



The Official Newsletter of the  
**Seventh United States Cavalry Association**

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*"Garryowen"*

*I'm still not getting the hang of this writing thing. Halloween is next week yet I'm sitting here and writing what will be the December Holiday issue of SABER.*

*As you read this, Veterans Day will have already passed and with it, many of you have a lost an opportunity to attend the Reunion and Ceremony in Washington DC [though if it turns out to be a blizzard, you're allowed to chuckle right about now].*

*Seriously, there is a big 1st Cavalry turnout for Veterans Day. It is a time predominantly when Vietnam Veterans gather at The Wall to "visit" with friends whether the friends are standing next to you or you are viewing their names engraved in the black granite memorial and "remembering them". REMEMBER ME. It's not a difficult promise to keep. It begins with seeing his name and thinking of a shared moment with him or in sharing a story about him with another friend.*

*For those of you who have never been to The Wall on Veterans Day, it is a mass gathering of Vietnam Veterans and quite honestly, the 1st Cavalry patches, Unit Crests, and Cavalry Stetsons far outnumber the rest of the crowd. People walk up and down the path of The Wall with the same quiet respect as one would expect in any place of worship. There are no groups of loud jungle-fatigue clad beer drinking vets to be seen - though the media will inevitably find and televise such a group somewhere (and they will all be wannabe Rangers, Green Berets, or Navy Seals). There's safety in numbers for mutual liars - hell, look at Congress! can I say that?*

*As is customary there will be an Ia Drang Veterans Banquet at the Crystal City Hilton on Saturday and an Ia Drang sunrise service at The Wall on Sunday. Tuesday's Ceremony will begin with the 1st Cavalry Division Honor Guard posting their Colors and the placing of the 1st Cavalry Division wreath by Ed TIMES (B 1/7 '65) in honor of all Cavalry Troopers of the Vietnam War. The wreath is placed at Panel 3 East where the first of our Vietnam Cavalry casualties are named. Shortly after the Vietnam Veterans Ceremony, the Honor Guard will have moved to the Korean War Memorial where another 1st Cavalry Division wreath will be placed in honor of our Korean War troopers. Again, the message that is*

conveyed to our friends, and demonstrated to their families is "We Remember".

Though this writing is early, the Deadline Lady of Fortune smiled upon me today as the NY-NJ Chapter of the 1st Cav. Div. Assn. had its Fall meeting and it was truly an edge of the seat and informative gathering. In all I'd guess about 75-80 people were comfortably seated through the courtesy of the Ridgfield Park Elks Lodge. "Many, many, thanks" folks! There were several guest speakers. Tom EGAN (15th Med'66) spoke of his emotional experience of reunion in visiting with his son Jamie earlier this year at Fort Hood. Jamie in Desert Camo fatigues with a familiar yellow patch on his shoulder;

Fred LEVINE walked us through his past experience beginning with being 17 years old on Dec. 7, 1941 and hearing people speaking about a place called Pearl Harbor to his service in the Pacific during WWII and post-war Japan. A notable comment was that he'd carry his Garand but also a Japanese rifle that he used for combat. The explanation was that he didn't have to clean the Japanese rifle. When it got dirty he'd just throw it away and go over and pick up another one from the ground. That way, his Garand was almost always clean. Fred's post-war tour in Japan was with the 8th Engineers).

The next speaker was Edie MEEKS (3rd Field Hospital & 71st EVAC at Pleiku. Now on the Board of Directors of VWMF). She spoke of this year's 10th Anniversary of the Vietnam Women's Memorial and the planned Candlelight Ceremony on the evening before Veterans Day; Tuesday's 7:30am reading of the names of the women veterans who have died and; afterward and throughout the day, the "In Their Own Words" storytelling through poetry, song, and the expression of feelings and experiences of those who are represented by that memorial. Each woman veteran will receive a red rose in thanks for her service. A visit to the VWMF website is suggested. It is there that you'll find the green t-shirt with a pair of dog tags printed on the front bearing the words "Not All Women Wore Love Beads". Visit [www.ameddgiftshop.com](http://www.ameddgiftshop.com) for the tee and many other VWMF products. Dave CATHCART, a veteran of the 101st Airborne "Hamburger Hill" battle spoke about PTSD, in his capacity as a Re-adjustment Counseling Therapist. We were reminded that as we get older we are less involved with commitments, have more free time on our hands, and that our previous resistance-factor has lessened. The newspaper stories and the sight of war on our evening news "can" stir up old feelings of your own combat experiences, regardless of what war you served in. Unexplained irritability, anxiety, and depression should be immediately suspect and a visit to the Vet Center - just to talk to someone about it - is highly recommended.

