



# THE LRRP/RANGERS

OF THE FIRST CAVALRY DIVISION  
DURING THE VIETNAM WAR



NUMBER 45

## *LRRP/RANGERS OFFICERS* 2004-2006

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## **Greeting Fellow Rangers**

**By Larry Curtis**

Well it's that time of the year, spring is almost here and if you have not made your reservation for the reunion yet, it's time to get started. The hotel is filling up fast. As you know the Rangers will be staying at the Howard Johnson in Killeen. We will open the hospitable room on Wednesday night, June 22.

Just a reminder that dues are due in June. If you are not going to the reunion please mail your dues to Doug PARKINSON. It is your dues that help make the reunion and the newsletters possible. I would like to thank Bill CARPENTER and his daughter Stacy for the great job they are doing on the newsletters.

Got a note from Bob CARR about one of our Colorado Rangers. Wayne OKKEN is a fire fighter in Colorado Springs and was in the unit in '71 and '72. A few years ago, Wayne was diagnosed with esophageal cancer. With treatment and surgery, Wayne has been clean for quite a few years but before Christmas of 2004, at a routine checkup, they have found that he has prostate cancer. I have been in touch with Wayne and he has told me that he is going to do a very aggressive radiation treatment. The doctors seem very optimistic that this treatment will do the trick. I want you all to know that his wife and family are doing well as can be expected. The primary reason for this is to remind all of us to have a routine prostate and colon checkup. Also a note to Wayne would not hurt.

Just got word that Floyd KIRDENDOLL is going to be at the reunion this year. So Bill HAND, John BARNES and "Rudy" TORRES, you guys better have your story right, and it would not hurt to have Bob CARR there too, because I know the bull will be flying.

Well that's all for now. Hope to see all of you in June at the reunion

## SECRETARY'S REPORT

By David Klimek

It's too bad Bill CARPENTER can't relate to my golfing theories. It's not going 90 mph and no one is screaming or making any noise. All you have to do is picture the ball hitting the club. I also make sure that each shot never affects me either emotionally or religiously. I do my best praying and thinking on the golf course.

I've visited with Doug MATZE, his wife Debbie, his son Ben and daughter Holly, twice over the past six months. Ben is now trained in the Marine Corp and will start his tour in the Middle East this spring. Holly is a knock-out who will start college in the fall.

I also spent two nights recently with Mike BRENNEN and his wife Bev. She has some prior military training. It's a good thing Mike has Bev to help him with his medical practice because he sure is busy from 7 am to 9 pm. It was Mike and David MCWILLIAMS who contacted me originally in 1989 and got me started with our reunion group. I'm sure glad they did.

Being a former soldier is a funny thing. One day we trust each other with our lives, then we don't keep in touch with each other later in life. Please try to forgive or forget whatever except to remember what great brothers we once were – and always will be. I feel this every time I talk or visit with any of you. Why not give an old friend a call and thank him for all the good times we had and for covering our backs back then. It will make you feel good.

Please note, comment from  
MCWILLIAMS' widow in  
"Running Slack"

**LRRP/RANGERS Association  
Treasure's Report**

March 6, 2005

Balance forwarded: \$4890.57

**INCOME:**

Dues \$0.00

Merchandise \$0.00

Donation \$0.00

**Subtotal \$0.00**

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**EXPENSES:**

Postage \$0.00

Merchandise \$0.00

Newsletter \$0.00

**Subtotal \$0.00**

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Bank Savings Account \$50.00

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Brick Fund to Date \$400.00

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**TOTAL \$4890.57**

Doug Parkinson

5220

## **REUNION HOTEL RESERVATIONS**

The reunion is in Killen, TX June 22-26, 2005. The LRRP/RANGERS will be staying once again at the former Park Inn now the Howard Johnson. The rooms are 69.00 dollars double occupancy plus 13% tax making the total \$77.97. We have a block of twenty rooms. LRRP/Rangers making reservations need to call the Howard Johnson at (254) 526-4343 for the block of rooms under Keith PHILLIPS, that way our HOSPITALITY ROOM will be complementary.

