



NUMBER 54

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



MARCH 2008

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

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5368

OBITUARY

The widow of Jan **Vandenberg** (Spring '67-'68) recently contacted Larry Curtis to tell him that Jan had died of bladder cancer a couple of years ago. She said that if it had been kidney or colon cancer, the VA would have treated it, but bladder cancer was not on their list. Jan had not talked about his Viet Nam experiences and requested to not have a military service. She did say that he always carried a P-38 can opener on his key ring. He was buried with it in his hand.

Jan had several photos of his LRRP days. There is an effort under way to obtain those pictures, post them on the webpage and possibly distribute them to other men who served with Jan. You will be informed in future newsletters about the status of the pictures.

May our Brother rest in peace

“Jan, pop smoke for us when we are approaching the PZ”

Upcoming Memorial Day at the Wall Washington, D.C. by Ken White

If you plan to be in the nation's capital this Memorial Day weekend, you may want to stop down at The National Mall and visit the Memorial Day Writers Project – a white canvas tent set-up on The Mall several hundred meters north of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (The Wall) along Constitution Avenue, where Vietnam veterans, family members, friends, and others who have been 'touched' by the Vietnam War, read poetry, tell war stories, and sing war-related songs.

“Anyone who has been affected by the Vietnam War and has something to say in a literary vein is welcome, according to Mike McDonell, a former Marine and co-founder of the Memorial Day Writers Project. Mike, a poet, is a retired teacher of English at Northern Virginia Community College in Fairfax, Virginia. He served with the 11th Marines in Vietnam in 1967-1968.

“What we're all about is getting other veterans to come and share what they've written, it's therapeutic as hell; it's also art. We share our stuff and we ask them to share what they have,” Mike says.

“Every Memorial or Veterans Day, it happens. It's that time during the weekend when somebody - a person we didn't plan on, comes in and reads a poem or tells a story that grabs the audience and floors us. It's what we call a magic moment,” according to Mike.

The Memorial Day Writers Project has had a tent set-up on The Mall every Memorial Day and Veterans Day since 1993, come rain or shine, according to Mike.

P.S. If you do decide to visit The Mall, may want to bring along some ear plugs. Remember, Rolling Thunder has its annual parade then in Washington, DC, so the roar of motorcycles will be heard everywhere.

MEMORIES OF YOUNG FACES

From Scott Hancock

Those rare days when the newsletter arrives are never easy ones. When I find one in my mail box, my mood always shifts. Upon the sight of my old unit crest upon folded paper, I find my inner me is suddenly stilled. From what ever busy hurly-burly pace of got-things-to-do-places-to-go mood I had been in, transitions immediately into a much more somber, quiet and reflective place, and I carry the thing back into my home unopened, a true mix of emotions churning inside.

It may not be right away that I open and read it, that newsletter. I usually wait till bed that night, when things are quiet and I will be undisturbed. It is the best time, the best way I can handle reading it.

Every year I think, this next time I will make the Unit Reunion, and yet, when it comes time to schedule such things, I find reasons not to go. I think I am afraid it will be too hard. Too hard to see faces of men grown older, faces whom I had only known as young, made harder to see by the remembering of faces of friends who never got the chance to grow older. Each year I tell myself, next year I will go, and wonder secretly if I lie to myself yet again.

It was but one year. One year in Nam. But filled with moments seared indelible into the soul and psyche, dressed now in a burnished patina only years of tears can create.

Don't get me wrong, most days are spent never giving that one year in Nam a thought, but then, - but then, it is Memorial Day, Veterans Day, or a day like today when the newsletter comes, and I am there again, hearing the throbbing beat of an incoming Huey come to save our butts in an emergency extraction, feeling my heart pound in rhythm with the whirling blades, my nose filled with the pungency of cordite, and then come memories of my teammates faces and the knowing smiles we gave

each other as we feel the bird lift us heavenward out and up from a green hill filled with death.

The newsletter came to my mailbox today. Telling me of all those things it does. Of the reunion missed again, reminding me of promises I made myself and broke, of the chances missed not only to see living smiles of friends once known, but to see again the smiles of those Donut Dollies, whose presence out there was a touchstone to all that which lay back-home and which was worth fighting and dying for. I missed the Reunion again, another opportunity lost.

