



The Official Newsletter of the
Seventh United States Cavalry Association

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"Troopers of the 7th Cavalry "

"GarryOwen"

As I start this edition of our 7th Cavalry News, the 40th Anniversary of the fall of Saigon is just a short seven days away. It remains a time of reflection, at least for me and I suspect many of us old warriors on the baffle casualties on both sides and the dreams and hopes of families that were impacted. We are also closing in on the 45th Anniversary of the "official" crossing into the Cambodian sanctuary in May of 1970. August will mark the 50th Anniversary of the First Team sailing IT to Vietnam, reminiscent of the same action in World War II and into the breach in 1951 to stem another tide of commUnist aggression. The First Team and our 7th Cavalry have formed a magnificent Warrior Ethos during these last 150-plus years and I'm proud to have been a member of both! The Marines have a saying 'Once A Marine " Always A Marine' and I believe it applies equally to us and with respect " 'Once A Cavalryman " Always A Cavalryman." GarryOwen!

Another Vietnam memoir will be hitting the shelves officially on 1 July 2015 _ with a book signing at the National Infantry Museum in Columbus, Georgia. Of IT course I'm referring to The Ghosts of the Green Grass by Bud Alley. Bud was a Warrior Infantry Lieutenant in the 2nd Battalion and has spent almost 50 years _ refining his recollections of infantry combat in the Ia Drang and other historic places. Our own Joe Galloway writes: 'The baffles of the Ia Drang in November of 1965 were horrific, with battalion casualties of 60 - 65% and nightmares enough to last all the survivors a lifetime. Second Lieutenant Bud Alley was in the thick of it at LZ Albany. The Ghosts of the Green Grass introduces the IT officers and men of the Second Battalion Seventh Cavalry and then marches them straight into Hell itself in the tall elephant grass. To read Alley's book is close " to living the bloody battle itself.' Ghosts will soon sit alongside the magnificent work of Joe and LTG Moore " We Were Soldiers Once.. .And Young and Larry IT Gwin's critically acclaimed Baptism. I am looking forward to reading Ghosts 2 certainly by November. On Wednesday, September 9,2015, Bud will speak and sign copies of his book at Austin Peay State University also in attendance will be Jim Lawrence, author of Reflections On LZ Albany.

Website Manager Jim Savage sends us this community outreach piece. Connecting soldiers and schools forms a mutually beneficial partnership that's _ tough to beat. Bringing the symbolism to bear on a relationship already bearing _ fruit, LTC Andy Watson, Battalion Commander of the 2nd Battalion,

7th Cavalry Regiment and Mountain View Elementary School administrators and student leaders marked the partnership. The battalion officially connected with the elementary school in January and has begun to assist teachers where needed. Recently LTC Watson and SSG Nicholas Miller, the unit's Fort Hood Adopt A School coordinator helped dedicate a new sign, in front of the Harker Heights one reason this is important," Watson said following ceremony, Central "Texas is our community." We are part of the population and we have sons and daughters in the school system. "I know we have IT influence here as mentors," said Miller, who said he has an easy time recruiting soldiers to serve at Mountain View. "We're here to help, to listen, to talk with kids." Mountain View principal Randy Podhaski said the military presence on the campus is welcomed and noted that the 2nd Battalion is motivated to stay IT connected to the school. "The military is such a presence in our community," he said. "It's fabulous to have that visibility here and it means a lot to our students and families. There is great role modeling and a spirit of working together. We see what community really means." The battalion commander said he expected soldiers to be active in assisting with tutoring students in math, reading, and other academic areas, as well as to lend a hand with social activities. "We receive such great support from this community," Watson said. "This is a way we can give back to an important population." He said soldiers enjoy seeing student growth and take satisfaction in the role they play as a positive influence. "The soldiers love it," Miller said. "I really like to see the younger soldiers get to come out and do it and see more of the community relations side of the IT military." Fifth-graders Clemente Esponilla and Ashley Brown, the president and vice president of the Mountain View student council, said they were busy planning spring functions and liked the idea of seeing soldiers on campus on a regular basis. "We're excited to get into a rhythm," Podhaski said of the IT new adoption. "We hope the battalion will establish a permanent place in the school.

