>th</sup> Civil Affairs Battalion were killed in action in Iraq on 13 October, and **Sergeant Michael G. Owens** and **Specialist Jonathan J. Santos**, both assigned to Company B, 9<sup>th</sup> Psychological Warfare Battalion (Airborne) were killed in action on 15 October in Iraq.

**Ranger Corporal William M. Amundson**, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ranger Battalion became a non-hostile casualty and died on 19 October in Afghanistan.

Two non-hostile additions to the Memorial include former Special Forces **Major Billy Joe Turner** of the Vietnam-era who is currently a security contractor in Baghdad, and **Major General Geoffrey C. Lambert** who retired on 18 August. General Lambert had served as a Long Range Reconnaissance Platoon Leader with Company B (Ranger), 75<sup>th</sup> Infantry (Airborne); and later as a Rifle Platoon Leader with Company A, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 75<sup>th</sup> Infantry (Ranger). He served as an Operational Detachment Commander with Company A, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 7<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group (Airborne) followed by assignment as an instructor with the Ranger Department, Fort Benning, Georgia. He became the Senior Liaison Officer for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment, followed by Executive Officer, 7<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group (Airborne). He assumed command of the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 7<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group (Airborne) followed consecutively by command of the 10<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group (Airborne), and command of Special Operations Command Europe. He was next assigned to U.S. Special Operations Command at MacDill AFB as the Director for Operations, Plans and Policy (J-3), and departed from there become the Commanding general, U.S. Special Forces Command (Airborne) at Fort Bragg until his final assignment as Commanding General, U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, Fort Bragg, North Carolina. General Peter Schoomaker, former Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command, who became the second four-star General to recalled in 62 years, and now serves as the Chief of Staff, U.S. Army, flew in to host the retirement ceremony at MacDill AFB.

An engraving to memorialize **Lieutenant Colonel Charles A. ‘Bruiser’ Allen**, former commander of Operational Detachment B-52 (Delta Project) was purchased by former members of ODB-52.

Geoff Barker

## Ranger Memorial Fund

**By: Dave Cummings**

I attended the Ranger Memorial Fund meeting on 14 October 2004. This was my first meeting having recently replaced Ranger Brown as assoc rep.

Reference the list of names I was given of association members with discrepancies on their stones. Joe Leur says that 90% of those stones have been corrected and he is waiting for further coordination with the association concerning payment for the rest of the corrections to be made. I need some guidance on how this is going to happen.

KC Leur lauded Steve Crabtree for his efforts on behalf of the association. According to him, much of the work done to date in fixing discrepancies on 75<sup>th</sup> RRA stones was financed by Crabs out of pocket. He has made a hell of a contribution to the association. Roger Brown has made a significant contribution in doing an on site visual check of each association stone to confirm errors, all 380 of them.

Sales of memorial stones can now be made on the internet, cost is \$280.00.

Reminder there is are \$750 scholarships for children of Rangers, they need only be applied for.

RMF will begin paying for the cost of engraving for Ranger Hall of Fame names on the wall. Cost has been covered by Ranger Training Brigade to date.

Friends of Rangers Program. A section of the memorial has been dedicated for names of corporate sponsors and individuals donating \$500 or more to RMF.

The RMF financial statement was discussed. The Foundation remains in the black despite the recent down turns on investments everyone is suffering through.

As a matter of interest, Phil Piazza, Merrill's Marauders representative for RMF told us he was invited to go to New York the next week to be interviewed by Ollie North who is doing a segment on the Marauders for his "War Stories" show on Fox News.

Regards,

Ranger Dave Cummings  
Columbus, GA  
[Davidf4f4@mchsi.com](mailto:Davidf4f4@mchsi.com)