I read in the newsletter Bill Carpenter's call for history, for accounts and so on. One year, one year in Nam. The memories covered in a burnished patina. Forty years of tears, forty years of raising the flag and saluting, and remembering those faces.

How can I write of that time, forty years past, and dare think I got it right? How many things might I write of and be writing only things as I can see them through that patina? How dare I even try?

I know of those who have done so, written of events of their service, and they were able to capture each truth, each date and event, so precisely, as to leave no doubt as to historical accuracy. But I, I with my patina, my off colored glasses, dare I try to recount what happened, what I think happened, and why?

I only know of hushed conversations while on patrol, of discussions of life and loves, of children and parents, of trials and fears. I only know the feelings that turn within me, within my teammates, as Tet unfolded and we watched and listened as the world went mad, the calls on the radio matching the gunfire that came from all the LZs in every direction around us, until the radio fell silent by command order. But the gunfire and explosions went on.

And I remember standing outside our HQ tent, in the dark one night, tears streaming down my face, listening as one of our teams, on the side of some hill, were being hit. I heard them

calling for help. I heard them giving sitreps as the battle they were engaged in progressed. And in the background as they reported each time, was the crackle of gunfire, and the explosions of grenades. I stood there listening to it all, the sitreps coming in, the responses being made. And I wept, because I could not help, because I was not there, standing with them. I listened to the recounting of the wounds received, of the grenades coming in, of the damages taken, the movements of the enemy. And then the reports stopped coming.

I stood there in the darkness, only canvas between me and the radio inside, and listened to those standing at the microphone calling again and again for a response, till it became quite clear, there would be no more reports received from that team. Ever.

And then I went back to my cot, in my own tent just down the hill, and lay there staring up into the darkness, until dawn came.

I know of some changes in procedures that were made while I was there, changes that many said were the root causes of some teams running into trouble. I remember discussions about the numbers of greenies being introduced into teams, about how it had once been that they would only put out only one new man on a team at a time, and would not count that new man "experienced" until either the team said he was, or ten missions had passed.

Only changes were made while my year passed, and experienced teams were broken up and made up of half newbies or so, and team members swapped around without care as to the working relationship of a veteran group. You team with a group, and like them or love them at first, if you come to trust each other, and come to know each other, then you will not be second guessing your team mates possible actions when the shit hits the fan. Second guessing and uncertainties lead to take too much time, lead to too many mistakes. And in battle with rounds incoming, you have no time and can make no

mistakes. Constantly mixing teams, treating men as if fully interchangeable parts, only works as long as they have time to learn each other. But my memories could be bad, or off the mark, I was but one guy in a Tiger suit.

Not all memories be bad. Being among the first into Ashua Valley and standing watch as dawn came my first morning there, the light, the mist in the trees, will always be one of my most beautiful memories, and the coming to know the values of and giving full respect to the Montenyard scouts I came to know..., but not the least and the most treasured, are the memories I have of smiling faces of the men I served with, when I too wore a younger man's face.

Scott Hancock
Strawberry Fields Forever.

THE NIGHT RADIO CONTACT WAS LOST

From Earl **McCann**

Bob **Carr's** team got run off that mountain two times in about three hours that same day. My team went in with C1/9, we lasted about 45 minutes before having to be extracted.

We were sent back out and, dropped off of the map sheet in a wide open meadow about ½ mile wide. We just made it to the edge of the tree line and got in a bomb crater. Not three minutes later a company of NVA walked within 2½ feet of the team. We never got spotted, got extraction.

I told the CO that there was a battalion size element in the area. He said I did not know what I was talking about. So out went another team, the fifth one to the same area in one day. You know the rest of the story. I was listing to the radio too, that long night.

Earl McCann

MY FINAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

From Dave **Klimek**

I think our last newsletter was the best one ever because it even had recent pictures of our guys. Thanks to Bill **Carpenter** and everyone who has submitted articles or personal updates. Our newsletter sure has evolved. I also thought the greeting done by Larry **Curtis** was worded beautifully, and it could not have been written better. It was fun working with him and the others from his era who helped and supported him. And since this is my final newsletter report to our 282 active members, I'm gonna tell you a story I know you're gonna like. This writing may be a bit long, but we have a lot of ground to cover to educate you and bring you up-to-date with our LRRP/Ranger unit chapter.