A Vet Center is funded by the VA but it operates independent of the VA. You may have even experienced intrusive thoughts (an unprompted personal combat recollection) so if you begin to experience any of these symptoms, call a local Veterans Center to make an appointment to discuss it with a fellow vet - regardless of what war you served in, WWI to Iraq. You might think that this was one helluva meeting but it ain't over yet, folks. Diane GIZZI, the Elks Lodge representative for Americanism spoke of the VFW sponsored program Operation Uplink. Here's a quote from the VFW website "Operation Uplink is a unique program that keeps military personnel and hospitalized veterans in touch with their families and loved ones by providing them with a free phone card. Using contributions from supporters like you, Operation Uplink purchases phone cards and distributes them to servicemen and women who are separated from those they care about. SPECIAL NOTE: As new threats surface from around the world, military deployments have increased dramatically. Operation Uplink is at the forefront of responding to the needs of deploying service members. Over 2,000,000 phone cards since 1996 - almost 900,000 in the last 100 days alone. Operation Uplink has always been supported and sustained solely by donations - the majority of which come from VFW and Ladies Auxiliary members. So, for those of you out there who

want to support our troops but ask "what can I possibly do?" the answer is to begin with a contribution to support this program.

The last guest speaker was LTC Terry FERRELL who is currently studying at the US Army War College. LTC FERRELL is the former commander of the 3/7 Cavalry that spearheaded the 3rd ID advance into Iraq. Terry was accompanied by his lovely wife, COL Robbie FERRELL, who is the Commander of the 24th CSG and currently stationed at Fort Stewart GA. Her previous assignment anybody else thinking Iraq? BINGO! Her unit was responsible for 85% of the logistical support received throughout the war. It is said that behind every great man is a great woman who, in this case, are also both great leaders. LTC FERRELL said that the most important detail of 3/7 actions in Iraq is that at the onset he crossed the border and brought 1240 troopers into Iraq and "today" those 1240 troopers are back at Ft. Stewart. [GarryOwen, SIR!]

LTC FERRELL pointed out that there are still significant activities occurring in Iraq but they're getting less than 1/10th media coverage simply because on March 20th there were some 600 correspondents in Iraq and today that number is about 25. He spoke of the Day 4 order to attack at 6am and isolate the city from the east; what seemed like a non-stop drive "in the sun"; and then the enemy's L-shaped ambush over a 6 mile stretch of road under a variety of enemy weapons; civilian men, women, and children, attacking the column. He said you haven't really seen anything until you've seen 5 or 6 enemy rise out up in the sand with AK-47s and attempt to attack a tank; the thump of RPG rounds hitting his vehicle and bouncing off because the enemy was firing them from a closer distance than is required to activate the rockets. He spoke of enemy fire upon their ambulances and of one that was hit, rolled over, and yet all of the injured men were able walk away from the crash. He spoke of his appreciation of the Warthog "tank-killer" aircraft - after having to give the aircraft commander his name and social security number (so that the pilot could document that the placement of fire was truly requested by the 3/7 commander) he watched as the Warthogs flew about 300 feet off the ground and about 500 feet from the 3/7 lines. He said he could literally read the tail numbers on the aircraft.

He spoke of weapons of every type mounted on cars, trucks, and motorcycles; the enemy attacking in waves, with buses being rammed into Bradlee Vehicles. He spoke of one particular act of heroism, that of a PSgt who stayed with a trapped driver as his burning tank melted around them and to the point where the PSgt was then able to free the man with a crowbar [a Silver Star award is forthcoming] - all that was later left of the tank was some of its track that had melted into the asphalt.

He spoke of the report of 100 enemy vehicles coming out of Baghdad with a reported 20 tanks and 2-3 thousand troops, being low on munitions and fuel, non-availability of arty, and nothing in the air for him to call upon for assistance. Finally, a woman pilot's voice giving a designation that identified her craft as a B-1; her rockets fired using only heat signatures because the conditions made it impossible to give a grid. The 3/7 C Troop Commander had informed LTC FERRELL that they'd supplemented their firepower with recovered AK's and afterward, C Troop was instructed to turn in all of the AK's they'd used (military procedure). And C Troop alone had turned in approximately 250 AK's. In a nutshell, he felt the 3/7 set many new levels of battle expectation during the campaign. Before they entered Baghdad the unit had come to the conclusion that their primary objective was to "first, be right with God and then get a plane ticket out of Baghdad". LTC FERRELL said that a "Cavalryman" is a unique soldier and only a unique soldier can be called a Cavalry Trooper." There was an open and lengthy question and answer period and, when asked if he had attended West Point, his reply was "I am a graduate of a small school in West Virginia". An admirable observation of LTC FERRELL was his frequent reference to his

men as "my kids". LTC FERRELL, "thank you", SIR! That concludes the events of the NY-NJ Chapter Fall Meeting.

