

**THE NEWSLETTER FOR  
THE LRRP/RANGERS OF THE 1<sup>ST</sup> CAVALRY DIVISION  
DURING THE VIETNAM WAR**



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**SEPTEMBER 2012**

THIS NEWSLETTER IS DISTRIBUTED IN JANUARY AND SEPTEMBER 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> MI; HHC (G-2) LRRP; CO. E (LRP), 52<sup>ND</sup> INF.; CO. H, (RANGER) 75<sup>TH</sup> INF.; AND DET. 10, (RANGER) HHC, 3<sup>RD</sup> BGE.

THE NEWSLETTER IS MAILED TO ALL OF THESE MEN FOR WHICH AN ADDRESS IS AVAILABLE. FUNDING FOR THE NEWSLETTER IS BY THE LRRP/RANGER ASSOCIATION OF THE 1<sup>ST</sup> CAVALRY DIVISION DURING THE VIETNAM WAR.

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[lrrp.rangers@comcast.net](mailto:lrrp.rangers@comcast.net)



**You can generate \$2.00 for  
the LRRP/Rangers  
association**

The 75<sup>th</sup> RRA will reimburse  
us for each 1<sup>st</sup> Cav  
LRRP/Ranger who joins the  
75<sup>th</sup> RRA

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## NEWS FROM THE SECOND RANGER BATTALION

### PASSING THE GUIDON CEREMONY WITH THE 2<sup>ND</sup> RANGER BATTALION

On the Wednesday before the reunion last June, several of us attended the "Passing of the Guidon" ceremony with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Ranger Battalion at Ft. Lewis.

Ranger Hall of Fame member Bill **Anton** represented our unit in this ceremony. After the passing of the guidon, he also made a little speech about the events; the Rangers of 40 years ago and those of today.

The following comments the battalion commander, LTC David Hodney, made to his troops during the ceremony were very interesting.

"Unit history strengths, history is important to perspective, and perspective is important to resiliency."

"Over 80% of the ribbons on our guidon were earned by (the Vietnam Rangers)."

"There is a commonality shared between the Viet Nam Rangers and us today. These men fought an adversary ideologically motivated, highly disciplined and who took advantage of his strategic sanctuary. Like you, he supported an ally who was weak, corrupt and ineffective. You did everything you needed to do to make it happen."

What would the Pentagon have to say about such a politically (in)correct statement?

The ceremony is preserved on a disc which will be posted on our webpage.

### 2<sup>ND</sup> RANGER BATTALION MEMORIAL DEDICATION

MARK YOUR CALENDAR, DEDICATION OF THE 2<sup>ND</sup> RANGER BATTALION MEMORIAL WILL BE AT FT. LEWIS ON WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 7, 2012. The memorial to all who have died serving in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Rangers is under construction at this time. The names of all of our KIAs from Ives to Osborne and Maurer will be engraved on the memorial.

### 2<sup>ND</sup> RANGERS HISTORY DISPLAY

There are display cabinets in the 2<sup>nd</sup> battalion headquarters for each military action the unit has been involved. Except for some photos, the one for the Viet Nam War seems very barren. There is a strong need for donations to this display.

A boonie hat and tiger fatigues would add a lot. A pair of ORIGINAL wooden nickels, so that both sides may be displayed, would be better. What would really spice it up is a sawed off M-79. Of course a brief write up describing each item would add a lot.

Anyone have any VN era LRRP rations for the cause? A part of our history is that what are now MRE's were originally developed in the 1960's specifically for Long Range Reconnaissance Patrols, thus the name "LRRP Rations".

### OSBORNE AND MAURER: LAST INFANTRYMEN TO DIE IN VIET NAM

From VFW Magazine, August 2012

The last infantry GIs to die in Vietnam on the ground by enemy action were 1<sup>st</sup> Cav Rangers: Sgt. Elvis **Osborne** and Spec. 4 Jeffrey **Maurer**. On June 9, 1972, H Company's Ranger Team 76, led by Osborne, conducted a recon patrol near Tan Uyen. After helicopter gunships raked the NVA bunker complex there, the team went in to assess the damage. Either rocket fire or a command-detonated bomb rigged as a mechanical ambush device claimed their lives.

H Company ceased combat operations by mid-July. A month later, on Aug. 15, 1972, it was inactivated, the last U.S. Ranger unit to serve in Vietnam. *It was credited with the longest continuous combat tenure of any Ranger outfit in U.S. military history up to that time. (Italics added)*

**LRRP RANGER REUNION  
PORTLAND OREGON  
07-10 JUNE 2012**

The executive meeting was held 08 June 2012 at 1800 hours, an agenda developed, and the meeting adjourned at 1835 hours. **Doug Parkinson, John LeBrun, Bennie Gentry and Larry Curtis** attended.

The AGM was called to order at 0904, 09 June 2012. All members in attendance were verified as having current dues paid (24).

**OLD BUSINESS:**

1. The previous minutes (2011) were presented, motioned and seconded with unanimous approval. One addition was made to include Curtis **Klimes** in attendance last year. Sorry Curtis.
2. Members moving without leaving a forwarding address are still a problem. Members need to remember to complete the form for the postal system or notify Sam, Bill or for that matter anyone who can pass the address on.
3. The rooster showing those members attending the reunion will continue to be published in the newsletter each year. The dialogue discussed sending the newsletter by email and Bill **Carpenter** discussed the results of the last poll. Not many supported. Although there is a cost savings members still want to get the minutes in the mail. We would need a member to take charge of updating and sending the newsletter out after printing. With the problems maintaining the home addresses it was thought it would be a nightmare to keep email addresses current. If someone wanted to take up the task please contact Bill Carpenter.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**2012 REUNION ATTENDEES are at the end of the minutes.**

1. The 2013 reunion will be 05-09 June 2013 in Killeen, Texas. For reservations call and mention you are with the 1st Cav Reunion to get the unit rate. The hospitality suite will be in The Shilo Inn. Phone number is 254-699-0999 or 254-699-0994.
2. There is still a need for a web master. Bill Anton has some one in mind.
3. Life membership dues were discussed with the outcome being \$200.00.
4. Bill **Anton** gave a brief talk about the 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment and encouraged members to attend the get together every two years at Columbus, Georgia/Fort Benning. He will put something in the next newsletter about the upcoming dates.
5. **The secretary's report was that a new one is needed. We do not have a secretary, and no name was placed on the ballot for that position. Someone needs to step up and take the position.** Not really that much work.
6. The Treasurers' report was not available. Doug will contact Bob **Carr** and include a copy in the next news letter. Doug indicated that he thought there was approximately \$8,000.00 in the bank.
7. Bennie indicated that the merchandise is still selling well. We have a new pin that can be ordered from Bennie. Ken **White** bought the lot (200) from the 1<sup>st</sup> Cav.
8. A written Chaplains' report was presented. Once again a number of members expressed a great appreciation for the job that Jim **Regan** is doing.
9. Doug **Parkinson** thanked everyone for attending and especially the first timers.
10. Doug passed on the regrets of Keith who could not attend.
11. With the general meeting over elections were held. Due to there being some write in candidates for positions a ballot was given to everyone present. The secretary collected the ballots and announced the outcome at the luncheon. Bill **Anton** requested that the ballots be counted by someone not on the ballot. This was not done. The secretary counted the ballots and the ballots will be available for anyone that would like to see them. Either come to Blaine or to the next reunion after which I will destroy them.

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## ELECTION RESULTS:

President: Doug Parkinson

Vice-pres John LeBrun

Sec: OPEN POSITION

Treasurer: Bob Carr

These positions will be held for two years.

12. Meeting was adjourned at 1105 hours

Any additions, deletions and/or comments forward them to me or bring them up at the next AGM.