I didn't like using email when I was an engineer with the state. The times I did receive one I called or went to see the sender about it, and I learned more doing it that way. Why would I want to email someone dear to me when I could call or visit them? Of course it is better that way, which is why I am using this format. The point is I think I'm addressing more of you via our newsletter and you all deserve and expect to know the truth.

I could have used a medical condition to escape the draft or get an admin job, but all of you volunteered to serve in our unit, so you are aware of what we did in the army. We did it because we were Americans and we damn well wanted to serve like our fathers before us and we wanted to prove to ourselves that we were manly men like them in our history. And wearing our unit's Ranger tab also means a lot to us.

Fast forward to 1990 and I did not know nothin'. I got a strange call from a cornail named Mike **Brennen** who was stationed nearby at the Carlisle War College. When we met he had David (Mac) **McWilliams** with him and those guys had a list of guys who served in our unit. I

identified seventy of those names for them from my era. They bonged me when they said there had been a couple of reunions and there was a plan to start our own chapter. I can still remember what it was like to go to my first reunion, and this is also when I began to detox da' Nam by meeting many others who were just as though we shared the same experiences and feelings. It sure was a trip and it was a good trip.

Ten years later I was assigned to infiltrate the newly formed leaders by serving as our chapter's secretary which I have done for the last eight years. I feel good about serving my bit as an officer. Along the way I got to know many more members, and along with my previous assignments we moved into the space-age of electronic digital imaging to complete my mission.

In the beginning there was Mike **Echterling** and his wife Bonnie who is now credited for starting our roster and our chapter. He was our first PRZ and she was our's and his's first secretary. Can you imagine how much time and effort they put into all of this? I can remember seeing Mike sometimes dripping from his sweat while he was trying hard to do the best he could with a stampede of new rowdy rangers.

West Point graduate and medical doctor Mike **Brennen** took over as our second PRZ. He didn't need any help getting voted into office and he deserves all the credit for getting our unit organized, including chapter bylaws. His administration began a storm-load of FNGs, and at that time they were in their prime. There were many late night beer and bull-crap sessions and I know everyone who came got to spill some beer. But the next day I could see a shine in everyone's eyes to prove they were all having a good time after spilling some beer.

Good-time Bob **Gill** became our third PRZ and our party got better, and most of the times many were in-excess in many ways. I say this because the majority had come to terms with their army service and were making friends so to

speak, because they used to be friends. That, and we experienced the biggest growth of our unit by FNGs.

An era of reasoning began when Stan **Freeborn** was our fourth PRZ. This was still an era with many late-night detox stories, but some of the beer and vinegar had evaporated. For most it was an age of enlightenment, which means our members were learning to try to not try to kill themselves which is something we must all do if we want to live longer and enjoy it better.

During all of this time Sam **Dixon** was helping out a lot and he became our fifth PRZ. This is when I also became secretary. Bruce **Judkins**, our Web-Sarge had created our web site at his college where he teaches but the time came for that to end. I got our program disc from Bruce. I believe time heals wounds.

By the time Sam was done our Ranger Memorial Brick Fund was in place; our by-laws had been revised; an agreement was reached with the 1st Cav to donate 5% of our available funds for their scholarship fund each year; the concept of various committees' began: Pete (Dutch) **Eisentrager** began being our new Web-Sarge; Bill **Anton** began being our 75th Ranger Association point of contact; the Ranger Hall of Fame began accepting Non-Comm applicants; a re-visit to Viet Nam was proposed; our chapter began an annual golf outing; and members began submitting articles for our newsletter which is the best way for all of us to keep in touch. For instance, in our last newsletter a guy requested information about the Devron Cochrane debacle and I have the morning reports for that mission, but he didn't give his address.

Oh my, how the time has passed. There were times when things got messy along the way and although we did argue, we did not fight, and we learned from our mistakes. Then former VP Larry **Curtis** became our sixth PRZ in 2004. Now we are a much better group and getter people because of it. And we still get FNGs. Rick **Brady** from Louisiana is our latest. The

Katrina storm trashed his place, but he hopes to attend his first reunion.

