



**NUMBER 44**

# THE LRRP/RANGERS OF THE FIRST CAVALRY DIVISION DURING THE VIETNAM WAR



**JANUARY 2005**

THIS NEWSLETTER IS DISTRIBUTED ON FEBRUARY 1, MARCH 1 (REUNION INFORMATION ISSUE) AND SEPTEMBER 1 OF EACH CALENDAR YEAR. IT IS FOR THE MEN WHO SERVED IN THE LONG RANGE PATROL UNITS OF THE 1<sup>ST</sup> CAVALRY DIVISION DURING THE VIETNAM WAR. THESE UNITS ARE: LRRP DET., 191<sup>ST</sup> ME; HHC (G-2) LRRP; CO. E (LRP), 52<sup>ND</sup> INF.; CO. II, (RANGER) 75<sup>TH</sup> INF.; AND DET. 10, (RANGER) HHC, 3<sup>RD</sup> BGE.

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713 DIAMOND STREET  
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## Meet Your Officers

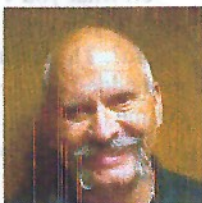
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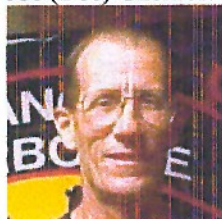
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## Greetings Fellow Rangers

I cannot 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 December 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 campfire 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.

We had a great time pheasant hunting over Veterans Day weekend. The group was small this year, only three of us, Rex McElroy, Stan Freeborn and Larry Curtis. Rex got 2 birds, Stan 0, and Larry 7 birds. We miss more birds than we got. As always the birds won out but we had a good time and plan on doing it again next year. But hope a few more Rangers show up then.

After the last newsletter I got a surprise call from Danny MILLER (67-68). I had not talked to Danny in over 30 years. For a few years after Nam Danny and I lived down the street from each other. Then both of us moved 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 a while. 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.

I hope you took the time during the past holidays to remember our men and women serving our country and remember, without 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

## SECRETARY'S REPORT

By David KLIMEK

I had fun visiting former teammate Ron HAMMON at his 400 acre ranch outside Rolla, MO. Every fall he is the host of a bar-b-que for nearly 150 friends and business associates. Former teammates Dennis RAINE and Leonard DECLUE also came.

It sure is nice when others are both friendly and respectful to you. Before the event I got to help Ron ear-tag 3 newborn calves; ride on his new \$82,000 tractor; and watch out for copperhead snakes while we cut up two fallen cedar trees for the bonfire.

Ron is now fully recovered from his last snakebite and from the kicking incident when his two bulls fought for supremacy.

After everyone ate and the horse rides were over, the music and hayrides began. His 20 gallons of homemade "hurricane" punch was a favorite for most.

The next day we had a luncheon and hay ride for about 25 handicapped locals. After they left, the four of us were finally alone to reminisce, share some stories of our times together and go through an old footlocker of things that Ron sent home from Nam.

After hearing all of the stories it occurred to me that none of us have to tell these stories anymore to prove ourselves. We all proved ourselves a long time ago, and deep down inside we know that we all served our country well and our cause was just. Later that night I lapsed in a hammock watching the bright stars up above, like we all did back then, and being happy I am still alive to enjoy it all.

Now that Ron's five daughters are grown, he soon hopes to pay off his mortgage and retire to be a full time rancher. He has found his peace of mind and I hope we all do, too.

DAVID KLIMEK

## LRRP/RANGERS ASSOC. TREASURE'S REPORT

January 9, 2005

Submitted by Douglas Parkinson

Balance forwarded	\$5476.00
Received from H. Shute	
Income:	
Dues	\$225.00
Merchandise	\$906.50
Donation	\$500.00
TOTAL	<u>\$1631.50</u>
Expenses:	
Postage	\$154.96
Merchandise	\$1636.44
Newsletter	\$356.56
(postage/supplies)	
checks	\$13.61
TOTAL	<u>-\$2161.57</u>
Bank Savings Acct:	-\$50.00
Refundable at closing	
Brick Fund to Date:	\$400.00
(included in total)	
TOTAL to DATE	<u>\$4895.93</u>

## VA CHANGES RULES FOR VETERANS WITH DIABETES

Governor's Veterans Outreach and Assistance Center has learned the Veterans Administration is setting new rules for Vietnam veterans with diabetes. Also, the center is helping veterans register with the Veterans Administration as a result of the high cost of prescription drugs. For more information, call the center at 800-442-6815 or 724-837-7988. Proof of military service is required.