Respectively submitted  
John LeBrun, Secretary

## 2012 REUNION ATTENDEES PORTLAND, OR

Gair Anderson	Bill Anton	Mike Blymyer	
Tom Campbell	Bill Carpenter	David Cooper	
Larry Curtis	Alvino Deimes	Dan De Mara	Mike
Doran	Bill Elliott	Jim Faulkner	Bennie Gentry
Bill Hand	David Hanson	Gary Kilmer	Curtis
Kimes	John LeBrun	Craig Leerburg	Patrick Lyons
Doug Matze	Rex McElroy	Jim McIntyre	Wayne Okken
Doug Parkinson	Rusty Ratzlow	Csl Renfro	Dan Roberts
Jim Seymour	Howard Shute	Danny Svoboda	John
Trumbell	Clint Voorhees	Dick Wall	Terry
Warrish	Ken White		

## TREASURER'S REPORT

From Bob Carr

start bal. 5/30/12	\$6,954.58
INCOME:	
Donations, dues, raffle, merchandise	\$10,927.58
EXPENSES	
1 <sup>st</sup> Cav: LRRP pins	\$492.00
meeting room -reunion-	\$350.00
tip for meeting room service	\$50.00
beer, soda, food -reunion-	\$299.84
total expenses	\$1,683.84
balance	\$9,735.74
brick fund (funds in same acct.)	\$1,174.00

new life members: **Tom Campbell**  
**Terry Wanish**

## OBITUARIES

### BRUCE MOHN

Received on March 10, 2012

Bruce **Mohn** died this morning at the Minneapolis Veterans Hospital. I believe he served H Company (Rangers) in Vietnam. Bruce was from Bloomington, Minnesota. If you can help me contact anyone that knew and remembers him, there might be time to jot down a few words about what he was like or did while there.

I wish I could provide you more information about him or his dates of service, but they are only guesses. I assume he was there sometime from 1967 – 70.

Bruce never spoke much about his service. He wasn't a story teller or a braggart. I hope someone from your

organization has the time to help me fill in some blank spaces. I can be contacted at;  
e-mail; [majorjeffj@comcast.net](mailto:majorjeffj@comcast.net)  
telephone; 651 481 8243

*ED: I understand that Rusty **Ratzlow** attended the services.*

## MRS. BOB OAKES

My wife Jo-Ann who was with all of us in spirit when we were in RVN 70-71 and supported us, died Aug 13, 2012 after a two year battle with brain cancer. Jo-Ann although a hippie in the 60's never wavered in her support for the soldiers. She was proud of not only me being a Ranger but of the entire Ranger heritage.

Her great love of life and giving of herself to others was proven by the over 600 people who attended her funeral. She will be sorely missed by many and I cannot tell you how I feel losing my soul mate.

We were at Woodstock in Aug 69 married in June 70 and I was in RVN and a Ranger in Oct of 70.

Bob Oakes

## LRRP/RANGERS ASSOCIATION BYLAWS CHANGES

Below are the changes in our bylaws that were approved at the Portland reunion. They came from Sam **Dixon**, our representative on the 1<sup>st</sup> Cav Assn. board of directors.

The changes were made to reduce the possibility of difficulties that other chapters have experienced. These are only the changes, not the entire set of bylaws. The changes are underlined.

Page 1: cover page, masthead

Page 2: **Rules and Procedures**

Part A. General Rules and Procedures of the Association.

Section 1. no changes

Section 2. Conduct of Business.

Paragraph b. Because the majority of association business, membership applications, and membership renewals occur during the Annual Reunion Period, the business year for the association designated as the 12-month period from the first official day of the current reunion year to seven days prior to the next annual reunion year. The treasurer shall balance the business account and prepare financial report. The financial report will include the "ICDA Form F; Financial Statement".

Page 4:

Part D: Financial rules and Procedures:

Section 1. General Policies and Fees. No changes

Page 5:

Section 2. Disbursements

Subsection 1. Regular annual chapter business

Paragraph f. Reunion room/Hospitality room usage expenses.

1. the chapter president or reunion chairperson shall coordinate through the Executive Director of 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry division association the usage of a room for purpose of meeting and hospitality. Disbursement shall be paid by chapter treasure to host hotel.
2. Reunion chairperson shall provide assorted beverages, snacks and drinking cups as may be required for attendees and guest. Costs shall be kept for reimbursement by chapter treasure.

Page 6.

Subsection 2. Special requests.

Paragraph a. Any requested disbursements in excess of \$100.00 must be reported to the President and must be approved in advance by a majority of the Executive Committee.

paragraph b. Chaplin expenses shall be included as "Special requests".

Subsection 3. 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division Association Scholarship Foundation>

Paragraph a. Donations to the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division Association Scholarship will be 5% of chapter bank balance after all expenses and income from that year's reunion have been finalized. Treasurer shall automatically forward a check to the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division Association with note designation to Scholarship Foundation.

Part E. Annual Association Luncheon and Procedures.

Section 1. General Policy on Luncheon.

Subsection 1. Annual LRRP/Ranger Reunion luncheon will be held on the day designated for Unit Luncheons by the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division Association Reunion.

Subsection 2. Luncheon facility may be coordinated thorough the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division Association Executive Director or Chapter Reunion Chairperson as directed by vote of the general membership. Vote must be taken and approval made at a minimum of two (2) full years prior to switch of facilitator.

Section 2. General Policy for Procedures.

- |  |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| <u>1. current chapter president shall call the luncheon to order.</u>    |                    |
| <u>2. president or designee shall light candle.</u>                      |                    |
| <u>3. president shall call for the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.</u> |                    |
| <u>4. Chaplain shall give invocation.</u>                                |                    |
| <u>5. salute 1</u>   | <u>7. salute 3</u> |
| <u>6. salute 2</u>   | <u>8. salute 4</u> |

9. chapter president or designee may make announcements.
  - a. in election year chapter secretary shall announce new officers.
  - And/or
  - b. start around tables introductions of attendees and guest.
10. president shall suspend meeting for lunch, after all has (sic) finished, will call for order.
11. president will introduce guest speaker when one is available.
12. chapter secretary will proceed with raffle.
13. current chapter president and/or incoming chapter president will close by:
  - a. play LRRP/Ranger Song.
  - b. put out candle.

#### **4 Things you might not have known about your cell phone**

Forwarded from Mike Gooding

For all the folks with cell phones. (This should be printed and kept in your car, purse, and wallet.

Good information to have with you.)

There are a few things that can be done in times of grave emergencies.

Your mobile phone can actually be a life saver or an emergency tool for survival.

Check out the things that you can do with it:

##### FIRST (Emergency)

The Emergency Number worldwide for Mobile is 112. If you find yourself out of the coverage area of your mobile network and there is an emergency, dial 112 and the mobile will search any existing network to establish the emergency number for you, and interestingly, this number 112 can be dialed even if the keypad is locked. Try it out.

##### SECOND (Hidden Battery Power)

Imagine your cell battery is very low. To activate, press the keys \*3370#. Your cell phone will restart with this reserve and the instrument will show a 50% increase in battery. This reserve will get charged when you charge your cell phone next time.

##### THIRD (How to Disable a STOLEN Mobile Phone)

To check your mobile phone's serial number, key in the following digits on your phone: \*#06# .

A 15-digit code will appear on the screen. This number is unique to your handset. Write it down and keep it somewhere safe.

If your phone is stolen, you can phone your service provider and give them this code. They will then be able to block your handset so even if the thief changes the SIM card, your phone will be totally useless. You probably won't get your phone back, but at least you know that whoever stole it can't use/sell it either. If everybody does this, there will be no point in people stealing mobile phones.

##### FOURTH (Free Directory Service for Cells)

Cell phone companies are charging us \$1.00 to \$1.75 or more for 411 information calls when they don't have to.

Most of us do not carry a telephone directory in our vehicle, which makes this situation even more of a problem.

When you need to use the 411 information option, simply dial:

(800) FREE411 or (800) 373-3411 without incurring any charge at all. Program this into your cell phone now.

This is sponsored by McDonald's.