In short, it is and it was a lot of hard work to get where we are and I want to take this time to acknowledge the many good people who helped us get there. They are: **AUGUSTINE GARCIA, DOUG AND DEBBIE MATZE, HOWARD SHUTE, AND PRESENT MERCHANDISER JOHN LEBRUN FROM CANADA, BENNIE GENTRY, BOB CARR, DOC GILCHREST, KEITH PHILLIPS, FORREST DECKER, BOB ANKONY, RON HALL, GEORGE PACCERELLI, CHARLES WINDHAM, SPANKY SEYMOUR, JIM REGAN, AL VOLKEL, DENNIS SMITH, DOUG PARKINSON, JON VARESKO, RUDY TORRES**, and bull-crap specialist **JOHN TRUMBULL**, who is our best storyteller when beer is in his hands.

Let us not forget about Jim **James** and Ron **Christopher**, Stag Six and Wise Owl One. Ron recently reminded me that none of us would have had to be a party-poopier for Charlie if they did not start our unit back in the day,

Next I want to honor Jon Varesko, a fellow I went to high school with who served the year before me. Margie and he were married after Nam for 36 ½ years, but they were really tight for 42 years. He suffered great with his cancer over the past year, but he made it until his birthday two days after Christmas. Jon was hard-core for sure G.I., and he sure was a good father, husband, friend, and LRRP/Ranger.

I'll close by saying I plan to call the 1st Cav and propose a two-man LRRP/Ranger golf challenge at our reunion this summer in Jacksonville, FL. And we will win. So I hope to see you there, and I will continue to act as a scout and a spy for the good of our unit. My last official business will be to run the election at our next meeting.

Thank you for putting up with me over the years

My friends
Slashing Talon 71, out

VA REPORT

From John **Simones**

I found in my tenure as a National Service Officer for AMVETS, that the obvious often needed to be stated. Many veterans just do not know what there entitlements are.

First and foremost, and I cannot emphasize this enough, use the services and expertise of a Service Organization (VFW, Am Leg, MOPH, DAV, etc) If you go it alone and become your own advocate, you lose.

REASON(s) to File a VA claim for Disability

1. Compensation (if awarded) is non-taxable.
2. Most states have special programs for service connected veterans. **
3. Certain chronic and tropical diseases have presumptive periods ranging from year to death.
4. A increase in severity of a S/C disability may be grounds for a % increase of the condition.
5. Certain severely disabling conditions, (blindness, paraplegia) carry special VA ratings, commonly called SMC (special monthly compensation)
6. VA pays a annual clothing allowance to veterans whose prosthetic devices cause wear and tear on clothing.

** In Massachusetts a veteran's service connected disability rated @ 100% receives an annuity from the Commonwealth for \$1000.00 twice a year.

(to be continued)

Enhanced Health Information Sharing Supports Care of Wounded Warriors

The Department of Defense (DoD) announced the organization-wide release of enhancements that allow DoD to share electronic health information with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) through the Bidirectional Health Information Exchange (BHIE) and the

Clinical Data Repository/Health Data Repository (CHDR) interfaces.

"These enhancements demonstrate the unprecedented level of interoperability that DoD and VA have been able to achieve with our electronic health record systems, and they contribute significantly to patient safety and continuity of care," said Dr. S. Ward Casscells, assistant secretary of defense for Health Affairs.

With the new enhancements in place, each agency is now able to view the other agency's clinical encounters, medical procedures, and lists of medical problems on shared patients using BHIE. This adds to the pharmacy, allergy, microbiology, and chemistry/hematology data, as well as radiology reports that were made available earlier this year. Additionally, DoD providers are also able to view combat zone data (including inpatient data) from the Theater Medical Data Store.

The CHDR software actively synchronizes data between DoD and VA repositories for patients who receive health services from both agencies. That synchronization significantly increases patient safety by enabling drug-drug and drug-allergy interaction checks with data from DoD, VA, and retail pharmacies. CHDR has been operating on a limited basis since late 2007, but new configuration enhancements have enabled all sites to view data on shared patients.

Providers in both agencies have more information available to support patient care decisions, and the continuity of care is greatly enhanced for the nation's wounded warriors, from the combat zone to medical facilities here at home.

5374

IMPORTANT VETERANS INFORMATION WHETHER OR NOT YOU PLAN TO LIVE FOREVER

Each week The War Library receives calls from anguished family members trying to hurdle the VA maze to get burial info or benefits for a deceased veteran because they cannot find the vet's Report of Separation or other military documents.

