



The Official Newsletter of the  
Seventh United States Cavalry Association

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PRESIDENT	VICE PRESIDENT	SECRETARY	TREASURER
John Guillory	Phill Zook	John Guillory	Robert J. Anderson

"Troopers of the 7th Cavalry "

"GarryOwen"

*Today as I begin our latest 7th Cavalry column, I harken back 140 years to 25 June 1876. On that fateful day, Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer led his Troops into the valley along the Little Bighorn River in Montana. The rest as they say is history. The 7th Cavalry Regiment was formed in 1866 just a short year after the end of the Civil War. With this backdrop I begin our march through the years to the present time.*

*John Guillory, our Association President sends us this report from Las Vegas, Nevada. If the feeling of enjoyment translates to success, then the 69th Annual 1st Cavalry Division Association Reunion was a success, because it certainly was enjoyed by all who attended. The same could be said for the annual 7th United States Cavalry Association Luncheon and Business Meeting. There were about 730 attendees at this reunion, including troopers, their plus ones, children, grand- children and a few dogs; the dogs were not included in the headcount. Troopers and their families came west from Rhode Island, east from Hawaii, south from North Dakota and northwest from Florida. The Nevada Association Chapter deserves credit for an outstanding job of supporting all the reunion activities. But what would a reunion be without the guidance of Dennis Webster. Dennis, (Executive Director retiring in July) did his usual best to add this reunion to his continuous string of well-arranged events. We hope to see Dennis down the road, enjoying a reunion where he is a guest and not head of staff. The 7th Cavalry Unit Luncheon was also a well-attended affair. My minds-eye count tabulated approximately 80+ troopers and their guests. We all seemed to enjoy our delicious luncheon meal. Without tasting a bite, I could tell the meal was delicious by the silence in the room, broken only by the sound of forks on china. After our meal, each attending trooper stood, identified himself, his unit, his conflict and the year(s) served in a combat assignment. Following trooper introductions, there was a presentation of details from the Treasurers Report. Next in the order of march, there was an announcement requesting copies of any orders or rosters be sent to Bob Anderson. Bob is compiling a listing of every trooper who served in Vietnam with the 7th Cavalry. Hopefully, after returning home, members in attendance will go through their memento boxes and come up with some usable data. Association elections followed the call for 7th Cavalry rosters and orders. Elections were held for two offices, Association President and Association Secretary. John Guillory, our current President, was*

*nominated and elected for a 3-year term. John Guillory was also nominated and elected to a 2-year term as Secretary. There were no other nominations for these offices and each voting was unanimous. Finally, it was announced that after 17 years as scribe, Bob Anderson's last 7th Cavalry column in the Saber would be the November/December 2016 publication. Additionally, there was a call for anyone interested in the scribe position to contact Bob Anderson directly. That wraps up the recap of the 69th Annual Reunion. Wait, one last note; I was fortunate to reconnect with two great troopers I hadn't seen in more than 47 years. Now that's one of those golden moments that happen at reunions. Hope to see a great turnout at Fort Hood next year - Garryowen!*

*Thank you John for this great report for those members who were unable to attend this year's reunion. With John accepting the challenge we can AGAIN open up the membership to new members. It's been a long two years for the membership to be closed and I'm sure this will be well received by Troopers that have been waiting to "Saddle Up." It's not too early to start thinking about Reunion 2017 to be held at Fort Hood and Reunion 2018 to be held in West Virginia. Garland Schnack sends in a very important link to Agent Orange related illnesses. This link covers discussions on the following: Agent Orange Presumptive Disabilities; Disabilities In Children of Herbicide Exposed Veterans; Gulf War Presumptive Disabilities; POW Presumptive Conditions and Radiation Exposure Presumptive Conditions. This link is . I for one am glad to see mention of what diseases have been linked to exposure in the Gulf War. This is important information. Thank you Garland. Dennis Deal via Ron Migut sadly reports, "I received a call from Larry Litton a few minutes ago (16 June) who called to inform me Warren Adams, D Co. 1SG, 1st Shift, passed away this AM. Apparently he was in route to the local VAMC when he passed. He complained earlier this AM that he wasn't feeling well, and his niece decided it was serious enough to take him to the Hospital. He passed very quickly and painlessly in the car in route. Larry does not use the computer much and asked me to get this to all who may have known Warren. He will be cremated and buried with no services before or after. That's all I have and Larry told me not to expect to hear more. Garryowen, Dennis.*

*On a somewhat more upbeat report, Dennis reported that he made another Parachute Jump on what would have been his Mother's 100th Birthday. What a way to celebrate her life. The video was extremely good as Dennis proudly displayed his Ranger Tab Baseball Cap as he was free falling from 10,000+ feet prior to deploying the chute. "Rangers Lead The Way!"*