#### **VIET NAM NUMBERS**

The first known casualty was Richard B. Fitzgibbon, of North Weymouth, Mass. listed by the U.S. Department of Defense as having been killed on June 8, 1956.

His name is listed on the Wall with that of his son, Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Richard B. Fitzgibbon III, who was killed on Sept. 7, 1965.

There are three sets of fathers and sons on the Wall.



## Crash of 078 on LRRP Mission

July 26, 1967

From John Othmer  
Pilot, A-229<sup>th</sup> Aviation

*ED: this is the pilot's version of the chopper crash story written by Jim Wright in the last newsletter.*

We were at LZ Two Bits I thing, but it could have been Uplift. We were just sitting and waiting when LT. James Wright and his OP's Sgt. whose name I believe was Horne, came running to our pad carrying several mailbags and said we needed to resupply a LRRP Team with ammo as they had been discovered and were under attack and low on ammo. I don't remember if we had inserted this team, but I don't believe we had.

It was on one of those steep sided mesa that popped up in different places along the main North/South highway South of LZ English and North of LZ Hammond. There was a large clearing on top of this mesa and the team was pinned down behind three large downed tree trunks that formed a triangle. Wright and Horne commenced dropped bags of ammo when we came to a high hover, I would say 50-80 feet above the ground. There were other trees around still standing and that is why we couldn't get in any lower otherwise we could probably gotten low enough for an extraction.

As soon as I got a hover established I took a look around for other aircraft and I'm not sure of the aircraft type, but it seems I thought it was a Navy Fighter and for some reason I think it was an F-5. He had released two bombs that were floating right towards us.

We were near the Southeast edge of the mesa and I duped it over the edge and entered autorotation. I knew the area below and knew there was a lake and lots of fairly flat sand ground. My intention was to get down there away from any explosions and wait on the ground for awhile until I saw if the jets were done.

The reason I chose to get down there and sit down was that a short time before I had been on a rescue mission to pick up some LRRP WIA and KIA Northwest of LZ English. The KIA was a big kid from Oregon that I had gotten to know back at LZ Two Bits. He was a big kid, he had been Oregon State heavy-weight wrestling champ.

We got down into the bombed out area and the Team leader came up and said he need our gunner and crew chief to come and help carry this fellow up. There were bombed out tree lying like jack-straws all over and they had to crawl down and it turned out to be a real mess.

We were running low on fuel and it took about 15 minutes for them to get him to our ship. The low fuel warning light had come on and we were in trouble. When they got loaded in we took off and followed an old road that we could land on in spaces where the trees thinned. The AC 1Lt. Milton W. (Tim) Griggs was one of our top pilots so he was flying and I watched the fuel pressure gage.

As soon as the pressure dropped Tim auto-rotated to the road and did a perfect job. We got out and sat up a perimeter and the Battalion C&C came in and picked up the surviving LRRPs. In a fairly short time the A/229 maintenance bird came in with fuel and we got out of there. We went back to the company area and got totally reamed by our CO for poor judgment. The LRRP team leader came to our company area and thanked us for getting them out. He was a former Marine who had joined the Army to get into Scouting. He was a really good NCO.

So I have to explain this incident to explain to you why I had decided to set down in the sandy area by the lake and wait for an all clear. I chopped the throttle and entered auto rotation and soon after that, which was maybe 10-15 seconds after diving away from the jet fighter that was on collision course with us, I felt a right/left shudder and it got quieter.

I asked the crew chief to check the tail rotor, the gunner came on the intercom and said "It's gone Sir, It's all gone!" I said, "What's gone?"

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He replied, "The whole tail rotor!" I picked out a landing spot and set up the approach and I believe I told the people in back to lie flat on the floor. I bled off the airspeed and pulled pitch and the helicopter started spinning real fast.

What had happened was that I hadn't rolled the throttle past the detent. This caused the governor to cut back in and reconnect the engine with the transmission causing the spin. I don't know if I got the throttle off but right at the end we straightened out and hit flat and hard.

The advancing rotor contacted the ground first which sent the transmission out the rear and kept the crew from getting crushed. The ship crushed down on the skids so no one had to jump out. The engine compartment was on fire and the crew chief and I got it out. At that time the pain hit me and I had to lie down. In a matter of 1-2 minutes two Hueys were landing. The first one was Gen. **Tolson** and I forget who was in the second ship. Gen. **Tolson** came over and got down and talked to each one of us.

A medevac came in and picked up as many as they could get and a Huey took either Sgt. Horne or Pulver, our crew chief, and me to the med-evac pad at LZ English. The medics at the pad put us in a bunker and said they would get us on the next available ship to Qui Nhon.

We laid in there from about 9:30 AM until dusk with no one checking on us. Finally I heard someone walk by the bunker and I got their attention and told them the problem. We were told they hadn't been told we were in the bunker but still didn't have any med evacs for us. I gave them our company frequency. A/229 HQ was only a short walk from where we were in the bunker. They had been trying all day to find where we were. One of our ships came and flew us to the hospital in Qui Nhon.

Now it gets weirder. They took us in the triage area which was busy and sat us down on some benches. I hadn't experienced air conditioning in 6 months and started shivering and cover myself completely over with a sheet. Big mistake! The next thing I knew a very heavy doctor sat down on my chest and started talking to the other Docs. I screamed in pain and he jumped and pulled the sheet back and said, "I thought you were dead!"

They took me to X-ray and found I had several compression fractures. I spent 2 nights in Qui Nhon and then flew to the Philippines for a night and then to the 249<sup>th</sup> Evac hospital in Tokyo. I got excellent care there. Lt **Wright** and I were together there. After a month our doc called us in and said we have made decisions on you. Wright you're going home and Othmer you're going back to your unit.

While they showed me my x-rays and explained that my fractures were minimal. While they were showing Wright his films I got to checking over my films and noticed a great deal of damage in the side views of my thoracic and lumbar vertebrae. I called the Radiologist's attention to those films and he said, "Oh my God I never noticed that! You're going home." They sent me to Madigan at Fort Lewis as I lived in Spokane. I was there for 2 months and got orders to Ft Wolters to be a flight instructor

I got married the weekend after getting out of Madigan. My wife was a young widow with a 2 year old daughter.

All in all my crash and injuries worked out well for me. I got a good disability settlement and have had a good life. No regrets.

Now that was probably more than you wanted, but that's my only LRRP story.

John Othmer

### **ROGERS STANDING ORDERS**

9. When we camp, half the party stays awake while the other half sleeps.
10. If we take prisoners, we keep 'em separate till we have had time to examine them, so they can't cook up a story between 'em.
11. Don't ever march home the same way. Take a different route so you won't be ambushed.

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## 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.

**Lurps: A Ranger's Diary of Tet, Khe Sanh, A Shau, 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-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.

### LRRP/RANGER MERCHANDISE PRICE LIST

T-Shirts: Black/White sizes to 4X	\$13
T-Shirts Novelty: White sizes to 4X	\$10
T-Shirts Recondo: Grey sizes to 2X	\$15
Golf(Polo)Shirts:Blk/White sizes to XL	\$30
Sweatshirts M to XXL	\$20
Windshirts:Pullover: Black M LR XL	\$36
Windshirt: (converts to sleeveless) Black With Khaki Trim: M L XL	\$48
Hats: Black or White	\$12
Ranger Ring: size 10 1/2 only	\$50
Watches: Ladies and Mens	\$30
Belt Buckles: numbered	\$20
Ranger Lapel Pin:	\$4
Cloth Scroll Patch: (Co H 75 <sup>th</sup> Inf.)	\$4
Cloth Logo Patch:	\$4

Wooden Nickel:	\$1
Ankony's book; LURP's	\$30
DVD's 1 James Gang 2 Bear Cat Training 3 Tribute To Our Fallen Comrades 4 History Channel LRRP's	\$15 each
Decals: interior/exterior	\$2
<b>ANNUAL DUES</b>	\$15
<b>Shipping per order</b>	\$5

Please mail check/money order payable to

### LRRP/RANGER

Bennie Gentry

1347 20<sup>th</sup> St.