Whether or not you plan to live forever you **MUST** make arrangements for your death should your privately made plans to cheat 'The Grim Reaper' fail to work out. It is both unfair and callous to frustrate family members who run into VA roadblocks because you failed to pre-prepare all of the information they will need.

To spare your survivors the anguish of VA bureaucracy you should do the following **NOW**:

1. Prepare an 8-by-12 envelope containing the following veteran-related information to be left on a shelf or in a drawer that can be easily found after your death:

a. a photocopy of your DD-214 (or Report of Separation) and other important military-issued documents

b. a photocopy of your Social Security card

c. a photocopy of your drivers license

d. the location of the nearest VA Service

Office for burial assistance benefits

e. a duplicate set of your military medals to be buried with you

f. the address and phone number of your local newspaper(s) to post your obit

g. your military medal Last Will and Testament naming the person you entrust your primary medal set to

h. the names and addresses of fellow veterans or veteran organizations you want your survivors to notify

i. cassette tapes in your voice historicalizing your most memorable military experiences. (these tapes will become monetarily valuable over time/generations... you can make your great-great-grandchildren rich.)

j. if applicable... the name(s) and last known locations of prior spouse(es) / mate(s) or child(ren) from any previous marriage(s) or relationship(s) you acquired in the US or abroad

2. Include also a page containing the following websites...

Find a nearby VA Service Officer to assist with deceased or burial benefits:

<http://www1.va.gov/directory/guide/home>

Where to get basic info on VA burial assistance and entitlements:

<http://www.cem.va.gov/>

Where to obtain duplicate medals sets for burial:

<http://www.amervets.com/replacement>

Where to obtain a Military Medal Last Will and Testament:

<http://www.amervets.com/medlwill.htm>

Contact Person for this posting: Roger Simpson, PIO

Public Information Office:

<http://www.13105320634.com>

The American War Library:

<http://www.amervets.com/>

16907 Brighton Avenue

Gardena CA 90247-5420

Phone / Fax: 1-310-532-0634

One thing should be added to this list, that is information on how to acquire your brick for the Ranger Walk at the Ranger Memorial. Remember that the LRRP/Ranger Assn. has a fund for these bricks. That is if someone else does not want to pay for it.

PROMISES

From Scott Hancock

Would anyone have any names or addresses for any of the family of Felix Leon Jr., KIA 17 March 1968? I have sort of a message to give them, if I can locate them.

Once while on a mission, Felix and I sat and talked at great length about the war, how we each came to be sitting together on that Central Highlands hillside. He told me all about his family, and of an older brother, and how he had joined because he wanted them to be so proud of him, especially that older brother of whom he himself was very proud (his brother had been accepted into the Catholic priesthood).

We then spoke of the dangerous place and undertaking our separate decisions had brought us sitting together there in the hills were death stalked, and Felix turned to me and told me that our team, One Delta, our team, and each person on it, were as close to him, were as important to him now, as his own brother and family was to him back home.

We were his family here in Nam and that he knew each of us would do whatever was called for, take any action regardless of risk, to protect the rest of the team members, - because we were brothers in battle. He told me he had heard of such a thing before, but had never really understood it, never appreciated what it meant, till he had come to Viet Nam. And then he turned to me and made me swear, that as a brother, should he ever fall, that I should see his family and they be told three things. Three simple things.

First, I should tell them that he loved them and that he would be looking at them with love from Heaven, and the second thing was that they should not dwell too sorrowfully on his death but see it as a good thing. That his death was not a waste or tragedy for he had come to Vietnam by his own decisions, had found brothers here for which he gladly fought and risked all for to

protect. And the third thing I was to tell them, the third thing was the truth, that I should tell them that he had lived and died with all honor, and that they had great reason to be proud of what he had done.

I was to see to it his family was told these three things, but I never have.

I had Leon's home address once, and had planned to travel to his home in Puerto Rico, when I left Nam myself. I was going to take the message to them in person. I had even commissioned a large ornate Bible, in Spanish, with a commemorative flyleaf page in it, honoring Leon.

I was going to deliver it in person to his brother. But I never did. Life got in the way. There was always something a bit more important it seemed than to travel to Puerto Rico just then. I carted that giant Bible around for decades, till one time, a Mexican-American lady visiting our home saw it, was greatly impressed and enamored of it and asked about it, and in the end I realized I had lost Leon's address and so I gave that Bible to my visitor, instead of seeing it to where it should have gone. And I wish I had not. Who knows, one day might find me in Puerto Rico yet.