## FAMILY FUND CONTRIBUTORS

Hilan Jones	E/75	James K. Waters, Jr.	BDQ	Sidney Baker	BDQ
Harry Bell	RGT	Geoffrey Koper		Charles Bourne	C/75
Timothy Kelley	I/75	Logan Smith	RGT	Joe Chetwyn	B/75
Todd Clark	RGT	Terry Rodericks	P/75	Donald Carnahan	D/75
Joseph Welsh	C/75	Bill Acebes	RGT	Charles Eads	D/151
Harry Adams	G/75	Kenneth Bosley	K/75	Lawrence Flanagan	K/75
Geoff Barker	SOCOM	Jerry Mooradian	E/75	Dennis Hagan	D/75
James Brockmiller	N/75	David Keefe	BDQ	Noah Halfacre	A/75
F/52 LRP-I/75 Ranger	I/75	Roy Allen	BDQ	Cecil Hamm	F/75
J. R. McDade Co.	I/75	Gary Banker	N	Gary Horton	RGT
Paul Catozzi	N/75	Darin Bistodeau	RGT	Tom Humpus	BDQ
Steven D. Dick	I FFV	Myles Downey	F/75	Kevin Ingraham	RGT

# PATROLLING – WINTER 2004

## FAMILY FUND CONTRIBUTORS Cont.

Charles Jentz	3ID	Harvey Lameman	F/75	Roger & Linda Brown	RGT
Hilan Jones	E/75	Fred Jenkins	E/75	Richard Chitwood	P/75
David Keith	RGT	Gail Ernst	RGT	Carl Cook	I/75
John Kingeter	D/75	Frederick Eastman	F/75	Richard Dudley	N/75
William Manderfeld	K/75	David Boilard	F/75	Randy King	I/75
Glen McCrary	H/75	Terry Bishop	P/75	Steve Legendre	L/75
Prescott Paulhus	RGT	Michael Bakkie	H/75	Garry Norton	P/75
Douglas Peck	F/75	Rufus Bacon	H/75	Dale Markovich	H/75
James Pfaff	RGT	Thomas Wright	B/75	Eric Rodriguez	E/51
Charles Rose	F/75	Welton Wardell	E/75	James Simpkins	B/75
R. W. Sandlin	F/75	Tim Walsh	F/75	Noble Taylor	K/75
William Schwartz	BDQ	Timothy Kelley	RGT	Robert Thomas	K/75
Gary Hollenbeck	E/75	James Hagan	D/151	Bob Thomas	K/75
James Godbolt	E/75	Alfre Danner	BDQ	Donald Andrews	E/75
Hans Tees	BDQ	Tavis Delaney	D/151	Mike Martin	BDQ
Harry Bell	RGT	Chris Coy	RGT	Thomas McMahon	I/75
Gil Berg	RGT	David Bobo	K/75	Robert Wells	G/75
William Block	RGT	Roger Barbe	D/75	Raymond Barrio	K/75
Joseph Cassilly	F/75	Errol Hansen	D/75	Scott Cook	F/75
Anthony Hanlon	E/75	James McSorley	N/75	Francis Davis	F/75
Terrenz Jeans	B75	William Oleskevich	P/75	Adam Macias	L/75
Ed Mateer	K/75	John Dubois	K/75	Richard Schimel	E/75
Phil Mayrand	F/75	Michael Flynn	L/75	Craig Vega	L/75
Duane Sells	K/75	Bob Hernandez	E/75	Allen Wene	E/75
Juan Serrano	K/75	Mike McClintock	3ID	Beth Vercolen	
Ralph Timmons	L/75	Louis McDonald		Ronald Davenport	N/75
Joe Tompkins	N/75	Loren Sayers	3ID	William Maack	G/75
David Hill	I/75	Mark Smith	RGT	David Wieder	RGT
Steve Walker	RGT	Charles Thomas	L/75	Harry Bell	RGT
Brian West	K/75	Jeffrey McCarrell	RGT	Frank Anderson	L/75
Darryl White	A/75	Andrew Connelly	C/75	Emmett Hiltibrand	F/75
Jerry Williams	D/151	Cephus Williams	B/75	Russ Bryant	RGT
Joseph Stankiewicz	N/75	Don Keller	K/75	Gene Erickson	C/75
Ted Trueblood	K/75	Eddie Johnston	P/75	Walter Towers	L/75
Eugene Tucker	F/75	Colin Shipley	RGT	Richard Foster	VII Corps
Van Kominitsky	F/51	Sam Day	G/75	Carlton Savory	C/75
Gregory Spring	RGT	Robert Johnston	L/75	William Christiansen	E/75
Frank Trifaro	A/75	Stanley Jones	A/75	James Glaze	E/75
Sandy Weisberger	RGT	John Masic	E/75	William Christiansen	E/75
Nathaniel Toney	G/75	William Koenig	E/75	Theodore Dunn	D/151
Dante Reynolds	E/51	Joel Vance	RGT	C. G. Matsuda	E/75
Charles Rafferty	RGT	Richard Wandke	BDQ	K Company Assn.	K/75
Steve Printz	P/75	Karl Fee	BDQ		
Phillip Norton	F/75	Michael Hartmere	B/75	<i>These are the contributors as of the time the magazine went to the printer. Later contributions in next issue.</i>	
John Meade	D/75	Bobby Pegram	RGT		
Douglas McCabe	BDQ	Matthew Stephenson	RGT		
John Lindhurst	RGT	James Trimble	K/75		
Gary Lemonds	F/75	Mike Warner	C/75		