Tell City, IN 47586

812-547-4830

[macv495soglrp@sbcglobal.net](mailto:macv495soglrp@sbcglobal.net)

The \$5.00 shipping charge covers only one or two shirts. Donations are gladly accepted

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## SEARCH FOR INFORMATION ABOUT JUAN ELIAS AND OLIVER STONE

ED: I realize that few veterans are fans of Oliver Stone. He was assigned to our unit in April 1968. Gair **Anderson** had some comments about training with Stone in the July/August 2012 issue of the 1<sup>st</sup> Cav's **Saber**. However I have not heard anyone say they pulled a mission with Stone. For what it is worth, the following is an email sent to our assn. president, Doug **Parkinson**. The email was forwarded to everyone in our email address book.

Dear Doug,

I understand you are the Vice-President of the Vietnam veteran LRRP/Rangers. I am contacting you from a British production company called Blink Films and we are producing a documentary series called *The Real Story*. The show is an intelligent and high end documentary series for the Smithsonian Network in the US, Channel Five in the UK and BBC Worldwide.. We explore the real story behind a movie and the making of that movie. The format is a combination of expert interviews and drama reconstruction telling the real story, with forensic-style experiments to test how elements of the movie work in real life.

This series we are featuring Oliver Stone's *Platoon* and exploring the real stories behind the movie, discovering the people it was based on and examining the reality of its portrayal of combat in Vietnam.

The movie is very much based on Oliver Stone's personal experience of the war and so we are actively searching for the brave men who fought alongside him, to find out the real stories from that time. I understand Oliver Stone served in E Company LRRP, 52nd Infantry, 1st Cavalry Division from April 1968 – November 1968. We would be very interested to speak with any men from the unit at this time to hear their personal testimonies of serving in Vietnam.

Also, one of the characters in the movie is Sergeant **Elias** who Oliver Stone has stated was based on a real man from E Company LRRP: Juan Angel **Elias**, who was sadly KIA on 29 May 1968. We are interested in speaking with anyone who served with Juan Angel **Elias** to find out what the real **Elias** was like and what men serving alongside him in E Company experienced.

We would very much like to speak to any veterans from E Company to find out the real stories from their service in Vietnam. I would be extremely grateful if you are able to pass my request on to members your association and put me in touch with any men who served with **Elias** or Stone. If you would like to know more about our programme I can be contacted on this email or the numbers below.

Best wishes,

**Georgia Braham** georgia.braham@blinkfilmsuk.com

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## BOB ANKONY'S REPLY

Luc, from Blink Productions, contacted me and I spoke of what I remembered of Sgts. **Barnes** and **Elias** and what I thought of Oliver Stone and his movie, *Platoon*. I can't tell from his questions what the tone of his movie will be, but he talked with me for forty minutes.

I sent him the following comment: with Oliver Stone in the unit for only a matter of weeks, and our platoon, the 2nd, along with Sgts. **Barnes** and **Elias**, faraway in battle in A Shau Valley at the time, it is very odd how Oliver Stone can say he served with those men and was inspired by Sgt. **Elias**.

I forwarded a copy of the report that shows Sgt. **Elias** was killed in Quang Tri Province from multiple fragmentation wounds on May 29, 1968 and I forwarded any photos I have of **Barnes** and **Elias**.

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## HISTORICAL OCCURRENCES

### VANHOOK'S DEROS GIFT

From Bill Hand

*(continued from last issue  
of the newsletter))*

#### *part 2*

At 0630, I woke the other team members and set turns for cooking chow, putting **Bitticks** last. **VanHook** quietly fussed the whole time about my dangerous nocturnal conversations. As the morning progressed, each of the team members finished their meals, inspected weapons and reapplied camouflage to their faces and arms. **Bitticks** began to heat his meal water with a small ball of C-4. As I continued to observe the trail junction some movement caught my eye on the Northwest branch. Before I could alert the rest of the team, Tom **Ford** stood erect pointing to the intersection and said "Gooks!"

As their lead element pointed at our position, I fired my CAR-15 missing at a range of maybe 115 meters. The team picked up the firing but the enemy element fell back to the cover of the reverse slope of the hill on which the junction was situated.

We immediately began taking small arms fire and I realized that the unknown sized element could flank our position by advancing on our left side. I yelled to **VanHook** to get three guns covering the North approach, while I grabbed for the radio to call for support. Due to the volume of incoming fire, I elected to break procedure by not encoding my message.

"Silent Avenger 65, this is Avenger 3-foxtrot we're in deep stuff over!" The small arms increased in intensity as our people began to identify the flanking enemy.

"Silent Avenger 3-Foxtrot this is 65, we have you Lima Charlie, but be advised that you are using improper radio procedure and you must encode a code Two to transmit on this push." I recognized the voice of Sgt. Joe **Paluso**, but could not believe what I heard.

"Negative on the code Two 65, request red-leg fire Delta Tango Alpha ASAP." I replied as I fired the Claymore mine oriented toward the source of considerable fire.

"3-Foxtrot be advised that you are compromising this push and that you must transmit a Code Two", **Paluso** advised.

"**Paluso**, you bastard, go to the trash push and if I make it back to camp, I'm going to cram your Code Two up your butt and then kill you!" I yelled back.

At this point the soothing voice of SSG Rudy **Torres** came over the horn, "Wilco on the trash push my good man."

**Lambert** quickly dialed in the frequency for the unsecured channel and called "65 this is Three Foxtrot, we're up!"

I yelled at the team to control their rate of fire as **Torres** responded, "Roger 3-Foxtrot, sounds like you could use some help out there. I've got tubes and birds cranking, tell me what you want the red-leg to fire."

"Confirm fire Delta Tango Alpha, Zone Fire three by five, troops in the open battery five, over!"

"Seconds later Rudy responded, "Roger on the Zone Fire, Delta Tango Alpha, Three by Five, Battery Five. Red Leg advises to go to their push for adjusting fire, over."

Over the noise of the steady gunfire, I yelled at **Lambert** to drag the spare PRC-25 to our position and to dial up the artillery frequency. "Fast Gun 22, this is 3- Foxtrot, over."

"Roger, three foxtrot, we have you Lima Charlie and are prepared to fire marking round on Delta Tango Alpha", came the reply from the 105 howitzer battery located to our Northwest at LZ Jane.

"Roger, fire it."

"Shot over!"

Hearing the boom of the shot in the distance, I replied, "Shot out!"

"Splash, over!" The smoke round impacted exactly on target in the trail junction. To the team I yelled, "Get low, it's coming!" and then to the artillery, "Smoke round on target, fire for effect!"

Immediately, the sounds of multiple artillery rounds being fired filled the lulls between the small arms fire.

"Three Foxtrot, shot over!"

Hearing the approaching shells, I responded, "Shot out!"

"Splash, over." The FDC was warning of the impending detonation of the first volley. Suddenly, the area of a football field erupted in explosive fury. No longer could we hear the guns firing in the background as the high explosive shells kept falling on the junction.

**Lambert** handed me the primary radio hand-set and pointed at the helicopter gun-ships orbiting in the distance. Sergeant **Torres** had come through on his promise for complete support. Not knowing the gun-ship call signs, I called, "Unidentified gun birds this is Avenger Three Foxtrot, over!"

"Roger, Three Foxtrot this is Blue Max at your service, we'll roll in at your direction when we get a check fire from the Red-Leg."

"Roger, Blue Max monitor red leg push for check fire!" The artillery fire continued ripping up the area of the junction and now the only incoming fire was from our Northwest where the flanking NVA were positioned.

I crawled over to **VanHook** and **Bitticks** who were facing the flankers to get a better sense of our situation. **Hook** had his M-16 at his cheek ready to fire but just laid there in an aimed position. **Bitticks** explained, "See that bush about 50 meters out? There's a Gook behind it." As I watched the NVA parted the branches of his cover and with a clear target, **VanHook** fired. The round hit the NVA squarely between the eyes, lifting him from a sitting position and slamming him back against the ground as his head exploded.

