



The Official Newsletter of the
Seventh United States Cavalry Association

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PRESIDENT

VICE-PRESIDENT

SECRETARY/TREASURER

Bill Richardson

Phill Zook

Robert J. Anderson

"Troopers of the 7th Cavalry "

"GarryOwen"

Well it's that time again, when brain cells hook up with the keyboard and hopefully turn out something that is of interest to all. I forgot to mention something that our President – William A. Richardson said at the last reunion regarding his time with the real cavalry. Real defined as riding horses. It seems that while on maneuvers they obviously rode 1 horse, while leading 2 horses and at the end of the day they had to groom 5 horses. Who rode the other two horses that had to be groomed and why didn't they do their own grooming? We will have to wait for that answer till 2012.

Pentwater, Michigan was the site of the 8 September reunion of men of C 1-7 from '70-'71 who served in Vietnam and participated in the Cambodian Incursion. As unlikely as it may seem, this was the third get together this group has had in the last 12 months. In the previous 40 years, they had never met as a group for any type of reunion. Twelve men and six wives attended. Some had not seen each other since 1970. First timers were Joe Diaz from California, Danny Maass from Texas, Brad Eagle from Illinois and yours truly. Some time was spent sharing stories, looking at photos and orders, placing names with faces and reminisc- ing. Most of the time, however, was spent laughing, eating, catching up with 41 years of living, sharing stories of super children and genius grandchildren and just enjoying each other's company. It is amazing how quickly the haze of time clears and friendships rekindle. We were blessed with lots of sun shine, warm sandy beaches and a calm Lake Michigan. This inspired long morning and sunset walks on the beach and visits to the beach towns of Pentwater, Silver Lake and Ludington. One of the highlights was watching the SS Badger (a coal fired steam ferry ship) dock in Ludington, Michigan from Manitowoc, Wisconsin. Another highlight was riding the Silver Lake State Park Dunes in a Jeep because a local resident spotted our group having breakfast at a small corner restaurant and gave us a

“welcome home” greeting. He offered to take us all on a Dune Buggy ride to show his appreciation for our service. We were touched by his thoughtfulness and generosity. Our men from the West were introduced to the Midwestern game of “Corn-Hole”. Danny Alligood and Danny Maass took over the championship from Phil Zook and Dave Smith. For those of you stumped by the name of the game, it’s a bag toss game similar to horseshoes with cloth bags filled with corn. Feeling better now? If anyone is interested in joining us for next year’s reunion, send an e-mail to Marion Siara at . I must say that Marion and his wife, Connie did a marvelous job of both organizing and feeding this crew of old-timers. Thanks for a wonderful time.

During dinner on Thursday, Phil Zook presented one of the guys with a Valorous Unit Award for his service which I wasn’t aware that the 1-7 had received, so I checked with the man who knows all – CSM (Ret) Dennis Webster, our Division Association Executive Director. He referred me to DA Pamphlet 672-3 and filled me in. You can find that document on the Web. Other Unit Awards were awarded as follows: The Presidential Unit Citation for the magnificent campaign in the Ia Drang; The RVN Gallantry Cross with Palm and the RVN Civil Actions Honor Medal for the period 1 Jan., ‘69 through 1 Feb., ‘70. In addition Bravo Company was awarded a PUC for their actions 12 Dec., ‘66 through 18 Feb., ‘67. Dennis suggested that I review my DD-214 to check and of course two of these awards are missing, possibly because I had left the Army by then. In addition I discovered that you can get the Department Of The Army General Orders from 1947 through 2011 via the Web. It’s great information.

I purchased a book titled To The Limit by Tom A. Johnson, who flew in A 229 during ‘67-’68. I’ve had this book in my collection for several years and finally got to it in September. He tells about Hue, Khe Sanh, Song Re and TET. The book parallel’s stories from Robert Mason’s Chickenhawk. I can’t remember if I purchased this book based on Hank Llewellyn’s recommendation or not so I e-mailed Hank. I felt kind of dumb because 15 pages later there was Hank’s name in the book. Tom ferried a bunch of 7th Cav troops into and out of many battles and you might be interested in another perspective. If you don’t recognize Hank’s name, he writes the wonderful Silver Wings column.