I cannot attest to the accuracy of this, as it was received as an email without a trail to the original source, but I'm repeating it in the spirit of sincerity and respect for the ingenuity of the American Soldier. "AQUBAH, Iraq -- American soldiers eat match heads in the desert. "The sulfur in them gets in your system and you sweat it out and it keeps the mosquitoes away, " explained Pfc. Joshua Joe, an artillery forward observer from Buena Park, Calif. A folding pack of matches comes in every Meal Ready to Eat (MRE), so some soldiers chew up -- or luck, depending on their preference -- as many as 20 per day. That's just one of the tricks GIs have devised to cope with life in Iraq's hostile environment. In the 4th Infantry Division from Fort Hood, Texas, many soldiers carry tampons to plug bullet holes in case they are shot. They stick condoms on the muzzles of .50-caliber machine guns to keep out dust, and shoot right through the latex when the time comes to fire. There are soldier-made port-a-johns: folding metal chairs with a hole cut in the seat and a toilet seat bolted around the hole. More primitively, the folding shovel used to dig foxholes can be locked in an L shape and the blade used for a seat under one buttocks cheek. The thigh pocket of desert fatigues is perfect for carrying a flattened roll of toilet paper. "We do a lot of things to make life a little more comfortable," said SFC Curtis Elliott of Cincinnati. "Like making automatic washing machines." An empty box that held about 20 MREs is lined with a plastic trash bag and filled with water and detergent. Socks, brown T-shirts, underwear and fatigues are loaded in and the top of the bag tied shut. "Then you stick it in the back of the truck and drive around with it for a couple of days," said Elliott. "Then you take out the clean clothes and rinse them." Clothes are dried by stringing a cord between the radio antennas of two combat vehicles. Need to stay awake on an all-night patrol? Many soldiers swear that chewing tobacco or snuff will do the trick. "You can also put the instant coffee that comes in MREs under your lip like Copenhagen and the caffeine will keep you up," said Sgt. Gabriel Graan of Las Vegas. Some soldiers even mix the coffee and snuff for a double kick. "Baby anythings are popular, " said one soldier. Baby wipes for bathing. Baby powder to prevent chafing. Baby salve to cure chafing. Even baby food, because the small containers are easily packed and don't need can openers. Various gear is used for weight training. A 50-pound tow bar makes a good barbell. A .50-caliber ammunition box can weigh 30 pounds and can be held on the chest during sit-ups. "You're going to lose weight in the desert because of the heat anyway," said Pvt. Matt St. John, a scout from Lake City, Fla. "You might as well take advantage of the time to work out and come home all ripped up." For every problem, there is an innovation. For creative cooks, bouillon cubes and spices are musts, said Sgt. Jason Thompson of McMinnville, Ore. "You can eat any MRE with the right spices." With Starbucks a distant memory, mixing milk shake powder with coffee makes great lattes. There is debate on the wisdom of wearing underpants. You can change underwear more often than fatigue trousers, and that promotes cleanliness, some insist. Others say underwear gets all sweaty, and going bare prevents chafing. Both sides swear by talcum powder. "I had a gunner that used the dust from the ground" when he was out of talcum powder, said one soldier. I called him Dusty." As you read this, we will also have had our Thanksgiving dinner and while you may have offered personal thanks to your maker for all things that you have and have accomplished, you must also give thanks to those who stood beside you during the difficult times of your life. Too often we are guilty of thanking others for small favors and forgetful of expressing our thanks and our love to our parents, siblings, spouses, and children.

They held your hand, hugged you, cried with, and prayed for you during the hard times. Set aside a special day of thanks just for them. It can be anything from a quiet dinner at a restaurant or, if there's a lot of thanking to do, check out the 99th FA News column in this paper and give thought to the

*Caribbean Cruise scheduled for April 2004 and you should know that any 1st Cavalry troopers are welcome and invited to join the cruise. Who knows, it could be the after-winter relaxation that we all need.*

*There are still US troops in Iraq, and around the world, who put themselves in harm's way for the same beliefs that we each held when we were militarily serving our country. Keep them in your thoughts and prayers. Offer a special prayer to ease the anxieties of their families. And if you missed a Veterans Day tribute then I offer the power of suggestion with these words "Remember me, remember the happy times, the laughs, as you would have wanted me to remember you." Happy Holidays and Good Wishes to you all! Here's some Holiday gift suggestions - Vietnam Women's Memorial Fund, 1735 Connecticut Ave. NW, Washington DC 20009 - "Operation Uplink" c/o VFW, 406 West 34th Street, Kansas City MO 64111-2721 - 1st Cavalry Division Trooper Fund, 302 N. Main, Copperas Cove TX 76522-1799 - 7th Cavalry Regiment Assn Sustaining Contributions c/o Bob Anderson, 2243 Ancient Drive, Wyoming MI 49505. Today's contributions are April's income tax charitable deductions. Well, that's it until your next year with the SABER. Be well; stay well and more important than anything else, walk tall and proud. YOU ARE CAV!*

*Ron Migut*

*Boots & Saddles Staff Writer*

*The 7th United States Cavalry Association*