5204

## LRRP/RANGER MERCHANDISE PRICE LIST

T-Shirts: black and white all sizes	\$13.00
Sweatshirts: black, S and M only	\$25.00
Hats: black or white	\$12.00
Decals: Interior/Exterior	\$2.00
Ranger Ring 9.5 10 10.5 only	\$35.00
Belt Buckles: numbered	\$20.00
Training Video: Bear Cat	\$10.00
Golf (Polo) Shirts: all sizes	\$30.00
Windshirt, Pullover: (black M, L, XL only)	\$36.00
Sweaters: Black only M LR XL only	\$50.00
Jackets: Black only M LR XL only	\$60.00
Windshirt: (converts to sleeveless) Black with khaki trim. (M, L XL only)	\$48.00
Cloth scroll patch: (Co H 75 <sup>th</sup> Inf.)	\$4.00
Cloth logo patch	\$4.00
Wooden Nickel	\$1.00
Ranger Lapel pins	\$4.00
Novelty T-shirt: all sizes	\$15.00
ANNUAL DUES	\$15.00
Shipping per order	\$4.50

Please mail check or money order payable to **LRRP/RANGER** to:

John LeBrun  
8080 Harborview Drive  
Blaine, WA 98230

The \$4.50 shipping charge covers only one or two shirts. Donations are gladly accepted. There is no shipping charge for decals, patches, lapel pins, wooden nickel novelty T-shirts or the ring.

Take care and see you in Texas  
June 23-26, 2005.

## BOOKS by and about LRRP/Rangers

The Ghosts of the Highlands by Gregg P.J. Jorgenson, Ivy Books. This is about the beginning of the 1<sup>st</sup> Cav LRRP/Rangers, 1966-67

LRRP Company Command by Gregg P. J. Jorgenson, Ballantine Books. The 1<sup>st</sup> Cav LRRP/Rangers, 1968-69

Acceptable Loss by Gregg P. J. Jorgenson, Ivy Books. Gregg's autobiography, 1969-70.

MIA RESCUE LRRPs in Cambodia by Gregg P.J. Jorgenson, Ivy Books. One mission gone bad during the Cambodian Invasion.

Above All Else by Ron Christopher, PublishAmerica. Ron's autobiography about being the TL of the first team to pull a mission as the 1<sup>st</sup> Cav's LRRP/Rangers.

One-Zulu by Curtis "Randy" Kimes, published by author. About one mission, May 7-9, 1968.

### OTHER BOOKS

For What It's Worth by David Klimek, published by author. Dave's experiences during the Cambodian Invasion before he joined H-75<sup>th</sup>.

A Troop, 9<sup>th</sup> Cavalry by Ron Christopher. PublishAmerica. Ron's experiences with the "Blues" A-1-9 before he joined LRRP.

Bumblebee Mountain, by Ron Christopher PublishAmerica. A fiction about what soldiers lived through.



## **Veterans Day 2004 at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Washington, DC**

Our LRRP/Ranger chapter was well represented at the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Veterans Day Observance at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (i.e., The Wall) on the National Mall in Washington, DC on Veterans Day -- at least in quality if not in quantity. Jim RODGERS, Levittown, PA (2/72-8/72) and I attended the ceremony along with an estimated 20,000 other Vietnam veterans, family members, friends, and dignitaries. Sam DIXON, past-president, was unable to attend this year's observance -- the first one he has missed in more than 15 years, due to a scheduled medical procedure. The 1st Cav, of course, was very well represented, as it is every year, due in part to the Ia Drang Association. This included the division's Color Guard from Fort Hood, in addition to the U.S. Armed Forces Color Guard.