# STATE ADVOCATE

By: Tom Gage

First let me say thanks to those of you that have responded to the need for state coordinators. For those of you state coordinators who have not received the roster of association members within your state it will shortly arrive. There is still a need for state coordinators in more than thirty states. So please take a moment of your time and contact me for more information. The time required to be a state coordinator is minimal for the most part. In larger states assistant state coordinators have been and will continue to be recruited to overcome the vast distance that a single coordinator would be required to travel and serve. In the next issue of the Patrolling magazine remaining state coordinator vacancies will be provided. Lets step up so that this vacancy roster is not required.

Soldiers of our present day Ranger Battalions serving in the middle east would appreciate some items of comfort. Besides letters the following items are desired.

- Magazines and paperback books
- Playing cards
- Legal pads, stationery and ink pens
- Razor blades, razors and shaving cream
- Powdered Gatorade
- Hard candies and gum
- Beef jerky
- Canned fruits and puddings
- Copenhagen tobacco
- Ziploc bags
- Q-tips and pipe cleaners
- Baby wipes or other wash packets
- Shampoo

Some Rangers have been departing the Army to return home without job opportunities. This needs our attention. We realize the dependability and high work ethics each of these Rangers possesses would be of value to any employer. If we are in a position to recruit or recommend Rangers into existing job vacancies lets help find them employment. Contact me with job opportunities that would benefit departing Rangers ASAP for dissemination. Include all position requirements, pay and benefits, as well as the POC information for the employer beside your name and phone number by e-mail or telephonically.

Dates for this summer's Ranger reunion at Fort Benning, Georgia have yet to have been provided by the Ranger Regiment. When those dates become available state coordinators will be informed to insure each association member is notified. Then make plans to attend the reunion. Also if you know of team members or other past unit Rangers that have not joined our Ranger Association lets get this corrected. Lets see how many of our Ranger teams and units can attend with 100 percent association membership.

Tom Gage  
1424 Francis Station Drive  
Knoxville, TN 37909  
(865) 693-3293  
thegages@comcast.net

# STATE COORDINATORS

First let me say thanks to those of you that have responded to the need for State Coordinators. For those of you State Coordinators who have not received the roster of association members within your state it will shortly arrive. There is still a need for State Coordinators in more than thirty states. So please take a moment of your time and contact me for more information. The time required to be a State Coordinator is minimal for the most part. In larger states Assistant State Coordinators have been and will continue to be recruited to overcome the vast distance that a single coordinator would be required to travel and serve. Below are the volunteers and vacancies of remaining State Coordinators. Lets step up so that this vacancy roster is not required. You do not have to be the actual State Coordinator to sign on.