## **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.

John LeBrun, [caabnranger@yahoo.com](mailto:caabnranger@yahoo.com)  
**RANGERS LEAD THE WAY.**

## 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:(blackM,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
<b>ANNUAL DUES</b>	<b>\$15.00</b>
<b>Shipping per order</b>	<b>\$4.50</b>

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.

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## **BOOKS**

by and about LRRP/Rangers

**The Ghosts of the Highlands** by Kregg 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 Kregg P. J. Jorgenson, Ballantine Books. The 1<sup>st</sup> Cav LRRP/Rangers, 1968-69

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

**MIA RESCUE LRRPs in Cambodia** by Kregg 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.

## **READ THIS IT IS IMPORTANT**

It has been suggested that the newsletter be sent out by email to those who want to receive it in that form. This is something that has to be voted on by the association board and membership. So let a board member know how you feel about this. We could start this with next fall's issue. It is in Microsoft Word format, so downloading should not be a problem.

It costs about \$0.50-0.60 to print and mail each copy of the newsletter. \$0.37 if that is the stamp. The variables are whether it is two, three or more pieces of paper, and how many colored pictures are in each issue.

So if you want to save the association a little money by receiving the newsletter by email, let the board know. If you want both email and ground mail copies, it can be done that way, too.

We will be sending it "bulk" email, if you have a firewall that intercepts those, that may be a problem to be aware of.

You will be receiving an email after the June reunion on what the decision is.



## Milk and Cookies

By Gair Anderson

In less than one hour after landing for my very first mission, the reality of war introduced itself to me in the form of a loud explosion and the pain of hot metal in my back. I turned and looked around, without going into details; Miller and Elias were down, Larry Curtis was on one knee with his hand over his eye. I could hear Parker's voice over the buzz in my ear "help Elias, Andy, help Elias." I pulled my medic bag from my pack and knelt over Elias, I would glance up from time to time to look for any possible danger. I looked up at one point and remember to this day a vision of Larry; it was if a Dutch Master painter had placed him in a pose before he turned to his paints and canvas. A most powerful man standing upright with his weapon at the ready. A small stream of blood and tears ran from his eye down to his chin. He saw and was ready for anything, I returned to the task at hand and I never again looked up because I knew that anything that moved, Larry would put in a permanent state of stillness.

After we returned, Parker and I were waiting for another team to be formed, we rotated on the base radio with teams in the field. During the long nights I would wonder about where I would go next. "Carr's team, please don't let me go to Carr's team". Carr's team was getting shot out every time. Not just now and then but every time. He always got everyone back and great stories followed, but it was still more than what I wanted at that time. It was about my 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> night on the radio and Carr called up from the field; this is where we're at, all is well but "we're running low on milk and cookies". I had never before heard that phrase and wanted to make sure I

had the message right, "I understand you're running short of food and water" says I.

A louder voice with just a touch of anger came back, "No! milk and cookies".

You, the reader need to understand than I'm talking to SSgt. Carr, the badist boy in the bush, and in no uncertain terms, I have to get the is message right. I reply, "I understand that milk and cookies is not food and water". "No God damn it, who is this?" came from the other end of the radio. And then it hit me. "Code, this is a code". At that very instant, two very dynamic scenarios came to mind, one being a V.C. radio intercept operator running to command post shouting "the code, we've broken the American code, it's just a matter of time now" and then the other one, the one that would have a far more personal and destructive nature about it. In a few days Carr would be back, and this 131 pounds, heart pumping of pure nitroglycerin, individual was going to leave pieces of my butt all over L.Z. Betty. And then he did come back and I made myself small. Later that night I resigned myself to take whatever hit was coming my way.

All I got from Carr was a look, not of anger or malice, but in my mind a statement of "Son, get your shit together, get it so tight it will fit in a corner of your match box."

All other things aside and in a very personal nature, my first week was the most important for me. I had seen the effects and results of war. I saw in Larry the warrior I needed to become, and in Carr, the mindset and way of thinking necessary to attain such.

My personal gratitude to you both, and my hat off to all others.