*Karl Haartz sends us this moving tribute written by Julie 'Little Sister' Kink. Growing up in the 1960s, my world was no bigger than the tree-lined streets of my neighborhood, wherever my Schwinn bike could take me. The evening news, with scenes of helicopters crashing and men on stretchers with white bandages around their heads, brought Vietnam into our living room. But "Vietnam" wasn't the name of a place. It was the name of a war. When my brother David went there to fly helicopters, I became aware of Vietnam as a pink spot on a map where it was very hot. We sent him Kool-Aid because the water was bad, and letters to remind him of home. Soon "Vietnam" became the thing that took David away from us, for good. And like most Gold Star families of the era, after a while, "Vietnam" became the thing we never spoke of again. Ten years ago, I visited Vietnam for the first time. It became not just the name of a war, but the name of a place. The guns are silent, the land is recovering, and the economy is growing. To Vietnam, "The American War," as it is called, is just one chapter in a centuries-long battle history. More than two-thirds of the people living in Vietnam today were born after the war. They are a proud people, eager to exchange friendly handshakes with their former foes. In 2006 and again in 2009, stood on a bridge outside of Phuoc Vinh, a mile or two from the site where an explosion brought down the 1st Cavalry scout helicopter carrying my brother David and his two fellow crewmen, causing their deaths. By finding men who served with him, I have learned not only how David died, but more importantly, how he lived. Now, after my third trip to Vietnam last month, I have spent more time there than David did, back in 1969. This time I accompanied my*

husband Mike Sprayberry, a Vietnam veteran whom I met on that 2006 trip, on a mission of his own. On April 25, 1968, as the 21-year-old commander of a 5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry Rifle Company, Mike led a small group of soldiers on a harrowing nighttime rescue in the A Shau Valley. A platoon of fellow infantrymen had been ambushed and pinned down by North Vietnamese forces. All of the survivors were rescued, but the bodies of three fallen soldiers could not be recovered. A few days later, a helicopter attempting to locate the three men's bodies was also lost to heavy enemy fire; the bodies of three helicopter crewmen could not be recovered. To this day, the bodies of all six men remain in the A Shau Valley. Mike received our nation's highest military award, the Congressional Medal of Honor, for his heroic efforts that dark night. Over the four decades since, he has remained determined to find the six missing men and bring them home, returning four times to Vietnam in search of evidence compelling enough to convince the U.S. government to initiate a formal recovery effort. The quest to bring the missing men home is the subject of the documentary, "Fallen But Not Forgotten," also known as "The MIAs on Tiger Mountain." Last month, Mike returned to the A Shau Valley with three of his men who had been in the ambush: Frank Elliott, Frank Brown and Neil Floyd, accompanied by Vietnam veteran/archaeologist Bruce Jones and former Vietnam helicopter pilot Chuck Kinnie. They were joined by members of the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA). Besides being a personal journey for the troopers who returned, the trip helped confirm locations where the missing men may be buried. An excavation is planned soon with the hope of returning these men at last to their waiting families. My husband searches for the dead; I search for the living. For 20 years, I have helped families of helicopter crewmembers killed in Vietnam to find veterans who served with their loved ones - I affectionately call them "my dead guys." There are over 400 of them. Some of their family members have become my best friends. I took a list of "my dead guys" to Vietnam. Winding up a high mountain road with breathtaking views, I took out my list and read each name to myself, thinking of their families, of their young lives, and of how things have changed since they shed their blood in Vietnam. I wanted each of them to be remembered in that place, in a time of peace. We, their families, and their buddies, will never forget them. In memory of Hubia J. Guillory, age 20; Daniel M. Kelley, age 20; David L. Scott, age 21; Donald P. Gervais, age 35; Richard D. Martin, age 31; Warren T. Whitmire Jr., age 32; and my brother, David R. Kink, age 19. Thank you Karl and Julie for sharing your thoughts and feeling as a member of the Gold Star Families. While shopping at my local food store several days ago, they were soliciting funds for Veterans Organizations. As I had never heard of the three they were peddling, I declined until I could do some more research. In so doing I discovered a web site called Charity Navigator located at <http://www.charitynavigator.org>. Two of the three were not listed and the 3rd received a so so rating. So I offer this as a possible avenue to use as a research tool when you decide to whom you donate your hard earned monies. Received my Saber today and was saddened to see in the Taps Section the name of COL (Ret) George R. Giles. COL Giles was the Battalion Commander of the Training Brigade when I joined them as a newly minted 2nd Lieutenant in April of 1969. I remember calling on him at his house at Fort Benning and the Silver Platter was exactly where my Officer's Guide said it would be - in the foyer of his home. I placed probably the only card that I ever used on that platter. A number of years ago I tried to find him, to no avail. He was the Reviewer on the first of many OER's and gave me high marks. I thought him an excellent commander and fine officer. He served with the 229th AHB in Vietnam and I still remember seeing that big yellow combat patch on his fatigues. Garryowen COL Giles! The Patriot's Almanac provides the following: 25 June 1917, ships carrying the AEF approach the shores of France; 25 June 1950, the Korean War starts; 4 July 1802, West Point opens; 4 July 1959, Alaska becomes the 49th state; 4 July 1960, Hawaii becomes the 50th state; 6 July 1976, the Naval Academy admits their first women Midshipmen; 25 July 1951, my wife Juliane is born in Hillsdale, MI; 15 December 1791, The Bill of Rights are added to the United States Constitution.