There were a number of LRRP/Rangers in attendance from other units, including some from the 1<sup>st</sup> Field Force, 173<sup>rd</sup> Airborne Brigade, 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Div., 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Div., 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Div., and 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Div. It's always interesting to talk with fellow LRRP/Rangers and hear of their experiences, especially those having to do with areas where the Cav served.

This year's keynote speaker was U.S. Congressman John P. Murtha, Pennsylvania-12<sup>th</sup> District. In 1974, Congressman Murtha became the first combat Vietnam veteran elected to Congress. He served with the Marines in the Korean War, retired, then re-

enlisted in 1966 in order to serve in Vietnam. Congressman Murtha was instrumental in getting Congressional approval for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial on the National Mall back in 1979-1981 and has been a strong advocate for veterans' rights over the years.

Other dignitaries included Jan Scruggs, founder and president of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund; Diane Carlson Evans, founder and president of the Vietnam Women's Memorial Foundation; retired Army General Barry McCaffrey, who was awarded three purple hearts in Vietnam and commanded the 24<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division (Mechanized) during the 1991 Gulf War; and Karen Spears Zacharias, author of "*Hero Mama*." Karen's father's name is inscribed on The Wall.

An interesting turn of events during the ceremony was when Jan Scruggs was describing the \$1 million lighting renovation that was recently completed at the memorial when the electrical power was lost and couldn't be restored. He found himself having to shout over the crowd during the laying of the wreaths since his microphone was dead.

Next year's observance at the memorial will likely attract a very large crowd since Veterans Day 2005 falls on a Friday. Hope to see everyone there.

Ken White  
1966-1968

The first stories are from Jim REGAN and Doug PARKINSON.

## **A SLICK STORY**

**By Jim Regan**

Okay, here goes: The day and date are not important. We had lifted off from Phuoc Vinh on a VR (Visual Recon) for two Teams from the 1st Plt. We were going South towards An Loc AO and did a good VR of both AOs, selecting LZs and PZs. Lots of canopy and trails.

VR Completed we headed back to PV. We were hanging out in the bird and I heard unusual chatter on the intercom (I always had a flight helmet plugged in to the net on the bird). The Crew Chief was going ballistic! "What's up?" We just sheared the pin on the tail rotor he shouted! Don't mean much to me. Then he says that we should get ready to crash and burn! That got my attention. He gave me a quick class and told me that if we maintained about 80 knots we could fly "Straight" and maybe not crash.

I got on the PRC25, called in to the TOC: "Slashing Talon 65, this is Slashing Talon 15, be advised we are going down approximately ten click south of your location, OUT!" Did it as if I was giving a weather report. I grabbed the two TLs and told them about the problem. Get yourself together, and be ready to unass this bird! As I looked out the door, nothing but canopy, nothing that "looked like" an LZ!

The Pilot was going "nuts" with his transmissions, May Days etc to PV.

We had managed to fly "Straight" for a while and I saw the strip at PV thru the canopy. It looked like the "Keystone Cops". Fire Trucks, checkered flags and all sorts of FLAs (Front Line Ambulances) running around the strip.

Hang on was the WORD! The door gunner and Crew Chief had the M-60s unhooked and the ammo wrapped around their necks. The TLs had their gear in their hands and the pilots had the "chicken plates" pulled back from their door and their seatbelts unbuckled.

Here we go!!! We came in to the strip, PSP (Perforated steel plate) at about 80 knots. The sparks were a flying as we slowly settled and touched down on the strip at about 80 knots! A fire truck was keeping pace with us out the right door. It seemed an eternity 'til the bird slowed. It slowed then tilted forward ever so slowly and I knew the blades would strike the ground! Didn't happen! The bird was almost tilted all the way forward and seemed to stop.

When the bird reached the forward most part of the tilt, we all exited the aircraft as a "glob", before the bird began to settle back down, towards the rear! We had all, me, the TLs, Door Gunner, Crew Chief, and both Pilots had evacuated the aircraft as if we were shot out of a cannon.

As I exited the A/C all I could think of was the strike of the rotor blades. I hauled ass straight out the right side, bent over and "booking!!" Bam!! I had run smack dab into the side of a fire truck. Bounced back and sat on my duff.

Checked and saw that all had made it out and the slick just sat there rocking back and forth with the rotor blades winding down.