From President Emeritus Jim Brigham comes the following from Janet Napolitano’s blog. On 21 September in New York City, I had the great honor of awarding the DHS Distinguished Public Service Medal to Rick Rescorla, a hero of 9/11 who gave his life helping his colleagues safely evacuate the World Trade Center. Rick’s story is one that continues to inspire many of us at DHS and across the homeland security enterprise. It also serves as a model of the importance of individual, business and community preparedness and resilience and the role that each of us plays in meeting our shared responsibility for security. Rick believed, as we do at DHS, that in an emergency, the public is not a liability to be protected, but an asset to be engaged. Rick expected his fellow employees to take preparedness seriously and challenged them to be personally responsible for their own safety. Because of his tireless efforts, nearly every Morgan Stanley employee safely evacuated the South Tower on 9/11. And while Rick could have joined them, he continued to help others evacuate the building and ultimately gave his life. Rick’s wife, Susan and his son, Trevor accepted the award on his behalf. In addition to awarding Rick the Distinguished Public Service Medal, I also announced the creation of a new award inspired by his legacy: the National Resilience Award. The National Resilience Award is DHS’s first national award on resilience. It will be given to individuals, organizations, or communities that have shown leadership in building resilience in their communities. It will also recognize superior leadership and innovation in helping to build a national culture of resilience, with a focus on effective preparation, response and recovery in the face of disasters. Rick Rescorla’s story is one that has inspired so many and provides a powerful message to us all in the preparedness of each of us, we can secure the nation for all

of us.

Jim Epperson writes: I saw the performance of the San Francisco Opera's pre-miere performance of Heart of a Soldier, Rick's story from a child in Cornwall England to his death at the World Trade Center. It was very moving. They had a special showing for veterans on Wednesday (7 September) for the final dress rehearsal before it opened on the 10th. The showing was for 1 veteran and 3 guests. I had the honor of seeing Rick's wife, Susan there. Jim was the RTO for LTC McDade at LZ Albany.

Unfortunately, Fiddler's Green was busy during this past two months receiving several of our comrades who have gone ahead and are waiting for us. Jeremy Hogan reports some very sad news as my friend Jack Zallen, one of the survivors from the Lost Platoon died 23 September in a motorcycle accident. I don't know a lot more at this time. I just saw Jack at the Kokomo Vietnam Veterans reunion. Jack attended the funeral of 1-9th CAV trooper Sergeant Bartley just last winter. Here is the link about the accident. . Another warrior gone before us from Marion Siara: Tommy R. Oliphant, 62, of Mooresville, North Carolina, passed away on 1 October. He served in Vietnam with Charlie Company 1-7 and was a retired brick mason. From Dennis Webster comes a message from Michael Thompson, son of SFC (Ret) Herman L. "Pete" Thompson who served three different times in the 2nd Battalion. Pete died on 27 August and was Rick Rescorla's Platoon Sergeant. Again from Dennis: We received notification of the death of 1LT Thomas A. Houf, Delta Company, 2-7th CAV, 1970-71. He died on 25 August, 2011 from a stroke. Tom was one of our most avid contributors to the Sustaining Membership program of the 7th Cavalry Association. He never missed a year since the program was started. From Tom Axley: 1LT Johnny Cook, 4th Platoon Leader of A 1-7 passed away on 11 Jul. from cancer. Johnny served in '71. Larry D. Merrill passed away in Salina, Oklahoma, on October 19, 2011. From 1968 to 1969 Larry served with Company C, 2-7th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Air Cavalry Division, in Vietnam, participating in Operations "Jeb Stuart III" and "Cheyenne Saber," earning the Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Combat Infantry Badge and Air Medal.