**State Advocate - Tom Gage, 1424 Francis Station Drive, Knoxville, TN 37909, (865) 693-3293, thegages@comcast.net**

<b><u>Alabama</u></b> State Coordinator	<b><u>Hawaii</u></b> State Coordinator	<b><u>Missouri</u></b> State Coordinator	<b><u>South Carolina</u></b> State Coordinator – Rick Ellison
<b><u>Alaska</u></b> State Coordinator	<b><u>Idaho</u></b> State Coordinator	<b><u>Montana</u></b> State Coordinator	<b><u>South Dakota</u></b> State Coordinator
<b><u>Arizona</u></b> State Coordinator	<b><u>Illinois</u></b> State Coordinator – Ken Kovac	<b><u>Nebraska</u></b> State Coordinator	<b><u>Tennessee</u></b> State Coordinator - Tom Gage
<b><u>Arkansas</u></b> State Coordinator	<b><u>Indiana</u></b> State Coordinator – Thomas Pease	<b><u>Nevada</u></b> State Coordinator – Harry Bell	<b><u>Texas</u></b> State Coordinator – Bob Cantu Jerry Greene Richard “Bear” Pappa Rick Ayers
<b><u>California</u></b> State Coordinator – Bill Davis Errol B. Hansen Rodolph “Rody” Lindhe	<b><u>Iowa</u></b> State Coordinator	<b><u>New Jersey</u></b> State Coordinator	
<b><u>Colorado</u></b> State Coordinator	<b><u>Kansas</u></b> State Coordinator – Bill Sloyer	<b><u>New Hampshire</u></b> State Coordinator	<b><u>Utah</u></b> State Coordinator
<b><u>Connecticut</u></b> State Coordinator	<b><u>Kentucky</u></b> State Coordinator – Steve Meade	<b><u>New Mexico</u></b> State Coordinator	<b><u>Vermont</u></b> State Coordinator
<b><u>Delaware</u></b> State Coordinator	<b><u>Louisiana</u></b> State Coordinator	<b><u>New York</u></b> State Coordinator – Tom Finnie	<b><u>Virginia</u></b> State Coordinator - Ralph Timmons
<b><u>Florida</u></b> State Coordinator	<b><u>Maine</u></b> State Coordinator – Edwin Howe	<b><u>North Carolina</u></b> State Coordinator – Hal Hermann	<b><u>Washington</u></b> State Coordinator – David A. Moloney Jerry Camplilieri Scott Lamb, Jerome Lee
<b><u>Georgia</u></b> State Coordinator - Wayne Mitsch Emmett W. Hiltibrand Mike Wise Marshall Huckaby Bob Suchke Gary Lemonds Roger Brown Eugene Reilly Dan Pope David Cummings Ted Tilson Doug Perry Earl Singletary Mike Turner Mark Ponzillo Bob Gilbert Steve Hawk	<b><u>Maryland</u></b> State Coordinator	<b><u>North Dakota</u></b> State Coordinator	<b><u>West Virginia</u></b> State Coordinator – Alfred Nesbitt
	<b><u>Massachusetts</u></b> State Coordinator	<b><u>Ohio</u></b> State Coordinator	<b><u>Wisconsin</u></b> State Coordinator – Karl R. Fee
	<b><u>Michigan</u></b> State Coordinator	<b><u>Oklahoma</u></b> State Coordinator	<b><u>Wyoming</u></b> State Coordinator
	<b><u>Minnesota</u></b> State Coordinator – John Henry Berg	<b><u>Pennsylvania</u></b> State Coordinator – Marc L. Thompson Pete Huston	<b><u>Great Britain</u></b> Country Coordinator – Richard S. Barela
	<b><u>Mississippi</u></b> State Coordinator	<b><u>Rhode Island</u></b> State Coordinator	

# I REMEMBER WHEN

The day you made team leader was scary to say the least,  
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You sat on your bunk and wondered "What the Hell".  
Could you do what was expected, could you do it well.

You had to face the realities of that awful war,  
You could only do your best, no one could ask more.  
You trained them hard, no one asked why,  
All knew in their hearts that some would die.

With each decision you make, you pray to do no wrong,  
The unexpected happens, you just ruck up and move on.  
You ask deep in your soul, "Am I Good Enough".  
Would you let your team down when the going got tough.

You led a mission in the Ashau, a place remembered well,  
Full of wild orchids and exotic birds, grunts called it hell.  
Your point man got down, pointing to the ground,  
You both look at the tracks, Charlie had been found.

You listen hard, hearing voices nearby,  
Reality hits, some one is going to die.  
You signaled your team, get ready to fight,  
Each man prayed in his own right.

For those that have experienced it, combat can be unkind,  
One of your men will be going home before his time.  
You were a LRRP team leader, you brought your team home,  
Your friends remembered in a black marbled stone.