Thanks to VA's on-line gravesite locator found at http://gravelocator.cem.va.gov/j2ee/servlet/NGL_v1 I now know that Leon is buried in Site 97, Section E of the Puerto Rico National Cemetery at Bayamon, in Puerto Rico. Perhaps one day I will visit it, and try to look up his relative, but even if I never actually make it to Puerto Rico, I would still like to deliver my message, if it isn't too late, if I can just find someone can tell me who to deliver it to.

Scott Hancock
Strawberry Fields Forever

THE RANGER LEGACY LIVES ON

From Charlie Ochoa

I was in the locker room at Life Time Fitness (Fitness Center in San Antonio, Texas) one day in mid February and speaking to a young man, I estimate in his early thirties, as had been the case for the last several months. As we were talking and getting dressed for work about 7 AM he asked if I had served in the military. I said yes, I had served in Viet Nam. He said to me that his father-in-law had also served in Viet Nam in the LRP's. Is that right I said? Well, I served as part of the 1st Cavalry with a LRP unit also I said. He tells me that he thought his father-in-law served with the 1st Cav but that his father-in-law had recently passed away. So I ask, "What is your father-in-law's name"? He says, "**Rudy Torres**".

My stomach sank to my feet. I ask, "Please tell me your name again". He says, Jay Hernandez. While trying to hold back my emotions I tell him that I knew Rudy Torres and that we served in the same company but his tour was in an earlier time. I also mention that I read about Rudy's passing in our Ranger Newsletter. I explain that I met Rudy in Killeen, Texas at one of our Ranger reunions. He then starts asking several questions to validate if we are really talking about the same Rudy Torres.

He asked me if I knew Doc? I said yes, Doc **Gilchrest** whom I also met at a Ranger reunion. We were both stunned and we didn't speak for a few moments as if trying to ask ourselves "Now what?" I said to Jay, if you are ready to leave I will walk out with you. I showed Jay my Toyota Pick-up with the Ranger Scroll as the front license plate. We talked for a moment and I told him I would bring the newsletter for him and his family to read and copy. Jay said that would be great since his wife, Cynthia had prepared a website about Rudy and this newsletter could be scanned into the website.

I brought the newsletter and shared it with Jay who looked at the picture of Doc **Gilchrest**,

Bennie **Gentry**, and Tom **Campbell** at Rudy's funeral. Jay says, "Oh my God! These are the guys that were at my house". I mention to Jay that the newsletter has some very kind comments about Rudy by many of his Viet Nam buddies.

I wanted to share this story with everyone because I feel that in some small way this will go a long way toward the healing process for Rudy's family which includes Rudy's wife, only daughter Cynthia, Jay, and Rudy's grandkids (one of which Rudy took to Killeen to a Ranger reunion). I am also here to tell you that our Ranger legacy lives on as our pride and spirit is passed on and felt by those that mean the most to us, our family.

Thank you
Charlie Ochoa
Aug 69- Mar 71



This statue stands outside an Iraqi palace. It will eventually be shipped home and put in the memorial museum in Fort Hood, TX. An Iraqi artist named Kalat, He melted 3 of the heads of the fallen Saddam statues and made this statue as a memorial to the American soldiers and their fallen warriors.

NOMINATION FOR HONORARY MEMBERSHIP

I recommend that Jim Bracewell be selected for honorary membership in our LRRP/Rangers Association. This will require a vote by the membership at the reunion.

Jim Bracewell was the first command and control pilot when our unit was started more than 40 years ago. He set the standard for all other aviation support to be measured by. If it was not for Jim Bracewell many of us, to include myself, would not have made it home. His skill, dedication, and professionalism were of the very highest order. He often flew when weather and other conditions were such that others could not or would not fly. He was totally dedicated to supporting us even at great risk to himself. Jim acted like, and was, one of us.

Now, more than 40 years later, Jim still acts like one of us. When he attends reunions he "hangs" with us rather than his official unit, the 229th Aviation Battalion. He has stayed in contact with many of us over the years.

Please join me in voting to bestow honorary membership in our Association on Jim Bracewell.