Next on the scene is SSG John BARNES, OPS NCO, driving like a mad man across the strip on a "Mule" waving something in the air as he flew across the airstrip headed towards us.

He pulls up, all grins and throws a pair of fatigue trousers at me saying, "Thought you might want to change your pants Sgt Regan!"

End of another day in the "Vacation Land of South East Asia." Jim RLTW

OK, who were the team leaders on this flight?

## IT'S A BEAR!

By Doug PARKINSON

It was our first mission together in October of 1967. We had trained together in An Khe and attended Recondo School together. Our team leader was Bob CARR, who had a previous tour with the 25<sup>th</sup> Division; the ATL was Don GLOVER a transfer from another line unit from the Cav. Steve "Swamp" FOX and myself were definitely 'Cherries'. Our other member, Ray PATTERSON was from a previous training cycle but had not been on any patrols yet. The Montagnard scout Shren, collectively possessed more combat time than all of us.

Other than being inserted out of our intended AO (which led to difficulties when calling in artillery and gunships later in the mission) the beginning of the mission went rather smoothly. Well, accept for the fact that the base for the long antenna had not been included with the commo kit and as the RTO I had neglected to confirm its absence. Amazing how small you feel when five pairs of eyeballs are trained on you in disbelief when you've nearly rendered inoperable a critical piece of equipment to a patrols success

Our first setup for the evening was on a small ridge in small canopy vegetation with not much undergrowth. The claymores were set out with the wire zig-zagged and somewhat taut. We finished our LRRP ration meals and discarded the empty containers at the edge of the perimeter and settled in after radio check.

The radio checks went on through the night without incident. Upon being wakened by PATTERSON to my right to perform my one hour watch, Ray informed me that he'd heard a noise out beyond the perimeter.

During later patrols, his ability to hear noises that the rest of the team could not detect were confirmed when he heard a circling tiger long before the tiger soundlessly revealed its presence.

My one hour watch passed without event, but near the end some faint sounds could be detected coming up the hill directly below my position. I awakened the TL, Bob Carr, to my left for his watch. I passed on the same observation that Ray had to me about the unidentified noises. The TL acknowledged and continued the watch. Since the noises had occurred at the end of my watch, I decided to stay awake and peer in the darkness directly in front of my position. There was some ambient light filtering down through the low canopy allowing a faint contrast to the dark under story.

Slight noise continued below my position, but were unheard by the TL on watch. Focusing on the small patches of light under the canopy I became aware of some lighter patches that would silently turn dark. The faint noises became more audible and frequent, but only to me and not the TL. Then a dark form began to take shape through the darkened tunnel of vegetation below my position. The solid dark form was low the ground as in a squat stance and slowly swaying side to side taking one careful step at a time and proceeding up the hill in a careful swaying motion.

At this time I recalled one of the war stories we 'cherries' eagerly listened to gain some sort of instant wisdom to guide us in this unaccustomed activity we were engaged in. The teller had recounted how an approaching VC/NVA had been in low crouch, advancing slowly in a swaying

motion with the careful placement of each foot.

The approaching form met all the previous visions of a carefully approaching enemy. Mesmerized by the image, and yet, not deciding whether to engage with my M-16, give away position or wait. But still the dark low form of a crouching enemy was closing the distance. Still the TL did not detect the quiet slowing approaching form that was only visible through the tunnel of vegetation below my position. Not really knowing what to do and frantic with indecision I leaned over to the TL and whispered about the approaching enemy. This was the first he knew of the approaching enemy. His reply was how far away was the threat? I whispered I'd check. Sliding back to my position I stared back down into the tunnel the form had been approaching. There was no tunnel to peer down. Just complete blackness. Attempting to get a better view I lowered my head to the ground to peer up at the sky and look for some contrast. About 6' in front of me there sky lighted was a roundish form with two smaller round forms set on top. It resembled a bears head with a pair of rounded ears. It's a bear! Simultaneous to the thought a slight low guttural rumbling began to resonate from a chest and progressed into a piercing and frightened roar.