"Andy"

## HISTORICAL OCCURENCES

### FOLLOW-UP TO JIM REGAN'S "A SLICK STORY"

Just wanted to let you guys know I was on that chopper, too. I wasn't a team leader though. I was an ATL. The TL and ATL for each team were along for the overflights. I sat on the port side of the bird with my TL. The TL and ATL for the other team sat on the other side.

Hate to admit it, but I'm not sure who my TL was then, but I think it was either Steve THOMPSON or Bob LARSON, and I'm thinking it was Thompson.

As for the other team, I'm clueless. But Jim, I can vouch for the veracity of your tale. Can't remember you running into the fire truck, but I was moving too fast to notice details.

Barnes attempt at comic relief was a good one, though, and I remember laughing my ass off.

Later, friends,

Bruce JUDKINS

SMOKE 'EM IF YOU GOT 'EM  
By Keith PHILLIPS

The mission I was on just prior to the "cease fire (?)" for Christmas in '71 is one that stands out in my mind because of a brief moment and phrase that makes me chuckle to this day.

The team was composed of Woody (Ronald WOOD), TL; "Smitty" (Thomas E. SMITH KIA 02/20/72), ATL; "Stubby"; "Jackson" (David W. JACKSON); and "Unknown", I have always thought his name was COOPER. He carried a Swedish 9mm submachine gun.

Anyway, I was walking Rear Scout and was sure we were being followed. Smitty and Woody peeled off as the rest of the Team continued to parallel a hard packed trail. We had barely gone 10 meters before all hell broke loose. Smitty and Woody ambushed three Viet Cong who had been following us.

As I was lying on my back, reloading, utilizing my ruck sack for cover (the ruck contained 3 claymore mines, 4 pounds of C4, det cord, 300 rounds of ammunition, 2 Willie Pete grenades, extra smoke grenades, extra frags, 15 second fuses and of course 10 gallons of water, and a few LRRP meals).

I kept hearing someone yelling, "PHILLIPS". As I looked to my left, I saw JACKSON with this grin on his face and he yelled, "You can smoke now, I thin they know where we are!" His statement was due to the fact I always kept an unlit cigarette in my mouth. We all made it out OK and sometime during the mayhem I broke the cigarette. Anyway, so much for war stories.

## FROM THE PILOT'S SEAT

By Charlie Johnson

Some of the scariest missions I flew as a gunship pilot were middle of the night extractions with the LRRPs in contact. "In Contact" usually meant a bunch of VC or NVA surrounding the five or six man LRRP patrol. It was always bad enough to be doing anything out there in the middle of the night but with our guys in contact, and they had to get extracted or die, close (or "Danger Close" I think it was called at times) gunship and artillery fire was frightening. It was always heartening to hear the LRRP leader telling us on the radio that we were close but we could bring it closer ... knowing that meant, on the ground, that mini-guns, rockets and door guns were hitting close enough to hurt the bad guys more than the good guys. When I think about some of the missions I don't know how we even got a slick in to pick them up sometimes without losing the aircraft and crew. I think it must have been more luck than skill that let us get away with it.

I have heard stories from the LRRPs after such missions telling us how much they appreciated the support and how they wouldn't trade jobs with us for anything in the world. I didn't know it at that time but it appears that was a common feeling among all combat veterans. I had some ground duty my second tour and I can tell you I will take the helicopters anytime, especially if it is gunships so you can at least shoot back.

I recall also missions where we were going to outsmart the wily enemy and have the slick set down three or four times, have the LRRPs get off on the third or fourth touch and go, only to have the slick take fire on one or two of the touchdowns. I don't know how the LRRPs worked up enough courage to even get off the helicopter some times.

## **RUNNING SLACK**

By Bill Carpenter

Contact was made with Bob TAYLOR, H Company First Sergeant in 1972 and retired a CSM. He would like to hear from anyone who served with him at that time. He is interested in "who is where and how they are" sort of things. He still has a voice that will lock your heels, over the phone. His phone line is usually tied up by the computer so he can be contacted at:

Robert Taylor

PO Box 1662

Owensboro, KY 42301

His son said, "I would VERY MUCH like to hear from anyone that served with him during this period. My phone number is 859-746-2114 or 412-576-6533."