Jim James
Original Commander

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 1st Cav LRRP/Rangers, 1966-67

LRRP Company Command by Gregg P. J. Jorgenson, Ballantine Books. The 1st 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 1st Cav's LRRP/Rangers.

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

Lurps: A Ranger's Diary of Tet, Khe Sanh, A Chau, and Quang Tri by Bob Ankony
University Press of America, of Rowman and Littlefield Publishing group, 1967-68

OTHER BOOKS

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

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

PHOTOS PHOTOS PHOTOS

from John LeBruun

I am putting together a hard cover photo album with as many people pictures as I can locate from the unit. So far I have collected just over 200. If you have pictures and would share them with me I would be very grateful. If you send me originals I will copy and return them to you quickly. If you send them by email please send them as JPEGs or TIFFS at high resolution of at least 300 DPI. I would prefer the original as many of the emailed picture do not turn out well when printed.

Thanks for your assistance.

John

MERCHANDISE AND RAFFLE

From John LeBrun

Greeting from the Pacific Northwest. Another great ski season starting to wrap up. Will be down from the mountain by Mid April. So if there are items you want for the reunion get your orders in by the end of April. If there is something in a specific size that you want to purchase at the reunion let me know in advance and I will put it aside for you.

Once again we will be having our annual raffle after the luncheon. If you have items that you would like to donate you can send them to me, mail them to the reunion hotel in care of me or give them to someone who is coming to bring them for you. The best way is to bring them yourself. This reunion being in Florida, should have a large attendance. Count yourself as one of those that attend.

Until then, take care and see you in Florida in June.

LRRP/RANGER MERCHANDISE

T-Shirts; black, white, all sizes to 4X	\$13
Novelty t-shirt: all sizes up to 4X	\$10
Recondo t-shirts, all sizes up to XL	\$15
Golf (Polo) Shirts: all sizes up to 4X	\$30
Windshirt, Pullover: black - L, XL - only two each size	\$36
Windshirt: (converts to sleeveless) Black with khaki trim: XL only - LAST ONE	\$48
Sweaters: Blk. - L, XL - only 2 ea. size	\$40
Jackets: Blk. Full zipper	\$50
Hats: black or white	\$12
Ranger Ring	\$50
Watches - men's & ladies	\$30
Belt Buckles: numbered	\$20
Cloth scroll patch: (Co H 75th Inf.)	\$4
Cloth logo patch	\$4
Wooden Nickel	\$1
Ranger Lapel pins	\$4
Decals: Interior/Exterior	\$2
Ankony's book: LURPs	\$30
DVDs	\$15
1: James Gang	
2: Bear Cat Training	
3: Tribute to our Fallen Comrades	
4: History Channel "LRRPs"	
5: Reunion 2006	
Annual Dues	\$15
Shipping per order --	\$5

Please mail check/money order to:
John LeBrun
932 Third St.
Blaine, WA 98230

The \$5 shipping charge covers only one or two shirts. There's no charge for shipping decals, patches, lapel pins, wooden nickels, novelty t-shirts, Recondo t-shirts or the ring.
Donations are gladly accepted.

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PULLING SLACK

From Bill Carpenter

A lot of you have been contributing "My Year In Nam" stories for our history book. The effort is really appreciated. There seems to be a shortage of reports from the '69-72 time period. So Rangers, how about sitting down this weekend and putting something on paper.

Just a reminder that what goes in this newsletter is what you send me. All we do is copy and paste. The "Historical Occurrences" section has really taken off. Keep them coming.

Don't say, "I can't write." If you can talk, you can write. Just write it the way you say it. Don't worry about the spelling and the grammar, there is a neat little thingy on the computer that I click on that takes care of that. As I am writing this, my computer reminded me that I had misspelled "grammar".

If there is any change at all in your story, it will be sent back for your approval before going to print.

Thanks to David **Moore**, this newsletter will soon be in the "serials" section of the Library of Congress. It also looks like your stories will become part of the "Vietnam History Project" of the Library of Congress.

Eventually, these stories, embellished with some chronological data, will become "The History of the 1st Cavalry Division's LRRP/Rangers in the Viet Nam War". Maybe it would be better to just take David **Shows'** advice and just be "1st Cav LRRPs".