I do not recall my immediate response. However, Ray Patterson, lying to my left and covered with a poncho was levitating vertically from his position on the ground. From under the poncho legs and arms were vainly and frantically searching for purchase on something. The entire team assembled weapons to the fore were oriented in the direction the bear had first announced its presence. Nervous whispering about what

was out there, but no response from out there. While we were all oriented in the direction of the first roar, a second piercing roar originated from about 10' behind us. Why nobody accidentally discharged a weapon, in our keystone cops attempt of six people to suddenly reverse ourselves to meet this new threat from behind, was testimony to our training or a simple form of divine assistance to beginners.

The bear perhaps sensing overwhelming odds, abandoned the frontal and rear piercing roar approach and would silently change positions and emit a low guttural rumble out of the darkness from about 10 to 15 feet away. The tension was too much for Ray, a short burst from his M-16 suddenly silenced the bear. That is until the bear silently changed position and issued a shorter growl from further away. The growls continued for about an hour from different locations, with decreased volume and progressively further away until nothing else was heard.

Bob Carr checked in with our nearest friendly force, a line company with the call sign "Black Bear".

Authors note: "Cherry RTO" Parkinson's ability to identify bears was acquired while working for Alaska Department of Fish and Game for two seasons(65-66) where he developed this ability from some uncomfortably close and personal relationships(phobia) with much larger cousins of the Southeast Asia, Asian Sun bear, the likely culprit of the story. Other witness' stories vary slightly from this truthful version.



From Wayne Kingston  
I have moved three times in the last year and I am  
anxious to keep in touch. This is my new  
address:

Wayne B. Kingston  
8086 N. Ridge Loop Way W # M2  
Eagle Mountain, Utah 84043  
[cgfonua@yahoo.com](mailto:cgfonua@yahoo.com)

Hey guys, when you move, fill out a change of  
address card with the post office. They will then  
notify us of the address change when we send out  
the next newsletter.

-----  
From Pete Dencker

Had some time here during the holidays to  
try to resurrect some old photos... I have a  
picture of the team where there were 2 KIA's  
- Jeff Maurer and Elvis Osborn TL. Have a  
bunch of other photos that I would like to  
load up to the web site.

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The following message was posted on the 1<sup>st</sup> Cav  
Div webpage's guestbook. Anyone interested?

I'm a re-enactor in the United Kingdom who  
is looking to chat to anyone who served as a  
LRRP/Ranger in Vietnam from '65-'73. Please  
email as I have loads of questions to ask.

[josephhobdell@hotmail.com](mailto:josephhobdell@hotmail.com)

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Someone sent me this and I am passing it along.  
This looks like a private publication. I have no  
idea how good this book is but it seems to cover  
the major topics

The "Retired Military Personnel  
Handbook" has been revised for 2005 and is  
available for \$13.95 from:

FEDweek  
PO Box 5519  
Glen Allen, VA 23058  
1-888-333-9335

My mother died a couple of months ago.  
She was 93 so it was time. Anyway, while doing  
the paperwork for the funeral, the director gave  
me a warranty slip for the coffin. Now think

about it, there cannot be too many things more  
worthless.

If the bottom fell out of the casket while the  
pallbearers are carrying it, I doubt that a warranty  
is needed to correct that. I guess they expect us  
to dig up the coffin next fall some time to see if it  
is performing according to the warranty  
standards. Have I been watching too much  
George Carlin?

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My wife has multiple sclerosis. She went to a  
neurologist about four years ago and was told  
that nothing could be done. "There is no need for  
you to come back." Well, she went to see a  
different doctor last fall. He explained how two  
new procedures have been developed which  
could help her a lot.

The reason I am writing this is, medicine is  
changing at a phenomenal rate. What was  
impossible four years ago is routine now. If you  
have a medical problem that was untreatable four  
years ago, give the doctor another try.  
Something may have changed. Also, no one  
knows everything about anything, so a second  
opinion may not hurt either.

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The concept that one goes to a good place or  
a bad place after death is found in most major  
religions throughout the world. The English  
word for the bad place is "Hell".

So, if an enlisted person tells an officer, "Go  
to Hell!!" they are using a religious expression,  
just as prayer is an expression of one's religion.  
Isn't it the same as saying, "God bless you" to the  
officer? What has me confused is; would this  
person be free of any retribution for saying this  
because they are expressing their religious belief,  
or could they be punished for expressing a  
religious belief in a government setting? Any of  
you know anyone who is with the ACLU?  
Maybe they could answer me.