Michael Monfrooe USA Ret  
Nov. 9, 2004

Dedicated to "L" Co. 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Team Leaders Sgt's Sheppard, Lambert, Distretti, Ackley and Wyatt  
"E" Co. 3/506<sup>th</sup> Recon Team Leaders Sgt Fischer and Brandt and SSG Vennard.

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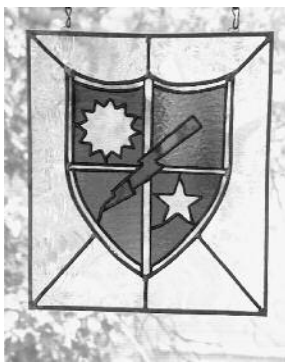
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The card ads on these pages allow the Association to bring you a quality product (the magazine) at a cost that is sustainable by the Association. These card ads are a great deal, the cost is only \$100.00 for **four** issues. That's a years worth of advertising. If the advertiser has a web site, we will provide a link from our web site ( 75thrra.org ) for an additional \$50.00, so for \$150.00 you will have a years worth of exposure as well as a link to your web site, for a total of \$150.00. We mail around 2,200 copies of the magazine each issue. The copies that go to the 3 Battalions and to the RTB are seen by many more people than the number of copies would indicate. That's a lot of exposure for a minimum cost.

As members, we should make an effort to patronize our advertisers. Most of us would prefer to deal with one of our own given the opportunity. Give it a chance, it helps the Association bring you a quality product at a reasonable price. Thanks to everyone that has signed up.



BY: Dan Nate

Photo #1, on the left facing out...me, kneeling, w/moustache/"Housemouse" Freeman, who became a "lifer", in the black rimmed glasses/ and Lunnell Hollingshead next to him. Lunnell still has NOT been located despite many tries.

Photo #2; myself with captured AK-47 with bayonet; Hollingshead next to me. "Housemouse" Freeman behind Hollingshead, and Duane DeVega with the beer, behind me. Duane was killed by sniper's head shot wound, just before completion of his 2nd tour. We are ALL proud of each of them. DeVega was a stract troop, Freeman became one, and stayed in to serve his nation. I was only there for the fun and the beer. Don't know about "Holly" though. He was a draftee, who changed his status to be a LRP.



**75 th Ranger Regiment Association. Inc**  
**P.O. Box 10970**  
**Baltimore, MD 21234**

**PERSONAL INFORMATION**

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AREA CODE/HOME PHONE	AREA CODE/WORK PHONE	OCCUPATION	

**UNITS**      SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

FROM (DATE)	TO (DATE)	UNIT (Company or Battalion)	NAMES OR ORDERS
FROM (DATE)	TO (DATE)	UNIT (Company or Battalion)	NAMES OR ORDERS
FROM (DATE)	TO (DATE)	UNIT (Company or Battalion)	NAMES OR ORDERS

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## **CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS/FAMILY FUND**

Once again this year the 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment Association, Inc. will make a sizable donation to each of the three Ranger Battalions, in order that the children of the younger Rangers, who might be financially challenged, will be sure to have a Merry Christmas. The money we collect also funds other activities throughout the year. We recently have assisted family members to stay with their sons and husbands that were wounded in Afghanistan, we have assisted in framing portraits that were donated by artists to be presented to the families of Rangers that were KIA, we have purchased learning soft ware for the son of a young Ranger that was disabled as a result of the removal of a brain tumor.

One hundred percent of the money collected goes to the families of the men in the Ranger Regiment. There are no fees charged for the administration of the fund. The funds are in an account separate from the operating funds of the Association, and are used solely for the benefit of the families of individuals serving in the Regiment. They are not used for parties for the troops or similar activities.

**Send donations to:**

**75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment Association, Inc.**  
**P O Box 10709**  
**Baltimore, MD 21234**

**Please make checks payable to "75<sup>th</sup> RRA" and indicate that it is for the Family Fund.**

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*Dated April 1970, is this slide belonging to former company commander Robert Guy of L Company. As B Troop 2/17 Cavalry ship #499 spools up, the team stands for a final snap of the shutter. Kneeling on the left is Ron McElroy with Dave Bennett in front. Standing is Andy Ransom and Frank Johnson, and possibly Mike Plunkett on the far right. Taken at Quang Tri before launching out to the Khe Sahn plains.*



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