Bob, the 2005 reunion in Texas may be a little far, but how about going up river a bit to Louisville in 2006?

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Another H-75<sup>th</sup> alumni reported in. Bill WINN, 1970, has been out of touch for a while. He is enjoying his peace out in California. Welcome Home Brother.

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There was an article on Military.com where the M-14 has been taken out of mothballs and is being used as a sniper rifle. The overall effect is that this extends the perimeter beyond the effective range of RPG's and light machine guns. A National Guard unit that has its own sniper school is using them.

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from Randy KIMES

I was advised yesterday that the cancerous tumor has dissolved(?) the inner portion of my sternum, and infiltrated the thinned remainder. The entire sternum will be removed, replaced by a plastic plate. Expected hospital stay is 7-10 days, with at least 6 weeks recuperation at home following. I'm guessing, but surgery will probably be done in the first week of April...ideally, I'm looking forward to being able to attend the reunion.

## From Geoff KOPER

I don't know if you saw this but NBC national news ran a series on the services that the VA provides and the anticipated problems that it will have with all of the returning wounded mid-east vets. They described in detail the VA experiences of two people, an Iraqi war vet and a vet from Viet Nam. The VN vet turned out to be Art GUERRERO and they conducted a lengthy (for the nightly news) interview with him.

He was petty critical of the VA, not for the quality of the care, but for the lack of adequate facilities and personnel to provide that care in a timely fashion. They also showed two VN era photos of him, both of which I took and appear on the LRRP CD. Except for his white hair Art hasn't changed all that much.

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Johnny 'Doc' SUGGS would like to make contact with the person he left his tiger fatigues with when he separated in March of 1968. 'Doc' said he asked the trainees at that time if anybody had a 29" waist (don't know if Doc was bragging or that was his size back then, been a few monsoons since he's seen that size). Somebody admitted to that size and Doc remembers giving the fatigues to that troop. Doc would like to get in contact with them just to find out who it was and how they're doing. He does not expect to be paid for the 'tigers'. He may be trying to win a bet that he could wear that size trousers at one time. Doc can be contacted at:

1101 Schoolhouse RD. NE  
Calhoun, GA 30701  
706-625-0436

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from Al VOLKEL

Patti MCWILLIAMS (David McWilliams' widow) gets the newsletters but she'd like to be included on your e-mail list as well. She said she hears from Bob Gill and us, and that's about it. She'd like to hear from some more of Mac's friends. Her e-mail address is [Pamk131@aol.com](mailto:Pamk131@aol.com). Thanks!

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## FROM DAVE KLIMEK

I hope to see many of you at the reunion this summer. I'm registered and will be sharing a room with one of my former ATL's, Ron HAMMON. I'm going out to Missouri again to visit and we will drive down together. Both of us are trying to contact Leonard DECLUE, Dennis RAINES, Pee Wee BARRETT, Kregg JORGENSEN, Howard SHUTE, Lee FIX, Gary PATTERSON, George GENTRY, Detroit Shorty NALLS, Randy KIMES, Gary LORENZ, Bill WYNN, Paul MIDDLETON, Alan HARTON, Frank STEWART, Richard GASSAWAY, Dennis TERRIO, Harvey CLAYPOOLE, Jon VARASKO, Lou CARRISTA, Bill WEAVER, Jim MASSENGILL, Ron CHRISTOPHER, Dennis SMITH, Frank DUGGAN, Thetis JOHNSON, Auggie GARCIA, Arthur RICE, John GUENTHER, Old Man O'NEAL, Dan GUITON, Bobby HOFFMAN, Ernest SQUIRE, and Mike and Bonnie ECHTERLING.

If any of you see or talk to any of these celebrated celebrities, tell them they're invited and I will buy them a beer.

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## STRAWBERRY FIELDS FOREVER



*HOPE TO SEE YA'LL THERE!!!*

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