STRAWBERRY FIELDS FOREVER

5210

## HISTORICAL OCCURRENCES

The following article was written for the local newspaper by a "local" who was in Iraq at that time. She was in "public relations" in Iraq. she lived in an air-conditioned trailer. Even though she never fired a rifle at an enemy, this "short timer's" feelings seem to be universal to military personnel.

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I have learned so much over the last year it scares me. I am intimidated by everything I have experienced. Will it affect me? Will I forget the smell, the air, the people, the work, the long hours, the heartache, the pain, the pride, the death, the sacrifice? Will I honor it in the right way or will I simply wash my hands of it?

I will never forget that during my tour 1200 men and women have given up their life so others may roam freely as they crouch in a foxhole or in a smothering Humvee; so others may sip their gourmet coffee as they sip polluted water from a canteen. Parents have said goodbye to their child for a year or more, perhaps forever, so others may send their sons and daughters to school.

Those who died deserve to know how much we, the part of the military who support their efforts, appreciate them. They make it possible for us to do our job. They guard us. They shield us from car bombs, mortars and suicide bombers. I can never express how grateful I am to them. I don't know if I will ever shake off the guilt I feel for not being injured. I am emotionally scared.

On the flip side, I will never forget the moments that, without the military, I would ever experience; the Blackhawk rides overlooking the country and absorbing its beauty and history. I will never forget walking through the Babylon ruins and wondering what I did to deserve such a treasure in life.

I've waited a year for this day. It's here. I am leaving, and it's bittersweet. I may be ready to go, but I am not ready to forget. This is the best and the worst thing that has ever happened to me.

From Doug PARKINSON

Perhaps we can elicit stories from our experienced readership for each letter. I like Bob CARR's reference to these stories as "historical occurrences" for a regular column. A caveat should/could be "There are cognitive causes: faulty processes of reasoning and judgment that lead people to misevaluate the evidence of their everyday experience". Or more specifically "...memory so fragile and easily fooled." Parky

So let's give it a shot.

We are lucky to have Gregg JORGENSEN among us who has recorded some of our events for history. But all of us have that little story that we tell when we feel the time is appropriate.

So send me your stories. Whatever you may want in print. My first inclination would be about events that are funny now, but may not have been as funny at the time they happened. But don't let that idea hold you back. Let's keep them clean enough for your granddaughter to read.

Email them to me. Write them in long hand and mail them to me. Tell the story to someone else and let them write it for you. Write it the way you talk, it sounds more "real". Whatever, get the stories to me.

Perhaps a couple of you could have a mini-reunion and put something together. I know I would want to make sure the "facts" were right before someone else wrote a story about me.

Bruce JUDKINS, you had a very funny story in one of your updates about a vertical extraction when the ropes got tangled. John SUGGS, you tell one about how a Pepsi can always reminds you of Lt. Ron HALL.

Gair ANDERSON is in the publishing business. Who knows, if enough stories come together, maybe he could put them together into a book.

I know a lot of you have seen this on the internet, but I think it is worth repeating.

**Subject: Packing your Parachute**

Charles Plumb was a U.S. Navy jet pilot in Vietnam. After 75 combat missions, his plane was destroyed by a surface-to-air missile. Plumb ejected and parachuted into enemy hands. He was captured and spent 6 years in a communist Vietnamese prison. He survived the ordeal and now lectures on lessons learned from that experience.

One day, when Plumb and his wife were sitting in a restaurant, a man at another table came up and said, "You're Plumb! You flew jet fighters in Vietnam from the aircraft carrier Kitty Hawk. You were shot down!" "How in the world did you know that?" asked Plumb.

"I packed your parachute," the man replied. Plumb gasped in surprise and gratitude. The man pumped his hand and said, "I guess it worked!"

Plumb assured him, "It sure did. If your chute hadn't worked, I wouldn't be here today."

Plumb couldn't sleep that night, thinking about that man. Plumb says, "I kept wondering what he had looked like in a Navy uniform: a white hat, a bib in the back, and bell-bottom trousers. I wonder how many times I might have seen him and not even said 'Good morning, how are you?' or anything because, you see, I was a fighter pilot and he was just a sailor."