It's never too late to get recognition for Troopers who paid the ultimate sacrifice on the field of battle. This report is from Karl Haartz of the 5th Battalion Association. James Castaldi's actions on 12 January 1968 went largely unnoticed by the Army until recently when members of his company heard of this oversight. Tom Golden, Ronnie Casteel, and Dean Davison would not rest until formal recognition was achieved for their comrade and their eyewitness accounts were instrumental in the Army's approval of the award. Presentation of James' posthumous Silver Star to his closest living relative will be made on Armed Forces Day, May 16, 2015 at the Cherry Hill, New Jersey American Legion Post. The ceremony will begin at 11am, at which time we will present the Silver Star Certificate and Citation to Anthony Caravello who is the First Cousin to James Castaldi. Tom Golden was greatly assisted in locating next of kin by a volunteer genealogist, Sue Quinn-Morris, who is very active in veteran's organizations in New Jersey.

Maury Edmonds reports via Karl that he had just spoken to LTC Charles Jack after reading that the 1st Brigade Combat Team of the 3rd Infantry Division will deploy to Europe for a three-month rotation in a few weeks. As it turns out only C Troop of 5-7 will be part of that package. The full squadron may deploy later in the year to a different area in Europe. Other news is that LTC Jack will turn over command sometime in July. His replacement has been named and I'll have some bio info on him shortly. They're also planning another lady's Spur Ride. I told him to let me know what they need to buy the awards, etc. They had one for the men in December. Trust all of you are well. I'm excited already about our next reunion in Colorado. Look forward to seeing all of you in November if not sooner. MG (Ret) Maury Edmonds commanded the 5-7 in Vietnam.

Dennis Deal reports that he is working to get the silver star medal added to the tombstone of his medic Calvin Bouknight. Doc Bouknight killed on 16 November 1965 at Landing Zone X-Ray. This conscientious objector Medic was killed while shielding fellow warriors that he went out to administer to It was a fierce firefight, and he had to know he was not going to make it. He was awarded a Silver Star, since we were unable to get him his well-deserved CMH SP-5 Calvin Bouknight rests with our

honored dead in Arlington National Cemetery.

Chuck Holtz, A 1-7 in '70-'71 sends in this notice regarding the upcoming NCOC Reunion in Columbus, Georgia for any NCOC Graduates. It will be held October 3-7, 2015.

Doug Halls, aka Sergeant Rock of A 1-7 in '69-'70 reported that SGM Victor Williams has passed away on 21 March. The then SFC Williams was the Platoon Sergeant of the 1st Platoon in 1970 and along with Ivory Ford were the only two Platoon Sergeant (E-7 's) that I ever saw in the field during my tour. SGM Williams also served in A 1-7 in Korea during 1962. Doug, Roger Barrier, and Gary Garrett were able to attend SGT Williams' funeral. The aforementioned Gary Garrett sent in a YouTube of the Japanese surrender on the USS Missouri from 2 September 1945. You can Google it to get the actual link. Moving ceremony, especially for those 1st Cay and 7th Cay who fought in the Pacific.

I'm amazed sometimes at the things I hear. Recently I heard a guy talking about an Honor Guard member who was a former Command Master Sergeant of the Air Force. He referred to this guy as an E- 10. Of course the highest enlisted rank in any of our services is an E-9. So I turned to the most knowledgeable guy that I know " our own Division Association Executive Director " CSM (Ret) Dennis Webster. He confirmed that there is no such thing as an E- 10, but did enlighten me that any Service Top Enlisted Person does get extra compensation above and beyond what the pay chart allows. Now I have the ammunition to de-bunk this latest "info."

What are our reader's thoughts on the wearing of Commemorative Ribbons as additions to what we actually earned the right to wear? These of course would only be worn on non-official garments, for example Honor Guard Uniforms. Please e-mail your thoughts.