As you can tell from other posting on this page, there are always people looking for info about relatives. In 50 years, when we are all dead, someone will be able to go to the Library of Congress to find out what great-grandpa did when he was a "1st Cav LRRP".

What you did long ago and far away in a place called Viet Nam did matter. It still matters today. It will still matter in the future. Take a little time and write down what really happened,

do not leave it to some pinhead with a history degree from some Left Coast school to write their version of that part of your life for you.

INFORMATION REQUEST

Robert Harper

5030 SW 119 Ave

Cooper City, FL 33330

Phone: 954 296-5207

Email: rharp3@bellsouth.net

My uncle was Robert Eugene **Whitten** who was killed on May 8, 1968. I am trying to gather memories and trying to find someone who might provide me with E Company 52 INF LRP scroll tab and/or crest. My family is trying to get some memories of my uncle for our kids to remember him by. Can you help or know where I can find the tab. Thank You

Brian Neas

58 West Gradwell Avenue

Maple Shade, NJ 08052

Email: brianneas@gmail.com

My mother-in-law's brother was William Robert **Critchfield**, whom I found listed in your Fallen Brothers tribute. I also saw a photo of him submitted by Earl McCann in your photo section. I was just doing some research and was looking for anyone who might have any further stories or Photos of William from when he was in Vietnam. My mother-in-law was only 16 when he was killed, and doesn't remember much. Any info or a point in the right direction would be greatly appreciated. Thank you!

Christopher R. Jella

3011 Chestnut St.

Cuba, Missouri 65453

Phone: 573-512-1454

Email: crjella@charter.net

Hello all, I'm LLRP Robert (Bob) **Jella's** son. I'm looking to contact members who served with my father if possible. I went to a reunion back in 87 in Orlando when I was 14 and it's been far too

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long. Mike Echterling and Cal Renfro took care of me like family then, and I will never forget that. Any information would be greatly appreciated. Thank you!

SIGNAL HILL UPDATE

From Bob **Ankony**

Just got a note from Vietnam magazine that said my "Air Assault in A Shau Valley" article will be coming out in their October issue. I was hoping it would come out in the April issue as that would be the 40th anniversary of the assault, but at least the story is coming out.

BOOK WITH ERRONIOUS INFORMATION

From Mike **Wirtz**

I sent away for a book- A HISTORY OF THE MACV RECONDO SCHOOL by Tom Halliwell. In the book its gives the history of the school and all of the classes and graduates. It gives the dates of the classes and Recondo numbers. The reason I sent for it is I was not on any of the list for attending Recondo School. I found my class of 11/70 Recondo number 2797 but some how the Army, as hard as it might be to believe, screwed up and had me in the wrong unit instead of 1CD First Cav. They have me in 11FFV I have no idea why but its there I started checking into this and found other records are lost for now. I have the book which I had to buy. Thought if anyone else has the same problem let me know I can look up their class for them now. For now can you add me to the Recondo list if you need further verification let me know.

Thank you,
Mike Wirtz

Thanks Mike for documenting why it is so important that we write our own history.

Bill

I had to stick the following in:
Your call, on your history
Bill

DO YOUR DUTY!

Do not confuse "duty" with what other people expect of you; they are utterly different. Duty is a debt you owe to yourself to fulfill obligations you have assumed voluntarily. Paying that debt can entail anything from years of patient work to instant willingness to die. Difficult it may be but the reward is self-respect.

But there is no reward at all for doing what other people expect of you, and to do so is not merely difficult, but impossible. It is easier to deal with a footpad than it is with the leech who wants "just a few minutes of your time, please -- this won't take long." Time is your total capital, and the minutes of your life are painfully few.

If you allow yourself to fall into the vice of agreeing to such requests, they will quickly snowball to the point where these parasites will use up 100 percent of your time -- and squawk for more.

So learn to say NO -- and to be rude about it when necessary. Otherwise you will not have time to carry out your own duty or to do your own work, and certainly no time for love and happiness. The termites will nibble away your life and leave none of it for you.

(This rule does not mean that you must not do a favor for a friend, or even a stranger. But let the choice be yours. Don't do it because it is "expected" of you.)

-- Lazarus Long (in Time Enough for Love by Robert Heinlein)

STRAWBERRY FIELDS FOREVER

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THE LRRP/RANGERS

OF THE FIRST CAVALRY DIVISION
DURING THE VIETNAM WAR



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