Plumb thought of the many hours the sailor had spent at a long wooden table in the bowels of the ship, carefully weaving the shrouds and folding the silks of each chute,

holding in his hands each time the fate of someone he didn't know.

Now, Plumb asks his audience, "Who's packing your parachute?" Everyone has someone who provides what they need to make it through the day. He also points out that he needed many kinds of parachutes when his plane was shot down over enemy territory - he needed his physical parachute, his mental parachute, his emotional parachute, and his spiritual parachute. He called on all these supports before reaching safety.

Sometimes in the daily challenges that life gives us, we miss what is really important. We may fail to say hello, please, or thank you, congratulate someone on something wonderful that has happened to them, give a compliment, or just do something nice for no reason. As you go through this week, this month, this year, recognize people who pack your parachutes.

Sometimes, we wonder why friends keep forwarding jokes to us without writing a word, maybe this could explain it: they are just helping you pack your parachute.

Remember the guy who "packed your parachute" 32-37 years ago? When was the last time you talked to him? How about a get together at the reunion?

**THE NEXT ISSUE/REUNION ISSUE OF THE NEWSLETTER WILL BE GOING OUT IN MARCH. IF YOU WANT TO GET SOMETHING IN IT, SEND THE ARTICLE TO ME IN THE NEXT COUPLE OF WEEKS.**

**MY ADDRESSES ARE ON THE FRONT PAGE OF THIS NEWSLETTER.**

**"LATER" MAY BE TOO LATE.  
BILL**

## FROM JOHN LEBRUN

Greetings and salutations from the Pacific Northwest. As usual the Winter rains have started and the snow has started to accumulate on the ski hills. Have decided to spend another Winter at Big White Ski Resort. Can't seem to get enough of that white fluffy stuff.

As you can see from the merchandise list we have added a few things. The jackets and sweaters are just two new and great items. Sorry about the price but seems like everything is getting a little more expensive as we go along. Sold out the last order of black jackets, with the removable sleeves, and so ordered another half dozen. These as well are a great item. They fit well and look like they have been tailored. I finally got a dealer that would provide the Recondo shirts at a fair price. I have them in Large and X-Large only. The price is a little higher than I thought I could get them for but anyways \$15.00 will get you one and that includes postage. If there is enough demand for other sizes I can get them as well with the next order. Let me know and I will put you on the wait list until then. I'm starting to sound like a used car salesman. O'well if you need anything send me a e-mail or snail mail and I will get the items you want off as quickly as I can. I will be coming down from the hill once a month for a few days and will mail the items then. If you are looking at purchasing something for Christmas I would appreciate getting the request prior to the end of December. Only joking.

Well, this is enough. Hope you all had a great Christmas and that Santa brought to you all that you really want.

Take care and see you in Texas this summer.

## REUNION REUNION REUNION

Its coming up faster than you think. I have already made my reservation, at the HOJO, how about you? Like last year, we will be having our annual raffle. This is our main fund raiser for the year. Once again I am asking for items that can be raffled. Bring them to the reunion, send them to me or someone else who is going or mail them to the HOJO care of the LRRP/RANGER reunion. Last years raffle was great. Lots of great items were donated and I think everyone left with a little something. Bikini underwear, knives, model helicopters and on and on. If you have something to contribute and can let me know I would appreciate it. Thanks for your help and assistance. [caabnranger@yahoo.com](mailto:caabnranger@yahoo.com)

**RANGERS LEAD THE WAY.**

## Kokomo In Vietnam reunion photo



Left to right Rangers Forrest Decker, Richard Gasaway, Larry Curtis. and Tex McElroy



Hello all,

I will soon be bringing my project for Trooper Support Program to a close. I still have a few kits left. As you have read or heard, the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division will be staying in Iraq until March 2005 or later. I do not have a cutoff date at this time for support packages.

I would like to thank everyone who took an interest and helped to make Trooper Support Program a success. I mailed or passed out 137 kits to 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry and non-Cavalry supporters. The largest group of supporters was at the Library of Congress with David Moore taking the lead.