Again from Karl Haartz: The MIA's on Tiger Mountain documentary - update and a special request. Here are two ways you can help: 1. Vote for the film. The trailer (less than two minutes) is on the G.I. Film Festival web site . After watching the trailer you can vote to give the film one to five stars. No identification or login is required--just click the number of stars. One vote per computer. 2. If you live in the Washington, DC area, attend the screening of the film. The screening will be at 3:30 p.m. Saturday, May 23 at Angelika at Mosaic Film Center, 2911 District Aye, Fairfax, VA 22031. Individual tickets for the screening are Just \$12 and can be purchased directly from the web page above by clicking the "Buy tickets" icon. We would love to pack the theater! Lastly, please cut, paste and send this email to your circle of friends and family, especially those living in the Washington DC area.

From Ron Migut via Glynn Donaho: The Hazelwood Act is a Texas state law that provides qualified Veterans"as well as their spouses and children--with various education benefits including, 150 hours of tuition and fee exemptions at state supported universities or colleges. The primary goal of the Texas Hazelwood Act is to offer an education benefit to honorably discharged Texas Veterans and to eligible dependent spouses and children of Texas veterans. Texans, as well as any veterans, can comment on this by searching "contact my Texas Representatives and selecting one or all of the different links that come up. This extremely valuable educational program is under fire in the Texas Legislature. .Please contact your state representatives and urge them to continue support for this program. Veterans paid for this with their service and sacrifice. GarryOwen!

The Veteran's Choice Program recently signed into law by President Obama has come under fire by Veteran Organizations because it really didn't resolve the issue of wait times. The good news is the VA has implemented a change to the program which in my opinion only goes part way to actually solving the problem. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has recently announced that it will determine eligibility for the Veterans Choice Program based on the distance between a Veteran's place of residence and the nearest VA medical facility using driving distance rather than straight-line distance.

This change has been published in the Federal Register and is effective immediately. This update to the program will allow more Veterans to access care when and where they want it. We look forward to continued dialogue with Veterans and our partners to help us ensure continued improvements for Veterans' to access care." The change from straight-line to driving distance roughly doubles the number of eligible Veterans. Letters are being sent to the newly eligible Veterans to let them know they are now eligible for the Veterans Choice Program under this expansion. If a Veteran does not remember receiving a Veterans Choice Card or has other questions about the Choice Program, they can call (866) 606-8198. Effective immediately, VA is also changing the mileage calculation for beneficiary travel. The change will ensure consistency in VA's mileage calculations across the two programs. The beneficiary travel calculation will now be made using the fastest route instead of the shortest route. For more details about the department's progress and related information, see . If you have any additional questions, please contact Jon Coen of VA's Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs at or (202) 461- 7627, and he will be happy to assist you. I believe that the VA needs to further refine the program to calculate the distance to the VA facility that can address the Veteran's issue. For example, when I need to have a colonoscopy done I have to go to Ann Arbor, Michigan but the VA will calculate my mileage to the Wyoming, Michigan Health Care Center, less than 40 miles from my home BUT that facility can't perform the procedure. Under the Care Choice Program I still don't qualify to use a local provider. The VA however should be commended for taking immediate steps which will help thousands of veterans nationally! Major League Baseball teams are showing their appreciation for service mem-bers, both past and present, with military discounts on 2015 game tickets. Many teams also hold military appreciation days to honor those who have served our country.

How many of you were Military Brats? Sons and Daughters of men and women who were on active duty when you were born. Both my sister and I are Military Brats as our father was a career Air Force Pilot who retired with over 10,000 flying hours as a Lieutenant Colonel. Might be interesting to report.

Another reminder that membership into the 7th Cavahy Association is currently closed and will remain so until a new Secretary is elected. In the interim I am maintaining a list of prospective members.

Spring has finally arrived in Michigan as the 14 yards of mulch sitting on my driveway will attest and with that I now close another column of your 7th Cavalry News. I hope that those who attend the upcoming Division Reunion at Fort Hood have a great time in Texas!