From Shortround Migut: Margie Castleberry called to let me know that Jack had just passed away (October 7). My first contact with Jack was easy. When I was tracking people down, I was given his full first name "Tennis" and told that his nickname was "Moultrie" because that's where in Georgia he was from. There was only one listing for a "Tennis Castleberry" in Moultrie - his uncle - who then gave me Jack's Mom's number. His Mom said Jack "had married and moved away... (long pause) ...would you like his phone number?" Timing is everything. As I spoke with Jack that night he kept repeating my words to someone else. When I asked what was going on he said "Lynn Hardin is here. He was with us. This is the first time we've seen each other since 'Nam." I'm going to back-track a bit. About a week prior I spoke with a guy in California - Ray A. Puckett - aka "RAP". Ray was certain that anyone he knew was dead by then and felt that I likely wouldn't find anyone who he knew or who remembered him. So, in that phone call to Jack I also spoke with Lynn (both really excited about finding long lost buddies) and, as a closing thought I asked if he remembered a guy named Puckety? Lynn's immediate reply was "Puckett? Hell I still got his watch! Do you have a number for him?" Jack was a mailman in the Lakeland, Florida area. At one of his usual stops he noted a car in the driveway with a Cav patch on the bumper. Jack handed the lady her mail and asked if her husband was in 'Nam. She said it was her ex-husband and yes he served with those "horse-army people". A few more questions and it was Hello, Bobby Tillman, aka "Old Man" of the 1st platoon. When I was attending one of their first gatherings, Jack offered to pick me up at Orlando Airport. My flight was Delta to Atlanta and a plane change to Orlando arriving around 7pm. The flight was delayed due to a storm and I missed the connection - very pissed off - arriving in Orlando around 2am. As I walked into the predominantly empty main terminal,

two tall figures came from the shadows to greet me, Jack and Larry McDaniel. They just “hung out” and talked until I finally got there. I have many more fond memories of Jack and he will be missed a lot, by me personally and by many. This is truly the essence of combat camaraderie. From Joe Galloway who reports that Charlie W. Hastings, Colonel, USAF (Ret) has passed away. Charlie was the ground FAC with the 1-7 at LZ X-RAY and was instrumental in building that insurmountable wall of steel around us which kept a lot of good men alive to fight another day. Finally some good news to report, the 2nd Battalion is now home from Iraq. Top Flanders reports that Alpha Company 2-7 held a mini reunion in Columbus, Georgia from 18-22 October, arranged and scheduled by our ‘66-‘67 Company Commander, Colonel (Ret) Warde Chittenden and his wife, Joyce. The weather held good and all the activities at Fort Benning and in the local community went off without a hitch. Those in attendance were: Jim Kelly and son, Scott; Robert Moore (Jim and Bob were lieutenants back in the day; Ray Temple and his wife, Teen; Hale Vannoy and wife, Bonnie; Jack Wagner; Angel Huerta; John Meyer; Paul Stroessner and wife, Janice; Bill Windham and Sherman Flanders. This reunion was our 2d at Columbus, the first was in 2007. Attending for the first time was Dan Slimp, accompanied by his son, Scott. Dan was the supply sergeant in ‘65 and remembers plowing roads in the early days at An Khe. Needless to say, Fort Benning is changing rapidly, with numerous new buildings and the arrival of the armor school and armor units from Fort Knox. At the farewell dinner at the Chattahoochee River Club, along the scenic river, plans were discussed to perhaps make the next reunion a cruise from one of the gulf ports, in 3 to 5 years. Top as always I thank you for this report.

William A Vieto writes to tell us of his service with the First Team in Hokkaido and Honsu from the early ‘50’s to ‘55. William who is in his late 70’s serves on the Honor Guard at his local American Legion Post.

To the person who sent an unsigned letter to me (postmarked Pittsburgh) regarding “truth” in reporting? It’s hard to take anything you write seriously when you vilify 2 great Americans and don’t have the guts to sign your name. On September 9, the U.S. House Veterans Affairs Committee passed an amendment by U.S. Representative Denny Rehberg (R-Montana) as a part of a larger piece of veterans’ legislation. The Veterans Second Amendment Protection Act, which was added to H.R.2349 as an amendment, provides individuals receiving veterans’ benefits with added protection against loss of the right to possess firearms due to mental health decisions. . No longer do veterans need to fear being disqualified from obtaining a CPL license, due to having PTSD.

Garryowen from Michigan.

Bob Anderson

Boots & Saddles Staff Writer

The 7th United States Cavalry Association