Dave KLIMEK sent me a check and requested that I use it for Trooper Support. I matched his funds and sent a check to the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division Association to be used for Christmas cards that the troops can send home to family and friends. I created and printed a Christmas card with a message on behalf of the LRRP/Rangers. I mailed 54 cards to Iraq using the list of contacts provided by the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division Association.

Please keep our troops in your prayers.

Sam DIXON

\*\*\*\*\*

*Stacy Nichols, Bill CARPENTER's daughter, designed and printed Christmas cards for some of the 1<sup>st</sup> Cav. soldiers over seas. A total of 302 cards with seven "care" boxes were sent. Children from her church, her daughter's nursery school, her son's kindergarten and the 1st and 2nd graders at the local elementary school colored the cards.*

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### WEBPAGE

Bill AHRENS checked in through the webpage a few days before Christmas. The organization had lost track of him. He is looking for Bob LARSON.

Input from you on what you want on the webpage is needed. What do you want the internet world to know about you? The webmaster's email address has been added on the webpage so that you can contact me. Let me know what else you want. You can also contact me by ground mail. Do you have any pictures you want up there, let me know. Do you want a guest book added? Let me know.

Contact your webmaster:

Pete "Dutch" Eisentrager  
1810 Kilbourn Ave.  
Tomah, WI 54660-2722  
petesphotos@charter.net

5214



## RUNNING SLACK

By  
Bill Carpenter

The compliments on the newsletter are really appreciated. But all I do is cut and paste what you send me. My daughter then composes it and the people who work for me fold, seal, address, and stamp it. I get off easy.

Keep sending me things and the newsletter will stay fat. Maybe some day we will have a "two stamp" size one.

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Dave KLIMEK and I attended the West Virginia vs. Syracuse football last fall. WVU won, of course. The kicking by both teams left a lot to be desired. I have a five-year-old grandson. Dave decided that the best way for me to help my grandson for college was to start working on him now to learn how to kick a football.

He explained how kicking a football did not really require any high level of natural skill, with practice and training anyone can do it. My grandson is already into soccer. Use the soccer for a few years to develop the foot coordination, then apply that to football.

Dave's engineer training then took over and he kinda lost me when he explained how the leg is just a hinged pendulum. Because of the hinge, the foot is traveling faster than the knee, and thus increases the energy that hits the ball (I think he used the phrase "transferred to the ball").

Dave is retired to the golf course. The "hinge in the pendulum" idea got Dave to talking about improving the distance on his drives by inventing a hinged golf club. I haven't figured that one out yet, you golfers will need to talk to Dave about that. He's the engineer.

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Two hometown boys, Marines, were killed in Fallujah. They were from the same high school.

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## UPDATES

From Doc Gilchrest

WO2 Matthew Carter is serving in Iraq with the United States Marines (son-in-law of Doc Gilchrest). His wife Amie and three children are living in San Diego, California, but spent Christmas in Texas with Doc and Louise Gilchrest.

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From John Simones

Just a brief note. The wife and I spent a few weeks in Germany and returned Labor Day week-end. Had a great time. We were however hit with some bad news that our 14 yr old grandson Mickey was diagnosed with leukemia. He spent a month @ New England Medical and underwent some intense treatment. He is in remission now, but has about a three year gig of chemo and the like before they can pronounce him aok. I looked at him in the hospital and said to myself, "there's a tough kid." No complaints, doing his home work etc. I told him that losing his hair was just small potatoes. I would have loved to have him in the LRRP's in 'Nam. Kids his age are worrying about tests, zits, and if they have a date for the dance. For the rest of his life, everything will be just details. Keep him your prayers.

John

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from Clint Voorhees

I got a phone call from Mike Wirtz.

His address is :

Mike Wirtz  
11433 Domingo St.  
Boise, ID 83709  
Cell # is 208 863 0333  
[mdwirtz@cableone.net](mailto:mdwirtz@cableone.net)

We had a good old times talk for close to an hour and seems he is doing pretty well. His voice is still the same a mere 35 years later. I know he will really appreciate being on the mailing list.

Clint Voorhees '69-'70

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# THE LRRP/RANGERS

OF THE FIRST CAVALRY DIVISION  
DURING THE VIETNAM WAR



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