**Lambert** yelled at me, holding up one of the radio handsets. I crawled back over, took the handset, "Three Foxtrot, go."

"Roger Three Foxtrot, this is Fast Gun 22, be advised last six are on the way and we are check fire."

"Roger two two understand check fire .... Break. Blue Max this is Three Foxtrot. Did you copy check fire from Fast Gun?" The last rounds had just impacted when Blue Max responded.

"Roger on the check fire, where do you want us to put our ordnance?"

"Blue Max, do you have our location in sight?" I responded while listening to the diminishing volume of small arms fire which was concentrated in the area in which **Hook's** element was covering.

"Roger, we have you identified."

"Max make your run east to west, from the trail junction one hundred meters out. Guns and rockets, over."

"Roger that keep your pennies low we're rolling in hot at this time!" I yelled at the team to get down as the gun-ships started their run. In trail formation with guns burping and rockets firing, Blue Max quickly paralleled our position and lifted clear of the target area. No more fire came from that quarter.

"Ah, Three Foxtrot, this is Blue Max, how was that, over?"

"Max, that was on target but request you make one more run up the North-South ravine where you pulled out."

"Roger, I have it in sight. Are you taking fire from that area?"

"Negative, but that is their only escape route that we can't observe."

"Roger, we're rolling in!" The gun-ships again delivered their lethal ordnance on the draw. "Uh, Three Foxtrot, what can we do for you now?"

There was complete silence except for the beating of the helicopter blades. "Max, if you would orbit over our position I'd appreciate it ....break, six five do you copy?"

"Roger Three Foxtrot, go."

"Six-five, request that we implement Plan Zebra, over." Zebra was the plan that Captain **Gooding** and I had formulated which would allow the team to be re-supplied by the Blues of the First of the Ninth Cavalry. After the resupply the team would extend the mission for another five days.

"Ah, Three Foxtrot this is six-five, we do not copy 'Zebra'. What the foxtrot, over?" **Torres** evidently had not been told of our plan.

"Six-five please contact Avenger Six for details."

"Three Foxtrot, be advised that Six left for Alpha Kilo at first light." Without Captain **Gooding** being there to coordinate the effort in a timely manner, Zebra would not work.

"Roger Six Five, request extraction as soon as possible."

"Roger on the exfil, birds are on the way .... break. Blue Max call sign for the lift will be Red Dog 11. They request you remain on station for pick up, do you copy?"

"Roger that."

"Break, Blue Max, Avenger Three Foxtrot, this is Red Dog 11 inbound to your location out of the Sierra, five miles out. Three Foxtrot what is your situation? Over."

"Dog 11 this is Three Foxtrot, be advised that the PZ will be green and that Blue Max is flying cover. Will pop goofy grape when you are one mike out ... break, Max be advised that we are going to blow two claymores at this time." I yelled at the team to get down while I fired the two Claymore mines that were not oriented for the firefight. Both exploded spewing their steel shot across the southern running portion of the trail.

After the noise subsided, I yelled to the team, "Birds inbound, saddle-up!" Hastily, the team members policed up their magazines, struggled into their ruck-sacks, and assumed positions for extraction, all the while keeping a wary eye out for any NVA activity.

**Lambert** handed me the hand set. "Avenger, this is Dog 11, we are one mike out. Pop smoke, over." I pulled the pin on a purple smoke grenade and threw it on the crest of our hill. "Dog 11 smoke out, over."

"Ah, roger that, identify goofy grape. Are your packs ready for pick-up?"

"This is Three Foxtrot, roger goofy grape, affirmative on the pick-up." The Huey set down upwind from the smoke, and the team boarded in an orderly but very quick manner. I gave the pilot the thumbs up signal that we were all aboard and he pulled pitch, lifting us off for the short ride back to Evans.

On our return to Evans for debriefing, **Paluso** was nowhere to be found. **Torres** had taken me at my word and sent Paluso to An Khe. While the team was undergoing debriefing, the gun-ships gave the following assessment of the action; 1 NVA KIA by small arms fire, 3 NVA KIA by artillery, and 6 NVA KIA by gun-ship. Total enemy casualties were 14 KIA confirmed for the mission.

**VanHook** went underground in a bunker to finish this tour, but came back for two more with the Special Forces. Back in the real world, Don became an EMT in North Carolina. He and I were able to visit several times and I talked to him the day before he died of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.

Tom **Ford** transferred out of the unit after the disastrous Signal Hill mission in the A Shau Valley. He has yet to attend a reunion.

Little John **Hardesty** completed his tour, returned to Maryland and raided his family. I had the pleasure of talking to him a year or so ago but we are still waiting for him to join us at our annual reunion.

Ron **Bitticks**, the erst-while hippie artist that no one wanted, became an outstanding Team Leader, winning a Silver Star during his tour. Ron is currently a college level art teacher in Milwaukee and attended his first reunion in 1996.

Newlywed Glenn **Lambert** was killed in action the following month on Signal Hill in the A Shau Valley.

I forgave Joe **Paluso** at a reunion at Fort Hood.

Bill Hand

### **Roger's Rangers Rules**

9. If you are obliged to retreat, let the front of your whole party fire and fall back, till the rear has done the same, making for the best ground you can; by this means you will oblige the enemy to pursue you, if they do it at all, in the face of a constant fire.



## WRITING YOUR STORY

Parts of this article are extracted from a  
**BEHIND THE LINES** magazine article  
Written by Gregg Jorgenson

How many times have you read a "war story" or a military article and said to yourself, "I can do that — and better, too." And you are right.

The stories you guys have written for our "Historical Occurrences" are the most accurate there is of the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division's LRRP/Rangers unit in the Viet Nam War. You were there when it happened. They are not written by some major who worked in G-2 who read reports, or listened to the radio transmissions you were sending when you were "in contact".

There is no one better to record history than the person who was there and saw what happened.

There are no big secrets with writing, just do it. But you have to take the time to do it. Like every thing else, the more you write, the better you will be at it. You were not the best LRRP in the company on your first mission. You may not have been the best LRRP in the company on your last mission. But you were definitely a better LRRP on your last mission than you were on your first.

The same is true with writing. How many men served in our outfit who said, "I can't do that!" I'd say none, zero. How many of us volunteered for the outfit just to see if we were good enough to play with the big kids? Give writing a shot, you may surprise yourself, and other people, at how good you are.

It all starts with an event that you want to write about. After that you simply keep adding details of what happened during that event. Then you arrange the details in the sequence they happened. Finally, spend a little more time, and ink, on things that you think are more important.

After you have the story the way you want it, walk away for a few days, then come back and read it. This fresh look will often change some things. It may prompt you to call a team member to get their opinion. Give him a call, you have been meaning to contact him anyway.

## MILITARY BRATS

[Many of you may know that the term Brat is a common reference to children of military members. It is a term of endearment - referring to a group who endure hardships, frequently move, change schools, leave behind friends, put up with frequent deployments, long absences of their parent(s), and (sometimes) inadequate government housing.]

Well - it turns out my wife was right ... and the NDU library came through. A researcher there found a book written in 1921 which described the origins of the term. It came, like many of our military traditions, from the British Army.

It seems that when a member of the British Army was assigned abroad and could take his family (mostly in India), the family went with the member in an Admin status entitled: **BRAT status. It stands for: British Regiment Attached Traveler.**

Over the years, it was altered to refer only to the children of the military member who were all males as the wives of the British Army objected to the term referring to them. The term not only stuck, but in many cases was adopted world-wide.

I can't emphasize too much the support role of families to our military. They move all over the world. Continuity of education, friendships ... and even living conditions are often lacking. The success of the military is dependent upon the safety and support of their family members.