If there are any former Jarheads who later saw the light and joined the United States Army, this next bit

*of information might be of interest. From the 1950s through the 1980s, people living or working at the U.S. Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, were potentially exposed to drinking water contaminated with industrial solvents, benzene, and other chemicals. You may be eligible for VA health benefits if you served on active duty (Veterans) or resided (family members) at Camp Lejeune for 30 days or more between August 1, 1953 and December 31, 1987: Veterans who are determined to be eligible will be able to receive VA health care. In addition, care for qualifying health conditions is provided at no cost to the Veteran (including copayments). Eligible family members may receive reimbursement for out-of-pocket medical expenses incurred from the treatment of qualifying health conditions after all other health insurance is applied.*

*As I begin to wind down my duties as your reporter, I have been consolidating the many years of files that have accrued when I was your Secretary. Hundreds of troopers have joined the 7th Cavalry Association during the time frame that Jim Brigham and I were serving as your elected officers. My duties as Secretary were to take each application and make up a membership packet and send it off to the newest member. Sometimes in the short time frame from applying and processing, a trooper moved on without leaving a forwarding address. I would like to get the membership packets to the following soldiers. I will list their name and the city where the packet was sent in the hope that they or someone who knows them can give me their correct address. Gregory D. Moore, Killeen, TX; Carlos A. Pope, Dallas, TX; Robert Blakey, Killeen, TX; Jimmy Fuente, Jr., Killeen, TX; and Johnnie I. Rivera, Merrillville, IN. Marc Levy who served as a Medic in D 1/7 in '69 and '70 sends us this.*

*Last year I wrote an article for CounterPunch titled "The Curious Case of Sergeant Doe" which detailed conflicts in the service record of a boastful Vietnam vet. There have been new developments since then. "Johnny" as I call him, was pressured to step down from his position in Veterans for Peace, but many in his local chapter still support him, or believe he is real. This in spite of the fact that he has furnished another questionable DD 214. Presently he and another supporter have asked a senate aide to obtain Johnny's DD 214 from the National Personnel Records Center. Well and good. But the documents in his Official Military Personnel File (OMPF) do not support his case. Neither does a FOIA summary of service. On the other hand, I recently pointed out service date conflicts between the latter two records to BG Burkett, author of Stolen Valor. As I have also never ruled out, Burkett said that "due to multiple archives, it's possible there was a record slip up." He's now reviewing the files. Since Burkett once worked for the VA IG, he may contact them to determine if Johnny has used a questionable DD 214 to obtain VA Benefits. If after a VA investigation it is determined that documents were altered, this could very well be a serious problem for him. Stay tuned. ("The Curious Case of SGT Doe" with redacted OMPF and fake DD 214 is on Marc's website: Medic in the Green Time. Marc Levy was decorated with the Silver Star for his actions while serving in Vietnam. My good friend Phantom Raider 3/6 has also uncovered a potential poser who claims to have been decorated with the Distinguished Service Cross for his exploits with the First Team. The trouble is no one can substantiate his name with that Valor Award. Both names redacted by your Editor.*

*I recently stumbled upon a book titled Under Custer's Command by James Henry Avery. It details the Civil War Campaigns and daily life of the Michigan Cavalry Brigade that Custer commanded and Sergeant Avery participated in. This is an extremely valuable tool for the aficionados of Colonel Custer. It's jam packed in its 160 pages of daily life, skirmishes' and battles like Gettysburg to whet your appetite.*

*Congratulations to Dara Wydler, First Sergeant (Ret) United States Army who took the reins of Executive Director of the 1st Cavalry Division Association on 1 July 2016. First Team and a hearty Garryowen, Top and welcome aboard!*

*Essentially I have but only one more column to write as my final words to you have mostly been*

*committed for the November/December edition of Saber. So if you would like something to be referenced please send it to me ASAP, as the September/October column is fast filling up. I hope everyone had a safe and relaxing 4th of July holiday. By the time you receive this edition summer will be dwindling fast. Garryowen and First Team!*