That is why one of the Chief of Staff of the Air Force's top five priorities is: Developing and Caring for Airmen and their families. Family members' motto is exactly the same as that of the

Michael M. Dunn  
President/CEO  
Air Force Association

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DD FORM 214  
EXTRA SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFIT

For those with active duty between January 1957 to December 31, 2001, we are passing on good information for all you military folks when you apply for social security. I know this may be too early for some of you to think about social security but, keep living and you will get there.

See the web site & notes below to possibly increase your Social Security Benefits.

DD FORM 214 -- SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFIT Please share this with anyone who had active duty service between January 1957 to December 31, 2001, and planning for retirement.

In a nutshell it boils down to this: you qualify for a higher social security payment because of your military service, for active duty any time from 1957 through 2001 (the program was done away with 1 January 2002).

Up to \$1200 per year of earnings credit credited at time of application - which can make a substantial difference in social security monthly payments upon your retirement. You must bring your DD-214 to the Social Security Office

and you must ask for this benefit to receive it!

Soc Sec website: <http://www.ssa.gov/retire2/military.htm>

This is something to put in your files for when you apply for Social Security down the road.. It is NOT just for retirees, BUT anyone who has served on active duty between January 1957 to December 31, 2001.

FYI - this benefit is not automatic, you must ask for it!

We've all been on active duty between 1957 and 2001 or know someone who has.

Since 1957, if you had military service earnings for active duty (including active duty for training), you paid Social Security taxes on those earnings. Since 1988, inactive duty service in the Armed Forces reserves (such as weekend drills) has also been covered by Social Security.

Under certain circumstances, special extra earnings for your military service from 1957 through 2001 can be credited to your record for Social Security purposes. These extra earnings credits may help you qualify for Social Security or increase the amount of your Social Security benefit.

Special extra earnings credits are granted for periods of active duty or active duty for training. Special extra earnings credits are **not** granted for inactive duty training.

If your active military service occurred

**From 1957 through 1967**, we will add the extra credits to your record when you apply for Social Security benefits.

**From 1968 through 2001**, you do not need to do anything to receive these extra credits. The credits were automatically added to your record.

**After 2001**, there are no special extra earnings credits for military service.

**TRICARE Announces New Contractor**

May 7, 2012

As of May 1, 2012, Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, Inc. (MetLife) is the new TRICARE Dental Program (TDP) contractor. Beneficiaries purchasing TDP will see expanded dental benefits beginning May 1 with lower monthly premium rates than last year. More details about premiums costs can be found on the MetLife TDP website at [mybenefits.metlife.com/tricare](http://mybenefits.metlife.com/tricare). TDP information is available by calling 1-855-638-8371 in the U.S., 1-855-638-8372 outside the United States or online through the MetLife TDP website at [mybenefits.metlife.com/tricare](http://mybenefits.metlife.com/tricare). The website has more information about costs, coverage details and finding a provider. For more information about TRICARE's dental programs, visit the TRICARE Dental webpage at [www.tricare.mil/dental](http://www.tricare.mil/dental). For more on TRICARE programs, visit the [Military.com](http://Military.com) TRICARE section.

"Old Rangers never die. They just go to Hell and regroup."

S 599

## PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY SUPPORT GROUP

*ED: Peripheral neuropathy is a disease which causes degeneration of the nerves which connect the brain to the skin and muscles. This nerve degeneration has been tied to exposure to Agent Orange. The VA is fighting this issue.*

### **Veterans and Agent Orange**

**A principle to remember:** Lack of proof of a connection between a medical condition and a cause in medicine, is never proof that there is no connection. This is where the legal principle of reasonable doubt and the recognized principle of high probability enter the equation.

Medicine is slowly coming to terms with the fact that Peripheral Neuropathy is a potentially serious condition and a disease of the Peripheral Nervous system, often leading to serious disability and is not **JUST** the symptom of something else.

The foundation principle for dismissing toxins (i.e. Agent Orange) as rarely causing Peripheral Neuropathy is the long standing principle that once a person is removed from a toxin, the symptoms of Peripheral Neuropathy will usually cease and if the toxin is retained in the human body, the levels are not high enough to cause a chronic neuropathy.

One of the well known causes of Peripheral Neuropathy is type two diabetes, which the VA notes is caused by exposure to Agent Orange and so chronic peripheral neuropathy secondary to diabetes would be approved by the VA. Thus the standards of the VA, with claims that Agent Orange involves only acute forms of neuropathy and not chronic forms fail again the test of time and fact.

When Peripheral Neuropathy was first listed by the VA in reference to Agent Orange, the VA criteria was very broad and Vietnam and Korean veterans flocked to the VA for help. The VA responded to this large surge of veterans seeking help by reducing the time criteria from exposure to symptoms and from symptom on set to remitting of symptoms. The VA did this multiple times sharing the fact of their uncertainty of what was involved with Peripheral Neuropathy. Then the VA stated that the condition recognized is limited to acute and sub-acute peripheral neuropathy. This medical opinion was based on NO research or fact of note combined with old and unscientific data or opinion. With these changes any claim regarding Peripheral Neuropathy based on presumed exposure to Agent Orange became a useless waste of time. To this day the VA continues to claim that any chronic neuropathy or polyneuropathy was not supported by the data from the Ranch Hand Study or Air Force Data.

Veterans should consider using notarized affidavits from the treating Neuromuscular Neurologist, when the VA refuses to recognize facts in the veteran's medical record. Affidavits from your qualified doctor can be used to counter opinions from unqualified VA doctors. Did you know that by VA law any doctor with an MD qualifies to render an opinion in your case and they may be from any field of medicine? Many of them are often retired, non-practicing and are not Board Certified or have current training. Affidavits from your qualified doctor can be effective when misstatements of fact are repeated in VA documents until the VA even believes them! The use of affidavits places the expertise of your treating Board Certified Neuromuscular Neurologists in the court with you.

Using the facts in your medical record, write a DRAFT (get someone to help you) of the document for the doctor to consider and sign on their letterhead adding a notary seal. Remember, stick to the recorded facts and the doctor should not have a problem with the document. The doctor can confirm any medical conclusions regarding the facts with their medical expertise and updated sources of medical information about Neuropathy. What you are establishing is reasonable doubt while using the accepted principle of highest probability. If medical tests have ruled out all other causes, then the highest probability is that your chronic neuropathy is due to your exposure to Agent Orange.

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**A REMINDER IN HISTORY**  
**NORTH VIETNAMESE**  
**GENERAL VO NGUYEN GIAP**

From Jim James

General Giap was a brilliant, highly respected leader of the North Vietnam military. The following quote is from his memoirs currently found in the Vietnam War memorial in Hanoi:

'What we still don't understand is why you Americans stopped the bombing of Hanoi. You had us on the ropes. If you had pressed us a little harder, just for another day or two, we were ready to surrender!

It was the same at the battle of TET. You defeated us! We knew it, and we thought you knew it. But we were elated to notice your media was helping us. They were causing more disruption in America than we could in the battlefields. We were ready to surrender. You had won!

General Giap has published his memoirs and confirmed what most Americans knew. The Vietnam War was not lost in Vietnam - it was lost at home. The same slippery slope, sponsored by the U.S. media, is currently underway. It exposes the enormous power of a biased media to cut out the heart and will of the American public.

**NOTE:** *General Giap commanded the Viet Minh from the time they started fighting the Japanese in 1936 until the French were defeated in 1954. He then became the head of the North Vietnam military after Indochina was divided into North and South Vietnam.*

A truism worthy of note: . . .

Do not fear the enemy,  
for they can take only your life.

**Fear the media,**  
for they will distort your grasp of reality and destroy your honor.

**The following are some extracts from the book "STREET WITHOUT JOY"**  
**The French Debacle in Indochina**  
**(1946-1954)**

"Remember -- the enemy is not fighting this war as per Army regulations"  
(A sign on the wall of the French guerrilla warfare school in North Vietnam, 1950)

"In the jungle -- there is no cheap substitute for --- the patiently trained jungle fighter who will stay in the jungle, not on the edge of it, and who will outstay the enemy."

"The recruits for the (commando group) was at first based on a wonderful batch of characters and 'troublemakers' considered too individualistic by their unit commanders who were glad to get rid of them anyway. The (commandos) obeyed (orders) on the all-important fact that they prove themselves equal to the task."

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**tourniquets**

The use of tourniquets as a part of a first measured response for massive extremity bleeding has saved countless lives in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere and represents a true paradigm shift in treatment compared to what had been Doctrine and what had been taught since WWII up until 2001. It is estimated that the use of a simple tourniquet as a response to extremity hemorrhage in Vietnam would have saved a minimum of 2500 battlefield deaths. Credit goes to the Committee on Tactical Combat Casualty Care for their ceaseless efforts to promote the use of tourniquets on the battlefield and to the agencies such as the Army's Institute of Surgical Research in providing the research to determine what are the best available choices.

***HEROES DON'T WEAR CAPES, THEY WEAR DOG TAGS!***

5601

## **OPERATION DELAWARE/ LAM SON 216**

*The following article was extracted from an after action report by B Company, 227<sup>th</sup> Assault Helicopter Battalion, originally printed in The Cavalry Magazine 1968*

On 19 April 1968, the 227<sup>th</sup> Assault Helicopter Battalion, commanded by LTC W. F. Dixon was prepared to commit its maximum available resources in the third massive helicopter assault within a month, Operation/Delaware/Lam Son 216. The plan of operation was to simultaneously assault into the A Shau Valley and to insert a Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol to secure "Signal Hill", a 4879 foot peak 5 kilometers northeast of A Loui Airfield to be used as a vital communications relay station. At 0730 hours, 19 April 1968, the weather, which was to play a harassing part throughout the 29 day operation, was a thin overcast on the plains and solid overcast above the valley. The cloud tops, however, were at about 4500 feet. The top of Signal Hill was above the clouds. With the main assault aircraft on a temporary weather hold, Co B, 227<sup>th</sup> AHB, with 4 UH-1H helicopters, a command and control ship, and 2 escort gunships from D. Co. were suddenly in the position of the lead assault element. Carrying an aircraft load (ACL) of 5, the 4 lift aircraft departed Camp Evans, climbed through the thin overcast, and were vectored to the initial landing zone.

It was briefed to be a single ship LZ and intelligence reports had spotted anti-aircraft positions along the ridge to the northeast and a heavy concentration of assorted weapons in the valley floor to the west. The initial approach was attempted directly to the west, approaching the hill mass at a 45 degree angle. The first view of the LZ showed it to be a bomb crater on a 40 degree slope surrounded by 50 foot trees. Touchdown was impossible and the LRRPs would have to be repelled from about 30 feet. The lead aircraft was unable to maintain a position over the LZ and made a "go around". The second aircraft attempting the drop lost power and crashed into the LZ, sliding down the hill into the trees. The approach axis was shifted from west to east and the lead aircraft on a second approach successfully repelled his load and extracted a miraculously uninjured crew of the downed aircraft. A total of 14 sorties were lifted into Signal Hill without further incident with constant improvement being made on the LZ. From the initial assault it looked like a mild run as no significant anti-aircraft fire was encountered.

### **101 SOLDIERLY THOUGHTS**

1. Never accept an officer as competent based on his source of commission.
2. Your right to influence the battlefield is diminished in ratio to the distance you are from the actual arena of action.
3. The battlefield selects its own Generals. No school or board can replace it.
4. Never call fire on your own troops, unless you stand among them.
5. Leaders are indeed born and no military school can provide what God did not.
6. Equipment procurement will always be compromised by not only being made by the lowest bidder, but by attempting to make it multi-functional.
7. Attempting to lighten the soldier's load by diminishing the weight of any given weapon, will always result in shorter range and less firepower.
8. Excellent staff officers rarely make good battlefield commanders.
9. Outstanding commanders will surround themselves with excellent staff officers.
10. Never make command a reward for good staff work.
11. Discipline began its decline with the demise of the swagger stick and centralized promotion boards.
12. Outstanding NCO's may make good officers. But, rarely will a riffed officer make a good NCO.
13. Atheists will never be trusted by their troops on the battlefield.
14. Women can do many things men do, except for a few days every month.

5602

## **“THROWIN’ A FIT!”**

From Jim Regan

Another lazy day in the vacationland of Southeast Asia. I’m in my hootch at the end of my First Platoon. Divvying up the Sundry Packs for the Teams. Lots of stuff is really good. Cigarettes, stationary, shaving cream, razors and blades, etc. I try to “share the wealth” among all the Teams. Most times, after I give the stuff to the TLs, I later “Find” Pall Malls, Camels, Chesterfields or Lucky Strikes (packs or cartons) on my bunk. I didn’t keep anything for myself, but there were only a few Rangers who smoked “the unfiltered stuff!”

All of a sudden, I hear one of our Rangers tearing through the hootch, shouting, “Sergeant Regan, Sergeant Regan!!!” I haul ass out of my hootch and follow him outside to the weapons cleaning area. There I see at least six Rangers straddling, holding down a struggling Ranger. He’s throwing a fit, they hollered! Get an Aid Kit, call for Medics, and a FLA from Squadron ASAP! I look and see that this is Ranger “T” After straddling him, sitting on his belly, and trying to turn his head, I find that his jaw is clamped tight! The Aid Kit is immediately by my side and I start calling for some things. Find the Jaw Jack, It’s black and looks like a big screw, I said. Got it! Turning his head I started to insert the jack between his teeth. I check and see that he is breathing and his airway is clear. Stuffed some bandage material as I jacked his jaw open, did not want to lose a finger! “Get the big safety pin, the one we use for slings.” Meanwhile, there are several Rangers holding his arms and legs down, his strength is almost unbelievable!

I get the safety pin opened and use a piece of bandage to grab, hold his tongue out of his mouth. Unhesitantly, I drive the safety pin through his lower lip and the underside of his tongue and fasten it. Hoped that this would keep him from swallowing his tongue. The Medics arrive and we load him onto a stretcher, tying down his arms, legs and anything else he’s trying to thrash with. The Rangers, who had assisted/gathered, immediately went back to what they were doing before the “Action!” They never ceased to amaze this fellow

I grab my gear and head to Squadron. Top and the CO know what the deal is and know I’ll get a good Sitrep from the Docs. By the time I get to the Aid Station, Ranger “T” is resting quietly on a cot. The Medics tell me that he had had some kind of “Break through, but would be alright. One of them said that he was going to have an awful sore tongue and lip for a while. Oh Lord, this was one “BIG” Ranger, and don’t tell him who did that!!!” Didn’t want him to be mad at me.

This Ranger “T” was the same Ranger that we had extracted from Vung Tau, R&R, Hoozegal!!! He fully recovered from both of those incidents. We selected him as the RTO for our infamous, Team # 6, Nov ’69, (Like Gilligan on “a three hour cruise!”) Probably one of the shortest missions for the LRRPS/Rangers, except for those missions where the Teams were “Shot out” of the LZs!!!

It was yet another example of these young men meeting a crisis, “head on,” and driving on to do the best that they could to save their Ranger Buddy!. Truly Rangers Leading the Way!

Jim RL.TW

## **Welcome to Da Nang Golf Club**

To see a part of Viet Nam that we never knew, go to [www.dananggolfclub.com](http://www.dananggolfclub.com). You will see what claims to be a place where golf’s history is revered as much as the game itself. Here, along Vietnam’s stunning Central Coast and amid a seaside landscape almost identical to what the world’s first courses were carved from, an experience was crafted as much by Mother Nature as it was by the legendary Greg Norman. In other words, it’s links-style golf in the truest sense of the term. It is a course GOLF Magazine called one of the top 15 to open worldwide in 2010. Apparently all unexploded ordinance and Agent Orange residue has been removed.

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## HEROES OF THE VIETNAM GENERATION

By Virginia Senator James Webb

Former Secretary of the Navy James Webb, and now Democratic Senator from Virginia, was awarded the Navy Cross, Silver Star, and Bronze Star medals for heroism as a Marine in Vietnam.

His novels include *The Emperor's General* and *Fields of Fire*.

"It's not enough that we do our best; sometimes we have to do what's required."

—Sir Winston Churchill—

What is a hero? My heroes are the young men who faced the issues of war and possible death, and then weighed those concerns against obligations to their country. Citizen-soldiers who interrupted their personal and professional lives at their most formative stage, in the timeless phrase of the Confederate Memorial in Arlington National Cemetery, "Not for fame or reward, not for place or for rank, but in simple obedience to duty, as they understood it." Who suffered loneliness, disease, and wounds with an often-contagious elan. And who deserve a far better place in history than that now offered them by the so-called spokesman of our so-called generation.

Nine million men served in the military during Vietnam War, three million of whom went to the Vietnam Theater. Contrary to popular mythology, two-thirds of these were volunteers, and 73 percent of those who died were volunteers. While some attention has been paid recently to the plight of our prisoners of war, most of whom were pilots; there has been little recognition of how brutal the war was for those who fought it on the ground.

When I remember those days and the very young men who spent them with me, I am continually amazed, for these were mostly recent civilians barely out of high school, called up from the cities and the farms to do their year in hell and then return. Visions haunt me every day, not of the nightmares of war but of the steady consistency with which my Marines faced their responsibilities, and of how uncomplaining most of them were in the face of constant danger. The salty, battle-hardened 20-year-olds teaching green 19-year-olds the intricate lessons of the hostile battlefield. The unerring skill of the young squad leaders as we moved through unfamiliar villages and weed-choked trails in the black of night. The quick certainty when a fellow Marine was wounded and needed help. Their willingness to risk their lives to save other Marines in peril. To this day it stuns me that their own countrymen have so completely missed the story of their service, lost in the bitter confusion of the war itself.

Like every military unit throughout history, we had occasional laggards, cowards, and complainers. But in the aggregate, these Marines were the finest people I have ever been around. It has been my privilege to keep up with many of them over the years since we all came home. One finds in them very little bitterness about the war in which they fought. The most common regret, almost to a man, is that they were not able to do more for each other and for the people they came to help.

Those who believe that it was a "dirty little war" where the bombs did all the work might contemplate that it is was the most costly war the U.S. Marine Corps has ever fought, five times as many dead as World War I, three times as many dead as in Korea, and more total killed and wounded than in all of World War II.

It would be redundant to say that I would trust my life to these men. Because I already have, in more ways than I can ever recount. I am alive today because of their quiet, unaffected heroism. Such valor epitomizes the conduct of Americans at war from the first days of our existence. That the boomer elites can canonize this sort of conduct in our fathers' generation while ignoring it in our own is more than simple oversight. It is a conscious, continuing travesty.

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## **PULLING SLACK**

From Bill Carpenter

### **MEETING TODAY'S RANGERS**

Before the reunion last June, our association chartered a bus and several of us took the trip from Portland, to Ft. Lewis. The first thing I noticed about today's Rangers was how young so many of them seemed to be. The second thing was, a very high majority of them had unit patches on their right shoulder.

With the entire 2<sup>nd</sup> battalion in company formation on the parade ground, my thought was, "My God, look at the fighting power on that field!"

As a result of this event, and a little help from battalion Sergeant Major Daryl Thies, each of the six companies in the battalion will now be on the mailing list for our newsletter. They will also be encouraged to contribute to this publication. **SO HOW ABOUT IT, NEW AGE RANGERS, SEND US SOME STORIES, UPDATES, WHATEVER.**

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I ran across a magazine called "The Wall, 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorative". It was published in 2007. There on page 97 is a picture of the crowd take from the top of the wall.

In the middle of the picture is a man on crutches, with a black beret, tiger fatigues, a 1<sup>st</sup> Cav patch on the right shoulder, and the H-75<sup>th</sup> tab on his left shoulder.

My question, who are you?

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I had a conversation with a friend about being in the LRRPs. She asks why anyone would volunteer for such a job. I said that other people in the military called us "The Crazies". I mentioned that during the war, the NVA put a bounty on us.

The reply was, "With that kind of qualifications, why aren't you a politician?"

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There are rumors that Ken **Gallagher** will be taking over as webmaster of our webpage. I have received no confirmation from anyone on this at the time of this writing.

### **CHUCK WILLIAMS' DEATH**

A few months ago, I received an email from Dave **Dickenson's** sister, Garnet **Jenkins**, that had been passed to her from some webpage.

The email contained comments about Chuck **Williams's** death, and was asking for more info. The initial information apparently came from "The Wall" webpage, which lists **Williams** as having died in a "non-hostile helicopter crash".

The inquirer wrote, "What do you know about SP4 John Williams? I know he was the machine gunner, and he was relentless to say the least. I understand that it was a late evening crash."

"He was known for chucking the lead as cover fire when they were getting with it. I was also told he could see what wasn't there when he sent cover fire... Some called him the metaphysical machine gunner..."

My educated guess is that this person is a Wannabee who is fishing for info to build his own war story around.

I responded to the inquirer using my "civilian" email address and told him that he had a lot of incorrect info. I did not give him anything to run with.

I also sent out his inquiry to you guys via bulk email. Below is the reply I got from John **Hutter**.

Look out for the wannabees, they walk among us.

From John **Hutter**

No, it was mid-to-late afternoon and the extraction was a day late ("no birds available"). Freshest signs of activity in the AO were about 6 months old. Official cause was engine failure hence the "non-hostile" crash and no PH's (any further comment on that will have to be eye-to-eye). SFC **Wallace** (2nd Platoon Sergeant riding shotgun) and I both had depressed skull fractures, I heard **Jones** (ATL) got his hips messed up badly enough to go stateside. At least one of the crew and (I think) one of the pilots was in a BIG hurt with a compressed spine.

### **STRAWBERRY FIELDS FOREVER**

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## **CHAPLAIN'S BOX**

From Jim **Regan**

Recently, there was occasion for me to “scrub” my copy of the Unit Roster. It had notes alongside some of the names. As I scanned each page, it came to me, how many of our Brothers are no longer with us. For no particular reason, I took a ‘High liter” and began to highlite those who were KIA. There were forty-six (46) names. One of those was an MIA; three others were KIA during their second tour with the Cav., and one during his third tour w/ the Cav. Then I scanned the list and highlighted those who have died since returning from the ‘Nam. Surprisingly, there were Ninety-two (92) of our Brothers, that we know of, who have passed away.

This gave me cause to reflect on all the blessings that I have enjoyed. A long and storied career in the U S Army, many years driving a school bus, and now, a “Professional Volunteer.” Someone taught me long ago, don’t take your life for granted. God has a plan for you. Let Him point you in the right direction.

As we move through our life there are certain to be peaks and valleys. As I used to encourage lots of troops, after I had a chance to honcho; Companies, Battalions, Military Communities, Agencies, and US Army Posts, “Stay Professional, Keep Chargin’ Hard, and have some fun while you’re at it!” It still holds true for me today. Though slowing down quite a bit, I still look forward to opportunities to encourage folks, young or old. You can do the same. Rely on your background and experience. Anyone who served in a unit such as ours, in Combat, has many lessons learned that need to be passed on.

Take a moment; remember your comrades, those who have gone to a better place, and those who are still with us. Stay in touch with each other; phone, e-mail, letters, or post cards. You’ll never know when your call may make a difference in a person’s life.

Take time for your families. Stay in touch with your friends. Visit the sick, and send post cards, e-mails, or make phone calls. You never know, it may be just that small effort, to reach out and “touch” somebody, that may turn their life around and put a smile on their face.

Stay safe and cool. See ya’ll in Texas, June 2013. Love and prayers, Jim RLTW

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